



## *Conrad Daniels of HJI Supply Chain Solutions*

### **ELECTED 2026 CHAIR OF THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

#### **KIM HALBAUER OF FIFTH THIRD BANK CHOSEN AS CHAIR-ELECT**

Conrad Daniels, president of HJI Supply Chain Solutions, has been elected to serve as chair of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce for the 2026 term. Daniels succeeds Scott Davis, chairman and CEO of Field & Main Bank, whose term expired on September 30, 2025.

Daniels brings more than two decades of experience in the logistics industry to his role as president of HJI Supply Chain Solutions, a single-source provider of outsourced manufacturing, contract warehousing, and 3PL supply chain solutions. Over his 24-year tenure, he has held multiple leadership positions—including Quality Systems Engineer and Chief Operating Officer—and has been instrumental in expanding HJI's capabilities across warehousing, order fulfillment, distribution, and manufacturing support services.

He was named president in 2017 following a four-year

generational succession planning process. Under his leadership, the company has grown from a single-industry facility into one of the largest woman- and minority-owned businesses in Kentucky, operating more than 1.3 million square feet across eight locations in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Daniels has demonstrated extensive leadership and civic engagement through service on numerous business and community boards. He has held key leadership roles with the Kentucky Chamber and Greater Louisville Inc. and currently serves as chair of the Louisville Branch Board of Directors of the 8th District Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

A graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Louisville, Daniels has received the Brown-Forman Family Business Leadership Award and was named an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist for the Central-East region.

**SEE CHAIRMAN, PAGE 3**

## **KENTUCKY BUSINESS COMMUNITY Honors Senator McConnell**

PRESENTED BY **DENTONS**

Business and civic leaders from across the Commonwealth gathered in Louisville in October as the Kentucky Chamber honored U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell for more than 40 years of public service and leadership at its Annual Dinner.

Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts opened the event by recognizing McConnell as one of the most influential Kentuckians in history. Chamber Board Chair Scott Davis of Field & Main Bank highlighted McConnell's role in advancing pro-growth policies that has opened doors for Kentucky and strengthened its position on the national stage.

U.S. Chamber President and CEO Suzanne Clark praised McConnell's enduring defense of free enterprise and his leadership through uncertain times, urging continued support for the principles that drive economic growth. Senate President Robert Stivers and House Speaker David Osborne reflected on McConnell's legacy of mentorship, results-driven leadership, and steady service to Kentucky and the nation.

In a conversation with Senator Julie Rague Adams, McConnell reflected on his career, emphasizing the value of showing up, listening, and delivering results through cooperation and common ground. He also underscored his ongoing commitment to preparing future leaders, pointing to the McConnell Center at the University of Louisville as one of his proudest achievements.

**OPPORTUNITY  
STARTS HERE:  
CHAMBER PRIORITIZES  
Child Care &  
Housing to  
Grow Kentucky's  
Workforce**

As the Commonwealth heads into the 2026 legislative session, the Kentucky Chamber is leading efforts to address two key barriers to growth: child care and housing. With new research and collaborative partnerships, the Chamber is advancing solutions that support working families and ensure Kentucky's economy continues to grow.

Testifying before multiple legislative committees during the interim, Chamber leaders emphasized how access to child care and housing directly impacts workforce participation and stressed that economic progress depends on policy solutions that support working families and address cost-of-living concerns.

