

THE KENTUCKY GAZETTE'S
2019 NOTABLE WOMEN
IN KENTUCKY POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT





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A Note from the Publisher

Dear Readers,

The women featured in these pages are some of the most talented, intelligent and powerful women in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. They have advanced degrees and decades of experiences, they work on causes for the benefit of others, and they succeed in the high-pressure, high-stakes game that is public affairs.

The world of politics, government and public affairs is still very much a man’s world.

Women make up roughly a third of the legislative branch lobbying corps, representing clients as close to home as Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and as global as Johnson & Johnson.

Laurie Dudgeon, director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, notes three of seven Kentucky Supreme Court Justices are women, as are six of

the 14 Appeals Court judges. In trial courts, 39 percent of circuit judges and 38 percent of district judges are women, and 68 percent of the state’s circuit court clerks are women.

Even so, the Kentucky General Assembly, where value-reflecting policy is made, is very much dominated by men: 78 percent of Kentucky’s state lawmakers are men. The four female senators in the 38-member chamber make up roughly 11 percent of the membership. In the House, women will make up 28 percent of the 100-member lower chamber when two new female lawmakers are sworn in after winning special elections earlier this month.

In the Fourth Estate, the rank of journalists covering these newsmakers also is dominated by men. The Capitol Press Corps has a handful of female reporters, many who also are assigned elsewhere except during news-making events or the General Assembly session.

Looking at the Kentucky Press Association’s membership, we see Ashland’s Daily Independent

is the only one of the state’s 22 daily newspapers with a female publisher. Fewer than 30 percent of the state’s 117 weekly papers have a female publisher, as does The Kentucky Gazette.

Over the summer, The Kentucky Gazette asked readers and social media followers to nominate women who have had an impact on public affairs, politics and government in Kentucky. We had an excellent response. Though we couldn’t include everyone who was nominated, we know the 50 women selected for inclusion this year all have one thing in common: They are very much admired by their peers, colleagues and collaborators who respect their work.

Thank you for reading about these women in this special edition of The Kentucky Gazette. And thanks to Donna Hawes Hodsdon, of Creek House Sales and Consulting, my advertising partner for this project, and to Gazette intern Olivia Epley, who double checked everything with us.

Laura Cullen Glasscock, editor and publisher

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KELLEY ABELL**THE ROTUNDA GROUP**

Understanding how government functions has always interested Kelley Abell.

Over the course of her career, she has met and worked with industry leaders and government officials in the executive and legislative branches of federal, state and local governments.

She has a keenly honed understanding and appreciation of the role of government in economic development, business and public affairs.

During her 25-year career, she successfully has led projects to increase provider rates, leverage federal funding, fund new projects and change the U.S. Tax Code. She also has worked collaboratively with industries on regulatory reform.

Abell has served on a number of boards, including The Morton Center and The Healing Place, which are focused on recovery from addiction. She was the first female and first non-physician board chair of The Healing Place, serving as chair during the expansion of the women's campus.

In addition, she has held several leadership roles with state and national associations on behalf of clients.

She attended the American University in Washington D.C. and the University of Louisville, graduating with a degree in communications and a minor in economics.

She and her husband, David L. Huber, share two daughters, two sons-in-law, three grandchildren and one demanding black Lab, Nora Lea.

**JULIE RAQUE ADAMS****KENTUCKY SENATE**

State Sen. Julie Raque Adams has served in the Kentucky General Assembly since 2011 – first in the state House of Representatives, now in the state Senate. She represents the 36th Senate District, which covers part of Jefferson County.

Though she's a first-term senator, Adams was elected by her peers to serve as majority caucus chair. As a member of Senate leadership, she also is a member of the Legislative Research Commission.

She is co-owner of Adams and Call Inc., a consulting firm in Louisville.

Adams was elected to the Louisville Metro Council for two terms, where she was active in business, tax and economic-development ventures. Before heading to city hall after her 2002 election win, Adams

served on the staff of U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell, as a lobbyist for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and as press secretary and campaign manager for former U.S. Rep. Anne Northup.

A Louisville native, Adams graduated from St. Margaret Mary Catholic School and Sacred Heart Academy. She holds a bachelor's degree from St. Mary's College in Indiana, and a master's from The George Washington University in Washington D.C.

She serves on the boards of the University of Louisville's McConnell Center, of Twisted Pink, a non-profit that focuses on breast cancer, and of TKO, an after-school program in Louisville. Adams and her husband, Jim Adams, have two sons, James and Joseph.

**LOURDES BÁEZ****BAPTIST HEALTH**

Lourdes C. Báez is assistant vice president of government relations and advocacy for Baptist Health in Louisville. There, she oversees the development and implementation of strategic public and governmental affairs efforts on the state and federal levels.

Báez previously served as communications director and chief education policy analyst for the Kentucky Senate majority caucus. Before that, she was a consultant with PwC Consulting, a political section staff member of the U.S. Department of State Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and a political analyst in the Central Intelligence Agency.

