

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR AWARD FINALISTS

Colby Hall,

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

Colby Hall is a born and raised Eastern Kentuckian. A 2015 graduate of the University of Kentucky, Colby pursued a successful sales career in Atlanta, Georgia before returning home to become the Executive Director of Shaping Our Appalachian Region, a nonprofit focused on economic revitalization in the Eastern Kentucky coalfields. Colby is married to Lindsey Hall, a nurse practitioner at the University of Kentucky's Chandler Hospital, and they have a one-year-old son, Hayden James.



Why Should This Nominee Be Recognized as Kentucky's Young Professional of the Year?

Colby Hall, as Executive Director, has successfully led Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) for the past 3 years and has already left an indelible mark on all of Kentucky. SOAR is the nonprofit organization founded by Congressman Hal Rogers and Governor Steve Beshear to serve the 54 Appalachian Regional Commission counties of Eastern Kentucky affected by the dramatic economic downturn caused by the demise of the coal industry. Yes, that is 45% of all Kentucky counties. SOAR cannot operate without leadership, vision, and the ability to obtain grants and funding to assist in these efforts. Colby has conquered these challenges, making SOAR stronger and a leader in the Commonwealth! Colby was selected from a highly competitive group of candidates to lead SOAR at a very young age. He was mature beyond his years and his youthful energy was an asset for Kentucky and the organization which was looking for strong leadership skills. He has worked tirelessly, with full support of his Board of Directors, in a nonpartisan way to assist his home state of Kentucky. His energy and dedication to the people of Eastern Kentucky is second to none. Under his leadership, SOAR's operating budget has increased 175%, and he supervises a staff of approximately 19 professionals in their work to promote economic prosperity, healthy communities, better education opportunities, regional collaboration, and other vital community related activities in the 54 county SOAR Region. His team graciously follows his lead which is a true testimony to his abilities and dedication, and, in turn, they all excel daily! Colby works continuously to guide his team and the SOAR Region to make Kentucky a better place for all of us to live and work.