**SEE OPPORTUNITY STARTS HERE,  
PAGE 4**





U.S. Chamber President and CEO Suzanne Clark

FROM THE FRONT

## Honoring Senator McConnell

### READ MORE

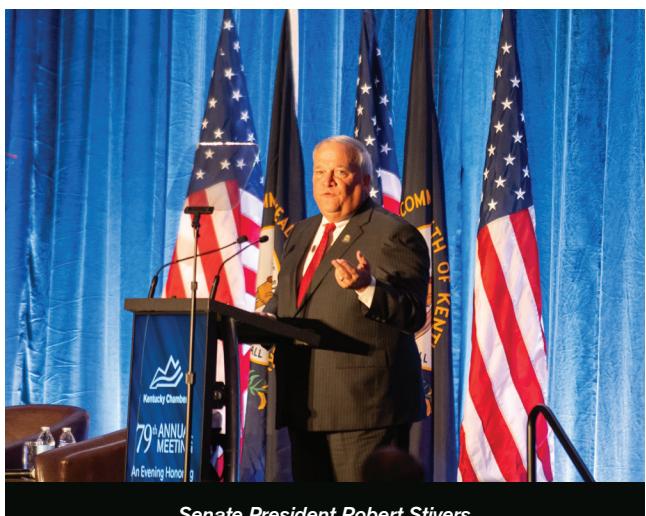
Read the full recap at [kychamberbottomline.com](http://kychamberbottomline.com).



Speaker of the House David Osborne



2025 Kentucky Chamber Chair Scott Davis



Senate President Robert Stivers



Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts, Former U.S. Secretary of Labor and Transportation Elaine Chao, and U.S. Chamber President and CEO Suzanne Clark



Kentucky Chamber Board Member Mark Sommer of Frost Brown Todd, and Former Chairs Darby Turner of Dentons and Winston Griffin of Laurel Grocery Company



April Wimberg of Dentons

IS YOUR COMPANY ONE OF THE BEST?  
Apply today for 2026!

[bestplacetoworkkentucky.com](http://bestplacetoworkkentucky.com)



This premier event  
sells out quickly —  
REGISTER NOW!



Kentucky Chamber  
31st Annual Kentucky  
**CHAMBER DAY DINNER**  
PRESENTED BY

January 8, 2026  
4:00 p.m. Registration & Reception  
6:00 p.m. Dinner  
Central Bank Center | Lexington

The premier gathering of Kentucky's business and political leadership returns. At the 31st Annual Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner, presented by Fidelity Investments, the governor and legislative leaders (all invited) reveal their priorities for the year ahead—giving you exclusive insight into the issues that matter most for your business and community.



FROM THE FRONT

## Chairman

"Conrad's extensive leadership experience and deep commitment to Kentucky's business community make him an outstanding choice to serve as chair of the Kentucky Chamber," said Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts. "Through his work in the logistics industry and his service on numerous civic and business boards, he has demonstrated a strong vision for growth and collaboration. We look forward to the year ahead under his leadership."

"I am honored to serve as chair of the Kentucky Chamber," said Daniels. "The Chamber plays a critical role in advancing policies and partnerships that strengthen Kentucky's economy and communities. I look forward to working alongside business leaders across the Commonwealth to build on this momentum and create even greater opportunities for Kentucky."

Kim Halbauer, Regional President of Fifth Third Bank, Kentucky, will serve as chair-elect for 2026.

Les Fugate, Vice President, Director, Public Affairs, U.S. State & Local, Canada & Latin America of Brown-Forman Corporation, will serve as chair of the Kentucky Chamber Foundation.

**Serving with Daniels and Halbauer on the Chamber's Executive Committee will be:**



**KIM HALBAUER**  
2026 CHAIR-ELECT  
KENTUCKY CHAMBER  
*Fifth Third Bank*

### The 2026 Chamber Executive Committee:

- **Immediate Past Chair:** Scott Davis, Chairman and CEO, Field & Main Bank, Henderson
- **Vice Chair, Administration:** Amy Luttrell, President and CEO, Goodwill Kentucky, Louisville
- **Vice Chair, Communications and Marketing:** Hollie Harris, President and CEO, Appalachian Regional Healthcare, Lexington
- **Vice Chair, Membership & Business Services:** Kimra Cole, President and COO, Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Lexington
- **Vice Chair, Public Affairs:** Carlos Sanchez, President, AT&T Kentucky, Louisville
- **Treasurer:** John Crockett, III, President, LG&E and KU Energy, Louisville
- **Chair, Kentucky Chamber Foundation:** Les Fugate, Vice President, Director, Public Affairs, U.S. State & Local, Canada & Latin America, Brown-Forman Corporation, Louisville
- **At-Large Member:** Patrick Coleman, Vice President of Finance and CFO, Houchens Industries, Inc., Bowling Green
- **Small Business At-Large Member:** Ray Daniels, Co-Founder, President and CEO, Equity Solutions Group, Lexington
- **At-Large Member:** Steven Lee, President, Kentucky Companies, CRH Americas Materials, Lexington
- **At-Large Member:** Amy Spiller, State President, Ohio and Kentucky, Duke Energy, Cincinnati, OH
- **President & CEO:** Ashli Watts, President & CEO, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Frankfort