Báez is a candidate for a master's degree in international relations and international economics from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington D.C. and has a bachelor's degree in political science and Latin American studies from Wellesley College.

She is active in the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Greater Louisville Inc., and One Southern Indiana. She is a board member of the Partnership for Commonsense Justice, the Kentucky Center for the Arts, and the St. Patrick Parish Council.

She worked on Gov. Matt Bevin's Health and Family Services transition team, is a graduate of Leadership Kentucky and Leadership Louisville, and a 2017 Health Enterprises Network Fellow.

Báez and her husband, Bryan Sunderland, share three children, Roman, Ava and Cooper.

**ALLISON BALL****KENTUCKY TREASURER'S OFFICE**

Allison Ball is the 38th state treasurer of Kentucky. A University of Kentucky College of Law graduate, Ball practiced bankruptcy law and spent time as an assistant Floyd County Attorney prior to her 2015 election to the treasurer's office.

As treasurer, Ball is focused on being a watchdog for taxpayer dollars spent in Frankfort. Since taking office, Ball has returned a record amount of unclaimed property to Kentuckians, launched a new transparency website, making it easier for Kentuckians to see how the state government is spending their money, thwarted millions of dollars in fraud attempts on the commonwealth, and started STABLE Kentucky, a savings and investment program for Kentuckians with disabilities.

Ball is a national leader on financial empowerment and was named chair of the National Association of State Treasurer's Financial Education and Empowerment Committee.

Back home, she advocated for the creation of Kentucky's financial literacy high school graduation requirement, established the Kentucky Financial Empowerment Coalition and Database, and successfully championed the establishment of the Kentucky Financial Empowerment Commission. The commission will develop and implement plans to improve the financial literacy of Kentuckians.

Ball and her husband, Asa James Swan, have one son, Levi.



Thank you, Debby

Thank you for your unabashed commitment to the people and children of our grand commonwealth. Thank you for continuing The Courier Journal's long tradition of serving our community as a watchdog, storyteller and chronicler.

You've saved lives. You've changed our state. You've made Kentucky better. You've made all of us better.

Thank you for never losing sight of what matters: Using the power of journalism to hold our government accountable and make our communities safer.

Thank you.



Deborah Yetter
Courier Journal Investigative Reporter
50 Notable Women in Kentucky
Politics and Government Honoree



AMYE BENSENHAVER**OPEN RECORDS ADVOCATE**

Amye Bensenhaver is a retired assistant attorney general whose 25-year career in the Kentucky Attorney General's Office focused exclusively on the state's open records and meetings laws, making her a top expert in the state. Her appointment to the AG's office in 1991 coincided with dramatic changes in the laws.

After the laws were on the books for nearly two decades, lawmakers recognized the need for a way to allow citizens to challenge public agency violations of the laws through an independent mediator. Lawmakers assigned that role to the AG, and Bensenhaver became the first assistant attorney general who served as a full-time open records and meetings dispute mediator.

Since retiring from the attorney general's office in September 2016, she actively has advocated for Kentucky's sunshine laws by writing extensively on victories, defeats and other developments in the laws. Her writings have appeared in print and online in many newspapers, including the Lexington Herald-Leader and The Kentucky Gazette.

Bensenhaver has championed the laws in the courts and behind the scenes, providing assistance to the public and media in understanding and asserting their rights, and to public officials in understanding and discharging their official duties. In March, Bensenhaver and former Kentucky New Era editor Jennifer P. Brown established the Kentucky Open Government Coalition in response to assaults on open government.

*Kentucky Today***JAMIE ENNIS BLOYD****HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE**

Jamie Ennis Boyd is president of the Kentucky Pediatric Cancer Research Trust Fund and the Kentucky Pediatric Cancer Foundation, positions for which she oversees implementation of new \$5 million funding for childhood cancer research at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville.

In July, Boyd was invited by President Trump's National Cancer Institute Childhood Cancer Data Initiative to highlight Kentucky's work using the state's data infrastructure to discover pediatric cancers.

Additionally, she serves as director of government relations for the American Childhood Cancer Organization in Washington D.C. There, Boyd directs all state and federal advocacy initiatives. She works closely as an expert patient advocate with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Cancer Institute, and the federal Centers for Disease Control. She currently is leading advocacy campaigns in many states, including Texas, where she was instrumental in reauthorizing \$3 billion in cancer research funds, with 11 percent earmarked for childhood cancer.

In 2017, Jamie secured a partnership with ACCO + Amazon, and in September 2019 Amazon expanded its childhood cancer campaign internationally, with donations and events at 50 global fulfillment centers. Boyd's leadership also paved the way for Amazon to expand its investment into direct childhood cancer research.

Boyd, of Louisville, runs her own lobbying and public relations firm.

**LINDA BLACKFORD****LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER**

Linda Blackford is an editorial writer and columnist for the Lexington Herald-Leader, a post she took on in June after having been a reporter at the paper for more than two decades.