### Newly-Elected Directors:

- **Jennifer Barber**, Louisville Partner-in-Charge, Frost Brown Todd, LLP, Louisville
- **Deanna Herrmann\***, President and CEO, London-Laurel County Chamber of Commerce, London
- **Mark Marsh**, President and CEO, Owensboro Health, Owensboro
- **Anne-Tyler Morgan**, Member, McBrayer, PLLC, Lexington
- **Chris Perry**, President and CEO, Kentucky Electric Cooperatives, Louisville
- **Tish Shade\***, **KCCE President**, President and CEO, Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce, Frankfort
- **Seema Sheth**, Senior Vice President & Regional Executive, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Louisville Branch, Louisville
- **Jonathan Westbrook**, CEO, East and Westbrook Construction Company, Buckner

\*Ex officio

*A full board listing, including members continuing their terms, can be found on Pages 4-5 or can be found online at [kychamber.com](http://kychamber.com).*



**Kentucky Chamber  
Foundation**

*Accelerating Solutions.  
Building Opportunity.*

## KENTUCKY CHAMBER FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEXT CHAPTER *To Strengthen Kentucky's Future*

Kentucky's growth depends on businesses leading solutions that create opportunities, strengthen communities, and drive the state forward. With its next chapter, the Kentucky Chamber Foundation is expanding its impact across the Commonwealth, guided by its strengthened purpose: unlock the power of business, accelerate solutions, and build opportunity in Kentucky.

"This next chapter marks a defining moment in our work, demonstrating the growing impact of business-led solutions across Kentucky. We are proud of what we have accomplished alongside our partners and Chamber members, and this reintroduction builds on that foundation. When employers engage with the Foundation, they help unlock solutions that extend beyond individual companies and create a thriving future for the entire Commonwealth and its people," said Kentucky Chamber Foundation Senior Vice President Beth Davisson.

The Foundation's work will continue to advance this mission through three core areas: driving collaborative, business-led solutions to tackle key challenges; expanding opportunity by strengthening communities and addressing barriers to prosperity; and building for tomorrow by focusing on long-term strategies and future trends.

### LEARN MORE

To learn more about the Foundation's next chapter and its impact across the Commonwealth, visit [kychamberfoundation.org](http://kychamberfoundation.org).



Kentucky Chamber Senior Vice President of Public Affairs Kate Shanks and Vice President of Policy Charles Aull testify with Kentucky Collaborative on Child Care members Liz McQuillen of the Metro United Way and Kenneth Calloway of Century Aluminum

## FROM THE FRONT

# Opportunity Starts Here

To drive coordinated action on this issue, the Chamber led the formation of the Kentucky Collaborative on Child Care, bringing together business leaders, child care providers, educators, and community partners to develop a shared plan for strengthening child care across the Commonwealth.

The Collaborative identified key priorities for the 2026 session, including improving data, modernizing regulations, strengthening the child care workforce, supporting high-quality programs, engaging employers and communities, and ensuring that working families have affordable and reliable options.

According to new research by the Kentucky Chamber Center for Policy and Research, "A Workforce Solution that Works," expanded child care access alone could potentially enable 16,000–28,000 parents to enter the workforce, generating up to \$1.1 billion in wages and tax revenue.

The Chamber is also leading on housing, another key factor limiting growth. Drawing from the 2024 "Building a Foundation for Growth" report, the Chamber presented to the General Assembly calling attention to the 200,000-unit shortage, rising costs, outdated zoning, and lack of infrastructure that are constraining new housing supply.

Through Opportunity Starts Here, the Chamber is urging lawmakers to prioritize child care and housing as workforce and economic priorities—and to advance solutions that position Kentucky for long-term growth and competitiveness.

The Chamber has built a petition for Kentuckians to sign and show their support for these issues.

SCAN ME



## LEARN MORE

Scan the QR Code or visit [opportunitystartshere.com](http://opportunitystartshere.com).



## KENTUCKY BUSINESS LEADERS STEADY ON ECONOMY, Cite Workforce and Housing as Ongoing Challenges

A survey by the National Association of State Chambers and Siena College Research Institute gathered insights from over 200 business and nonprofit leaders on Kentucky's economy, workforce, and policy priorities. Respondents from a wide range of industries shared perspectives on key challenges and opportunities facing employers across Kentucky.

"Understanding how employers view the economy and what's holding back growth helps us focus on solutions that expand opportunity," said Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts. "This year's results show Kentucky's business community remains steady but realistic—optimistic about growth potential while increasingly focused on workforce shortages and the need for housing to support employees."

### Public Policy

Workforce development remains the top concern for employers, with 54% citing it as the most urgent issue. Personal income tax reform (47%) and affordable housing (43%) also ranked highly, with housing now seen as a critical factor in workforce participation and business growth. Additionally, 42% of employers said they would expand child care benefits if matched by public funding, pointing to growing interest in collaborative solutions like Kentucky's Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership.

### Views on the Economy

Top concerns include government regulation, taxation, health care costs, and supplier pricing—though fewer employers cited these issues compared to 2024. Workforce shortages remain a barrier, but conditions have improved slightly: 28% now say there's an adequate supply of trained workers, up from 16%. Revenue expectations held steady, with 44% anticipating growth over the next year.

### AI Adoption

AI usage remains limited but is growing, particularly in finance, retail, and professional services. Among adopters, 87% report improved efficiency, with added benefits in customer outreach and business development.

### Kentucky Confidence

Long-term business confidence remains high. Eighty-one percent of respondents expect their company to stay in Kentucky over the next decade, and 80% would choose the state again if starting fresh—reflecting steady optimism despite ongoing workforce and housing challenges.



# 41st Annual KYSHRM Conference

## HELD IN LEXINGTON

PRESENTED BY



The 41st Annual Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management (KYSHRM) Conference, presented by Kentucky Career Center, was held in August, at the Central Bank Center in Lexington. The event drew nearly 1,000 attendees from across the Commonwealth for three days of professional development, including three keynote presentations and up to 14 professional development credits. Programming focused on strengthening HR leadership, sharing best practices, and addressing critical workforce challenges. At the heart of the conference was an exhibit hall featuring more than 120 solution provider companies, where attendees connected with exhibitors and sponsors during breaks, meals, and receptions to explore a wide range of HR products and services.

### Keynotes included:

**Built by Us: How HR Is Leading the Future of Work** | Brad Shuck, Professor, University of Louisville, and Co-Founder, OrgVitals

**How to Work with Jerks: Creating Inclusive, Collaborative, and Conflict-Free Work Environments** | Eric Williamson, Conflict Resolution Specialist, Tailored Training Solutions

**Get Your Brave On: Empowering HR Professionals to Lead with Courage, Authenticity, and Impact** | Carol Schulte, Keynote Speaker, Author, and Executive Coach



AFFILIATE OF  
**SIRM**<sup>®</sup>  
BETTER WORKPLACES  
BETTER WORLD<sup>™</sup>

**KYSHRM**  
42<sup>ND</sup> Annual Conference

August 25-27, 2026 | The Galt House Hotel | Louisville

### SAVE THE DATE!

Join us next year **August 25-27, 2026**, at the Galt House Hotel and Suites in downtown Louisville. Register at [kyshrmconference.com](http://kyshrmconference.com).



## KENTUCKY CHAMBER FOUNDATION AND GLI LAUNCH *New Kentuckian Hiring Academy*

To help employers address workforce shortages, the Kentucky Chamber Foundation and Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI) launched the New Kentuckian Hiring Academy in August. The one-day training equipped 21 participants from 17 companies with strategies to recruit and retain work-authorized immigrants, refugees, and documented workers.