An award-winning journalist, Blackford was an accountability reporter for a number of years at the Herald-Leader, covering K-12 and higher education, as well as many other issues.

She has covered – and uncovered – numerous prize-winning issues in Lexington and Kentucky, including a series on Kentucky's education reform, a corrupt courthouse construction program and Lexington's unpublicized civil rights movement. Her work has won many state and national awards, including two McClatchy President's Awards, a Green Eyeshade Award from the Society of Professional Journalists in the investigative reporting category, and a number of awards from the Kentucky Press Association.

Blackford is involved in the Carnegie Center for Literacy's Author Academy and in Seedleaf, a community gardening organization. She formerly served on the board of the Kentucky Women Writers' Conference.

She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia and a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

She and her husband have three children and live in Lexington.

**CASSIE CHAMBERS****KENTUCKY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

Cassie Chambers is vice chair of the Kentucky Democratic Party. She also is an attorney at Kaplan Johnson Abate & Bird, and focuses on issues related to access to justice and government transparency.

Chambers spent her childhood in Eastern Kentucky before heading to Yale College, the Yale School of Public Health, the London School of Economics, and Harvard Law School.

At Harvard, she was president of the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, a student-run law firm that represents low-income clients. There, she started a clinic to provide legal services to homeless women in Boston. After law school, Chambers received a Skadden Fellowship to return to Kentucky to perform pro bono legal work for domestic violence survivors. In 2018, she worked to pass Jeanette's Law, which eliminated the requirement that domestic violence survivors pay an incarcerated spouse's legal fees in order to get a divorce. Chambers continues to write and speak about access-to-justice issues facing low-income women in rural parts of Kentucky.

Chambers is the author of the forthcoming book "Hill Women," set for publication by Ballantine in January 2020. The book discusses poverty, rural Kentucky, and the ways women can move communities forward. It also focuses on the story of women in her family, and their path from poverty to the Ivy League.

She lives in Louisville with her husband, Bryan, and their son, Cooper.



LESLIE COMBS**CIVIC ADVOCATE**

A Central Kentucky native who spent much of the last decade serving in the state House of Representatives, Leslie Combs earned a reputation as a fierce advocate for those hit hardest by the twin downturns in the economy and the coal industry.

Combs was elected in 2006 to the 94th House District.

Over the next decade, she rose to become chair of two powerful committees: Budget Review Subcommittee on Transportation, which oversees the multi-billion-dollar highway plan, and the Tourism Development and Energy Committee.

She sponsored a constitutional amendment strengthening hunting and fishing rights, which voters ratified in 2012. In 2016, her final legislative session, she was successful in adding Kentucky to the list of more than 30 states using public-private partnerships, a cause for which she still advocates. Last spring, the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships chose her as one of the country's top 10 pioneers in the use of P3 for improving transportation infrastructure.

Combs now spends much of her time in the Lexington area, where she attended Transylvania University. Professionally, she spent much of her career as treasurer and vice president at what is now University of Pikeville, and before then she was chief accountant at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Combs spent six years as a director of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, and was twice president of her local chamber. She also served on local hospital and fair boards, and two school councils. She is a Rotary member.

**SARAH DAVASHER-WISDOM****GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.**

Sarah Davasher-Wisdom has been with Greater Louisville Inc. since 2014, rising from vice president of government affairs to chief of staff and chief operating officer.

In her current role, Davasher-Wisdom provides strategic leadership and operational oversight to all departments within GLI, and leads a team of 36 professionals who develop and implement the strategies, objectives and policies of the organization. All this work paid off: GLI was named national 2019 Chamber of the Year.

She is the 2015 recipient of Louisville Business First's 40 Under 40 award. In 2017, she was selected by Business First as one of the Five People to Watch. Most recently, the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives named her a Top 40

Under 40 in the national chamber industry. Davasher-Wisdom has held previous roles in government and public policy, including manager of government affairs for the Tennessee Valley Authority, strategic communications officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and community development coordinator for former U.S. Rep. Ron Lewis.

Davasher-Wisdom earned a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in political science and public relations from Western Kentucky University. She is also a graduate of the Government Affairs Institute's Legislative Studies Program through Georgetown University. She will graduate from the Institute for Organizational Management in January 2020.



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Congratulations to Sarah Kidder for being named a notable woman in The Kentucky Gazette's 50 Notable Women in Politics and Government 2019.



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LAURIE DUDGEON**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS**

As director of Kentucky's Administrative Office of the Courts, Laurie K. Dudgeon is responsible for providing administrative support to Kentucky's 406 elected justices, judges and circuit court clerks. She oversees Kentucky's judicial branch budget, monitors legislation, and works with county, state and national officials on court-related issues.

Since being named director in 2009, she has adapted the AOC's organizational structure to meet the needs of the courts, improved personnel policies and salary structure, and relocated the AOC in Frankfort. Dudgeon led Kentucky eCourts, a sweeping initiative to update court technology. She worked closely with the legislature on policy initiatives, including felony expungement and juvenile justice reform. She advocates for the courts on the national level as president-elect of the Conference of State Court Administrators, as a board member for the National Center for State Courts, as co-chair of the National Task Force on Fines, Fees and Bail Practices, and on the board of The Council of State Governments' Justice Center.

Dudgeon practiced law and was executive director of the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy and a staff attorney in the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet. She received the 2018 Mary C. McQueen Award for Excellence and Leadership in Justice System Improvement and is an alumna of the Toll Fellowship Program. She has a bachelor's degree and juris doctorate from the University of Kentucky.

**AMBER DUKE****AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION**

Amber Duke became the ACLU of Kentucky's communications director in 2012. She works with a dynamic team that is dedicated to increasing awareness of civil liberties and civil rights among the general public, while inspiring active ACLU-Kentucky supporters to advance the organization's policy goals.

As communications director, she determines ideal communications channels and tactics for distributing ACLU news, promoting advocacy campaigns, publicizing events, broadening ACLU audiences, and making civil liberties accessible and relevant. She is a frequent contributor to the Courier Journal's op-ed page.

Before joining the ACLU, Duke served as program coordinator of the University of Louisville's Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research. Before that, she worked as a journalist at WLKY-TV in Louisville.

Duke is a graduate of the University of Louisville's Pan African Studies Department, where her master's work and thesis focused on the history of African American female journalists. She also received a graduate certificate in public history from the University of Louisville's History Department. She holds a bachelor's degree in communication studies from New York University.

Duke is a volunteer leader with Kentucky Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. She is also a member of Impact 100 Southern Indiana, which engages community members to raise awareness and resources to advance the quality of life for women.

**JESSICA FETTE****CITY OF ERLANGER**

Jessica Fette is the mayor of Erlanger who previously served a stint on the Erlanger City Council.

As mayor, she serves on the Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services, the Management Board for Planning and Development Services of Kenton County, and is secretary of the Kenton County Mayors Group.

Fette is the founder of the Erlanger Business Council and of the Youth Leadership Academy of Erlanger.

One her top accomplishments as mayor is creating a police social worker position in the Erlanger Police Department and moving the Erlanger Fire Department to a completely full-time department.

As a mayor and the owner of a small business, Fette has been adaptable to the everyday challenges that are presented in a fast-paced environment.

She prides herself on her thirst to tackle new and different challenges, and looks forward to the new ways she can apply her skills.

Fette is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University with a bachelor's degree in economics and business administration.

She owns Jace Solutions, a small business that assists other small businesses with their marketing and graphic-design needs.

Fette and her husband, Jim, live in Erlanger with their three children.

**KELLY FLOOD****KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

State Rep. Kelly Flood has served in the Kentucky House of Representatives since she was sworn into office in January 2009. She represents Lexington's 75th District.

After graduating from Florida State University in 1981, Flood devoted herself to progressive political issues. She spent a year on the campaign to pass the Equal Rights Amendment; she spent two years as an aide to a Florida state legislator; she spent two more years at a nonprofit consumer-protection agency.

Her early experience in state politics let her see how the levers work.

In the late 1980s, Flood felt a call to ministry and attended four years of seminary. She and her husband, Neil Chethik, moved to Lexington, where Flood served as senior minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church from 1991 to 1998. There, she led interfaith organizations designed to heal divisions among races, ethnic groups and faith communities.

Over the past decade, Flood has helped raise \$10 million for nonprofit organizations in which she is involved: as vice president for Starr King School for the Ministry; as a member of the boards of the Kentucky Council for Community and Justice, and of the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning. Flood also volunteered on the political campaigns of Steve Kay for [Lexington] Council and Barack Obama for President.

Flood and her husband have one son, Evan.



TAYNA FOGLE

KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Tayna Fogle is a motivational speaker, a woman of faith, a community organizer and a powerful advocate for voting rights.

Fogle serves as a Democracy Fellow with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, and travels Kentucky to empower formerly incarcerated people, people in recovery, young adults, people of color, and others to participate in our democracy. She is a strong advocate for voting rights – so much so, she even considers registering people to vote as one of her hobbies.

As a formerly incarcerated individual, her past has become her greatest asset. Building relationships and empowering others in communities are her strengths. For the past dozen years, Fogle has been a leader in a grassroots campaign to change the Kentucky Constitution, which includes a life-time voting ban for anyone convicted of a felony.

Fogle also is a tri-chair for the Kentucky Poor People’s Campaign and serves as a Women’s Fellow for Community Change, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit that creates “power from the ground up.” There, she spotlights “Formally Incarcerated Women of Color for 2019.”

She is the mother of two young men, Michael Sr. and Ishmael, a grandmother of 11, and is former captain of the University of Kentucky Lady Wildcats basketball team.



SARA BETH GREGORY

KENTUCKY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Sara Beth Gregory is chief of staff for Mike Harmon, Kentucky’s auditor of public accounts. In that role, she oversees the operations of the auditor’s office, serves as legislative liaison for the agency, and provides policy advice to the auditor. As part of Harmon’s executive team, Gregory works to carry out the agency’s mission to “follow the data” and increase transparency at both the state and local levels of government.