Attendees learned about legal considerations, workforce demographics, and best practices for supporting immigrant talent, while also hearing directly from new Kentuckians about their experiences. Louisville is home to nearly 90,000 foreign-born residents, many of whom are highly educated and already filling critical workforce needs.



Powered by  
**Kentucky Chamber Foundation**

"New Kentuckians are already filling critical roles in industries facing persistent labor shortages, which makes employer engagement a key opportunity," said Kelly Gold, Vice President of Marketing, Talent Attraction and Retention of Greater Louisville Inc. "That's why GLI is proud to partner on this pilot to meet growing regional demand for innovative workforce solutions. By bringing the New Kentuckian Hiring Academy to Louisville, we're giving employers tailored resources that address state and regional needs while strengthening our community's talent pipeline."

### LEARN MORE

Learn more at [kychamberfoundation.org](http://kychamberfoundation.org).

# KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## 2026 Leadership



**Kentucky Chamber**  
Uniting Business. Advancing Kentucky.

### Executive Committee *Officers and Regional Representatives*



### Board of Directors *Business leaders from every region in the state who govern the Kentucky Chamber*



### Local Chamber Advisory Board



\* Ex-Officio

# KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Key Investors



**Kentucky Chamber**  
Uniting Business. Advancing Kentucky.

**Key Investors** An exclusive group of top Kentucky executives whose companies provide significant financial support and leadership for Chamber involvement in critical issues affecting businesses.

Commonwealth Partners	aeatna	amazon	Anthem	brown-forman	Humana	IGE KU	suntory	TOYOTA   KY	TRUIST	ups	
— Louisville											
Chairman's Circle											
— Lexington											
Champions											
— Owensboro											
Advisors											
— Louisville											
Trustees											
— Lexington											
Other											
— Louisville											
Other											
— Lexington											
Other											
— Lexington											
Other											
— Lexington											

## 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.

### ADVISOR

DHL Express, Inc.

### TRUSTEE

TC Energy

### CORNERSTONE

ABSDABS Accounting, LLC  
Kentucky Nonprofit Recovery Alliance  
MAREC

### STAKEHOLDER

4C Innovations LLC  
Athenian House Catering, LLC  
AV Club LLC  
Blue North  
Cline & Co Travel Consulting  
Collision Masters of Lexington, Inc.  
Emerald Energy & Exploration  
Heuser Health  
HR Know-How, LLC  
Kentucky Pharmacists Association  
LBMC  
Louisville MRI  
MSE of Kentucky, Inc.  
One Cross Medical  
Thermex Thermatron Systems  
Thrive By 5 Louisville  
Victor Enterprises, Inc.

## KENTUCKY CHAMBER NEWS

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



## LOCAL CHAMBERS RECOGNIZED AS PART OF *Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Executives 2025 Excellence Awards*

Local chambers from across the Commonwealth were honored at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Executives (KCCE) 2025 Annual Dinner in September, held during the organization's Annual Conference in Bardstown. The dinner and awards ceremony also paid tribute to local chambers of commerce in areas of operational excellence, including membership growth and retention, civic engagement, and more.

As part of the dinner, the KCCE Board named Tish Shade of the Frankfort Area Chamber as 2026 president, succeeding Michelle Bundren of the Murray-Calloway Chamber.

The group recognized Bullitt County Chamber President and CEO Anita Stump as Chamber Professional of the Year this year.



Tish Shade of the Frankfort Chamber and Michelle Bundren of the Murray-Calloway County Chamber



Sandra Wilson of the Paducah Area Chamber and Anita Stump of the Bullitt County Chamber

### READ MORE

Find out the local chambers that received KCCE Annual Excellence Awards at [kychamberbottomline.com](http://kychamberbottomline.com).