Gregory, an attorney, has worked on successful legislative initiatives, including strengthening city audit requirements, improving area development district transparency, and reducing the cost of audits for county officials.

Gregory previously served in public office, having first been elected as state representative for the 52nd District in 2010 and winning re-election in 2012. She later won a special election to the open 16th District state Senate seat and served until 2014. As a lawmaker, she is particularly proud of sponsoring the bill that created Kentucky’s Adult Caregiver Misconduct Registry (2014 SB 98).

A graduate of the University of Kentucky and the UK College of Law, she served as a law clerk for Senior Judge Eugene E. Siler Jr. with the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She joined the auditor’s office as general counsel in 2016, after working seven years as an attorney with the Carroll & Turner law firm in Monticello. She also serves as a member of the Republican Party of Kentucky’s Executive Committee.



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ALISON LUNDERGAN GRIMES

SECRETARY OF STATE

When Alison Lundergan Grimes was elected secretary of state in 2011, she became one of only seven women elected to statewide office in Kentucky in nearly four decades. She built her career on the core belief that everyone deserves a fair shake and an equal chance in life.

Grimes is a national leader for women's rights, veterans' rights, workers' rights, and human rights. As secretary of state, she fought to protect voting rights, and ushered in voting advancements, such as the military heroes voting bill, online voter registration, electronic poll books and a domestic-violence address-confidentiality program. An advocate for civic engagement, Grimes in 2016, launched Kentucky's first online voter registration portal, "GoVoteKY.com," which makes registering to vote more accessible. She is the chief business official in the state, overseeing the creation of more than 250,000 new businesses during her administration.

Grimes is an advocate for Kentucky's military service members and their families, advocating for entrepreneurship opportunities like "Boots To Business," which waives initial filing fees for veteran-owned businesses.

She received a bachelor of arts degree in political science from Rhodes College in Memphis, and obtained her law degree with honors from American University, Washington College of Law, in Washington D.C.

Grimes lives with her husband, Andrew, and son, Ford, in Lexington.



AMANDA HALL

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Amanda Hall joined the ACLU of Kentucky staff as the organization's first Smart Justice field organizer in November 2017.

The ACLU of Kentucky has helped establish Kentucky Smart on Crime, a coalition working for commonsense justice reforms that enhance public safety, strengthen communities, and promote cost-effective sentencing alternatives.

Hall has focused on the responsibility of co-founding and mobilizing an infrastructure of directly affected advocates for criminal justice reform, called the ACLU of Kentucky Smart Justice Advocates. She plays a significant role in continuing to build out the coalition and mobilizing supporters, and volunteers to advance the commonsense justice reform priorities of the coalition.

Before joining the ACLU, Hall served as program director of The Healing Place for Women in Louisville. Hall has a bachelor's degree in social work and is working on her master's degree at the University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work. She is also a registered peer support specialist in the substance use disorder field. As a formerly incarcerated Kentuckian, Hall hopes to change the narrative around incarceration and those who are formerly incarcerated.

She has been named as one of the Best of Louisville, one of the Faces of Compassion for Kentucky, and has been awarded an advocacy award by the Coalition for Public Safety.



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KATE WOOD HALL
COMMONWEALTH ALLIANCES

Kate Wood Hall has worked in Kentucky politics and government for more than 12 years and has been a member of the Commonwealth Alliances team for more than five years. There, Hall focuses on education, health care, technology and budget policy, and she has expertise in a broad array of policy areas from her time working in the executive branch.

Before joining Commonwealth Alliances, she served as former Gov. Steve Beshear’s director of the Governor’s Office of Legislative Services for seven years. During her tenure, she was the governor’s senior advisor on issues relating to the legislature and state legislation.

Hall also actively worked with the governor and other members of his senior staff and cabinet officials on policy development and strategic decision making.

She began her work in politics in 2004, working on a congressional election in Alabama and as the PAC director for the minority leadership in the Virginia House of Delegates.

In 2007, Hall returned to her home state to work as deputy finance director for candidates running for governor and lieutenant governor of Kentucky.

Hall earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Transylvania University in 2004. She was a Hansard Scholar at the London School of Economics in 2003 prior to completing her degree. In 2013, she completed her MBA at the University of Louisville College of Business. Hall and her husband, David, have three children.



JENEAN HAMPTON
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Jenean Hampton was elected Kentucky’s 57th lieutenant governor in 2015, making her the first African American to hold statewide office in Kentucky history.

Growing up in Detroit, she knew she was blessed to live in a nation where everyone could rise from poverty. She worked full-time in the automotive industry to pay for college, earning an industrial engineering degree. She served in the U.S. Air Force for seven years, deploying to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm. Her post-military career includes 19 years in the corrugated packaging industry, where she advanced from machine supervisor to plant manager, earning an MBA along the way.

Her interest in civics led to leadership in the tea party movement.

As lieutenant governor, Hampton chose to serve Kentucky beyond the slim responsibilities set by the constitution. Her initiatives include the Lieutenant Governor’s Entrepreneurship Challenge, a business-pitch competition that awarded \$250,000 in scholarships, and the STEM Challenge for middle school girls. She works with the Bluegrass Book Buddies program, and she created the Kentucky Aerospace Industry Consortium to foster networking in the aerospace and aviation industries, Kentucky’s largest export. She is active in veterans affairs, emergency management and youth suicide prevention. She has visited students in 190 schools, sharing her inspiring personal story.

Hampton lives in Bowling Green with husband, Dr. Doyle Isaak, a retired U.S. Air Force flight surgeon, and her 92-year-old mother, Marie.





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Ashli Watts

AS NEW PRESIDENT & CEO



BRANDI HARLESS**CITY OF PADUCAH**

Mayor Brandi Harless is an experienced leader, with a background in community development, grant writing, research and executive management with organizations like Rocketown in Nashville, Tennessee, Harvard University in Sierra Leone, West Africa, Management Sciences for Health in Washington D.C., and locally at Heartland CARES, EntrePaducah and St. Nicholas Family Clinic.

Along with being Paducah's mayor, Harless is the CEO and co-founder of PreventScripts, a software business. PreventScripts is the only Kentucky company accepted to the Startup Health Academy, a global army of health-care firms that utilize technology to improve health care.

She also is the former network director for Purchase Area Health Connections. Harless is an avid volunteer and has served several agencies as a member of their boards of directors. Locally, these include Child Watch, Paducah Day Nursery and Project AIDS Orphan. She is a co-organizer of the group Progress Paducah and was involved in the Impact Poverty Task Force. She graduated in 2016 from the Delta Regional Authority Executive Leadership Academy. She also served as the president of Rotaract in 2013.

Harless graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2005 with a degree in communication of science and technology, which was founded by a former NASA astronaut. She earned a master's degree in public health at Boston University. While in Boston, she learned to sail and enjoyed watching the Red Sox play the Yankees from the Green Monster at Fenway

**ANGIE HATTON****KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Angie Hatton is serving her second term representing Letcher and Pike counties as 94th District representative. Since her election, Hatton has become a vocal advocate for public education, worker rights issues and net-metering for residential solar customers. Though her votes often cross party lines on social issues, she has become a leader in her party on issues affecting poor people. Representing some of the poorest communities in the nation, she delivers fiery speeches on the House floor against abuse of power.

Angela Caroline Hatton was born and raised in tiny Whitesburg. She graduated from Whitesburg High School and then earned a degree in journalism from Eastern Kentucky University. Hatton worked as a newspaper reporter briefly at the Lexington Herald-Leader and then at The State Journal and The Kentucky Gazette in Frankfort before enrolling in law school.

She received her juris doctorate degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1999. She was trial commissioner for two years and assistant county attorney for nine years, along with running her private practice. Hatton is president of the Letcher County Bar Association. She serves on numerous non-profit boards and community groups.

Recently married to her second husband, David Fields, she spends most of her time when not in Frankfort on the bleachers, cheering on her children, Sam and Ellie. Hatton was elected five times to the site-based decision-making councils at their schools.

**JONI JENKINS****KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Joni Jenkins was elected as the state representative for Kentucky's 44th District in 1994. She has served as chair of the House Women's Caucus and chair of the Jefferson County delegation.

In 2019, Jenkins was elected by her colleagues to serve as whip of the Kentucky Democratic caucus, the second woman elected into Democratic leadership.

Much of Jenkins' career focus has been in preventing violence against women. She created and directed Prevention, Education, Advocacy on Campus and in the Community at the University of Louisville, and managed the professional training and public education programs at the Center for Women and Families in Louisville.

Throughout her tenure, Jenkins has championed legislation to address substance abuse. She and state Rep. McKenzie Cantrell established the South Louisville Opioid Task Force in June 2018. She serves on a number of boards and committees, including the Milbank Memorial Fund Reforming States Group, Volunteers of America Freedom House, Women's Action for New Directions, United Church of Christ and PAL After School Program.

She has been recognized for her legislative work by the Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, the Kentucky Humane Society, the Kentucky Attorney General's Office, the Jefferson County Teachers Association, among others.

Jenkins holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Kentucky.

**SARAH KIDDER****BART BALDWIN CONSULTING**

Sarah Kidder is the director of policy and research at Bart Baldwin Consulting, a government relations firm in Frankfort, that specializes in the health and human services sector.

Kidder brings her expertise in behavioral health (mental health and substance use) and disability policy to the firm's clientele, particularly in regard to statutory and regulatory analysis, academic and legal research, and strategic advocacy. She has dedicated her entire professional career to her passion: education and expertise in behavioral health and disability policy.

Before moving into government affairs, Kidder worked for the Legislative Research Commission as a committee analyst for the Health and Welfare and Family Services Committee. She worked on all subject matters relevant to the committee's jurisdiction, but was the key staffer for behavioral health and disability policy.