## Mark Your Calendars

**December 9-10, 2025** | OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course — Lexington  
**December 9-12, 2025** | OSHA 30-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course — Lexington  
**December 11-12, 2025** | Supervising & Managing People — Lexington  
**January 8, 2026** | 31st Annual Kentucky Chamber Day — Lexington  
**February 9 – April 27, 2026** | A Virtual SHRM Certification Prep Course — Virtual  
**February 10, 2026** | OSHA Recordkeeping and Reporting — Louisville  
**February 11, 2026** | OSHA Forklift — Train the Trainer — Louisville  
**February 17-18, 2026** | 11th Annual Kentucky Workforce Summit — Lexington  
**March 5-6, 2026** | Supervising & Managing People — Bowling Green  
**March 17-18, 2026** | 24th Annual Kentucky Environmental Conference — Lexington  
**April 29-30, 2026** | 38th Annual Kentucky HR Update — Hybrid — Lexington  
**May 6-7, 2026** | 15th Annual Kentucky Energy Management Conference — Lexington  
**May 19, 2026** | Advanced Workers' Comp Seminar — Lexington  
**May 21, 2026** | Inaugural Kentucky Economic Summit — Lexington  
**May 28, 2026** | 13th Annual Navigating Sales and Use Tax in Kentucky-Hybrid — Lexington  
**June 2-3, 2026** | OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course — Louisville  
**June 2-5, 2026** | OSHA 30-Hour General Industry Voluntary Compliance Course — Louisville  
**June 4-5, 2026** | Supervising & Managing People — Louisville  
**June 9, 2026** | 6th Annual Women's Summit — Lexington  
**June 18, 2026** | Best Places to Work in Kentucky — Lexington  
**August 25-27, 2026** | 42nd Annual KYSHRM Conference — Louisville

## REGISTER FOR OR SPONSOR AN EVENT

To register for an event visit [kychamber.com](http://kychamber.com) or contact Lori Jo Goff at **502-848-8727** or [lgoff@kychamber.com](mailto: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](mailto:aflanders@kychamber.com).



VISIT [KYCHAMBERBOTTOMLINE.COM](http://KYCHAMBERBOTTOMLINE.COM)



Ava Bogard of Calloway County wins the 2025 National Civics Bee Kentucky State Finals

## AVA BOGARD OF CALLOWAY COUNTY WINS 2025 *National Civics Bee® Kentucky State Finals*

The Kentucky Chamber Foundation hosted the 2025 National Civics Bee Kentucky State Finals in August at the Kentucky State Fair, where middle school students from across the Commonwealth showcased their civics knowledge and presented solutions to issues impacting their communities.

Ava Bogard of Calloway County earned first place, followed by Phoenix Hurtgen and Lucy Reynolds of Taylor County. Bogard represented Kentucky at the National Civics Bee in Washington, D.C., in November.

"We want middle school students across Kentucky to see that civic engagement isn't just something for adults. It starts with them," said Beth Davisson, Senior Vice President of the Kentucky Chamber Foundation. "We hope the Civics Bee sparks curiosity, confidence, and a deeper understanding of how their voice and actions can shape their communities."

The National Civics Bee is a national initiative aimed at encouraging more young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities, organized in partnership with The Civic Trust of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.



### LEARN MORE

Learn more about the 2026 National Civics Bee at [kychamberfoundation.org](http://kychamberfoundation.org).

LOUISVILLE'S HOME FOR  
**PRO SOCCER**

IMPRESS CLIENTS OR REWARD YOUR TEAM IN STYLE WITH PREMIUM SEATING!  
**VISIT LYNNFAMILYSTADIUM.COM/SUITES**

**DANIELS COMMITTED  
TO GROWING  
OPPORTUNITY  
ACROSS KENTUCKY**

**Local. National. Global.  
Wherever you need us.**

Proud sponsor of the Kentucky Chamber's  
79th Annual Meeting Dinner.  
With offices in more than 160 locations, including  
Kentucky, Dentons is the world's largest global law firm.

**dentons.com**

© 2025 Dentons. Dentons is a global legal practice providing client services worldwide through its member firms and affiliates. Please see dentons.com for Legal Notices.