Previously, she worked in Austin, Texas, for a state representative on his health and human services policy agenda, and she held a post-graduate policy fellowship at the University of Texas Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, providing the Texas Legislature with research, expertise and advocacy on behavioral health issues.

Kidder has spent many summers volunteering at a camp for kids with disabilities and is a past recipient of the Volunteer of the Year award from The Arc of Texas. She lives in Lexington with her husband, Dr. Barry Kidder, and their children, Wilkes and Edie.



HILDA LEGG

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hilda Legg started her career as a teacher in Adair County and now serves as state director for USDA Rural Development, a position to which she was appointed by the Trump administration in November 2017. She is serving under her fourth president.

Legg previously served a key role at USDA Rural Development during the President George W. Bush administration as administrator for Rural Utilities Service. At the national level, she managed a budget of \$6 billion in loan and grant money, and she prioritized investing portfolio assets in rural areas across the country that had a critical need for broadband and other utility services.

Prior to her appointment as state director, Legg ran a small business advocating for the need to bring broadband access to rural residents. Legg’s leadership experience includes serving under President George H.W. Bush as the alternate federal co-chairman for the Appalachian Regional Commission, where she assisted in managing a budget of \$190 million to create jobs, improve education and build infrastructure to support the region of 21 million people. She served as the first executive director and CEO of the Center for Rural Development in Somerset, which is considered a national model for rural economic development. Under President Ronald Reagan’s administration, she worked at the U.S. Department of Education.

A native of Adair County, where she is co-owner of the family farm, she lives in Central Kentucky and is the proud mother of a U.S. soldier.



KAREN THOMAS LENTZ

COMMONWEALTH ALLIANCES

Karen Thomas Lentz has three decades of experience working in Kentucky state government, including positions in both the executive and legislative branches. She now is a partner with the government relations firm Commonwealth Alliances, where has 20 years of experience in government relations, representing Fortune 500 companies, Kentucky associations and nonprofit organizations.

Prior to beginning her career in lobbying, Lentz held positions both in the legislative and executive branches. From 1985-1993, she served as executive assistant to the Kentucky speaker of the House.

In 1993, Lentz joined Gov. Brereton Jones’ administration. She was appointed chief of staff to Kentucky’s Public Health Commissioner and served as legislative liaison for Jones with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

In 1996, she began lobbying alongside her father, former state Rep. Sam Thomas. In 2007, she merged her lobbying business with Commonwealth Alliances.

She and her partners, Patrick Jennings and Kate Wood Hall, have built Commonwealth Alliances into one of Kentucky’s premier government relations firms. While Lentz enjoys working with clients with a variety of interests, her primary passion is in the area of health care.

A graduate of Sullivan University, Lentz and her husband, Jerry, have one son, Cory.



CONGRATULATIONS TO

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“Brigitte is building a Groundswell for **EQUITY, INNOVATION,** and **ENGAGEMENT** in public education.”

MACKENZIE LONGORIA

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Mackenzie Wallace Longoria is a self-described politico – from serving on student council in middle school to phone-banking for presidential candidates from her dorm room.

In May 2018, Longoria joined the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Kentucky as director of public policy, a role in which she manages eight Alzheimer's Congressional Teams and guides them in advocacy efforts, both in-district and in Washington D.C. In Kentucky, she works with legislators of both parties and chambers, keeping her work fiercely nonpartisan. She forms those relationships with lawmakers by sharing members' stories as caregivers, family members and people living with Alzheimer's.

Longoria hosted an advocacy day during Kentucky's 2019 legislative session, received a proclamation recognizing Feb. 19 as Alzheimer's Day, and pushed for the creation of the Alzheimer's and Dementia Workforce Assessment Task Force, of which she is a member.

She received a bachelor of arts degree in international and cultural studies in the Honors Program at the University of Tampa, and obtained her juris doctorate from the University of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law. She worked on a statewide political campaign.

Longoria is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, Omicron Delta Kappa and Alpha Chi. She has served on the Associate Board for Legal Aid and supports several nonprofits.

She lives in Germantown with her husband, Zach, and dogs, Frank, Fred and Scarlett.



SUZANNE MILES

KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Majority Caucus Chair Suzanne Miles has served in the Kentucky House of Representatives since 2013, and, as caucus chair, she holds the distinction of being the first woman to serve in House Republican leadership.

As a member of leadership, she is a member of the Legislative Research Commission and serves on the House Rules Committee and the Committee on Committees.

Miles represents the 7th House District, which is Union County and parts of Daviess and Henderson counties.

Professionally, she is a field representative for U.S. Rep. Brett Guthrie, of Bowling Green, a position she has held since 2009.

A former small business owner, Miles owned and operated Town and Countrywear, a ladies clothing and accessory store, which she bought while she was a senior at Transylvania University. She graduated from Transy in 1992.

Miles has been involved in many non-profit organizations, including Impact 100 Owensboro and Junior Achievement USA.

She also serves on the Council on State Governments' Shared State Legislation Committee, which facilitates the sharing of legislative ideas among member states.

Miles lives in Owensboro and is a member of Panther Creek Baptist Church.





KET

LEGISLATIVE COVERAGE



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
(during regular sessions)
KET Mondays-Thursdays • 11/10 pm
KET Fridays • 8:30/7:30 pm

KENTUCKY TONIGHT
Legislators and guests discuss policy with host Renee Shaw
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COMMENT ON KENTUCKY
Host Bill Bryant and journalists explore the week's top stories
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JENNIFER MOORE
MOORE LAW GROUP

Jennifer Moore has practiced law since she was admitted to the Kentucky Bar in 1998. Founding partner of the Moore Law Group in Louisville, Moore has been active in politics for decades, as far back as her stint as president of the Transylvania College Democrats.

She is founder and chair of Emerge Kentucky, an organization that trains Democratic women to run for political office, a role she's held since 2009.

She is a former chair, vice chair and counsel for the Kentucky Democratic Party, and was a five-time delegate to the Democratic National Convention. Moore served on finance committees for the U.S. Senate campaigns of Lois Weinberg and Jack Conway, and the U.S. House campaign of U.S. John Yarmuth. Moore is a member of the American Association for Justice and is Kentucky counsel for the Alliance for Justice. She also is on the board of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention, and the board of the Kentucky Justice Association. She is a member of the Kentucky Supreme Court Rules Committee.

Moore is the recipient of the 2018 Coretta Scott King Spirit of Ivy Award, is a graduate of Leadership Kentucky, and was the Kentucky Bar Association's 2005 Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year. In addition to her Transy degree, Moore holds her juris doctorate from the University of Kentucky College of Law, and attended International Literature Summer School at Oxford University in Oxford, England.



SARA LUNA OSBORNE
MML&K GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS

Sara Luna Osborne joined MML&K Government Solutions as a lobbyist in 2013.

As former executive director for the Office of Intergovernmental Services in the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, Osborne brings strong insight into the state's legislative process to MML&K's government relations team. Osborne was directly involved with Kentucky state government's various cabinets, agencies and the governor's office. Before serving as executive director, she was director of business services and legislative liaison for the Office of Secretary of State. She also spent a year and a half with the Department for Local Government.

Osborne has had the rare opportunity to work under two different gubernatorial administrations in separate states: She played important roles for both former Gov. Steve Beshear's office and the former Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen's administration.

She earned a bachelor's degree in government from Centre College, with a minor in religion. Osborne's passion for politics comes from a long family history of civic engagement and deep-rooted beliefs that you have to get involved to make a difference.

Osborne is a board member for the Kentucky CASA Network, and she volunteers regularly with the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge. She lives in Lexington with her husband, Matt, two young children, and two middle-aged dogs.



2019 NOTABLE WOMEN IN KENTUCKY POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

CONGRATULATIONS
SARAH DAVASHER-WISDOM

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LAURA EMBERTON OWENS JYB3 GROUP

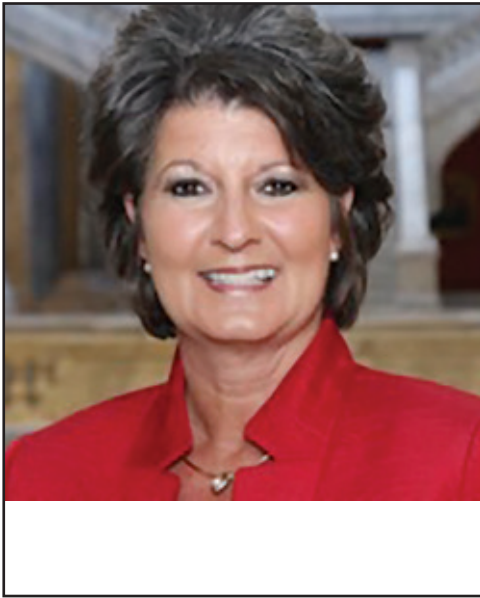
Over the last 35 years, Laura Emberton Owens has been involved in workforce training, education, government and politics in a variety of roles. She served as secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Cabinet, and before that as Kentucky's commissioner for Workforce Investment, a position for which she was responsible for 2,300 employees and a nearly \$1 billion budget.

Her commitment and expertise have been noted at the state and national levels, where she received appointments from two governors and served on the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars at the invitation of two presidents, George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

Also having served as an elected official on the local level, Owens' passion is working to promote others. Having no recollection of life without politics, Owens began attending political events as a 6-year-old, when her father was campaign chair for U.S. Rep. Tim Lee Carter.

For the last 10 years, Owens has been senior partner in JYB3 Group, a government relations firm, representing approximately 30 clients. Occasionally, she conducts leadership training with her presentation "Becoming the Red Sock in the Laundry Basket." She has published one book, "Thank You for Blue Horses: Lessons I have Learned from My Children," and a second book is in the works.

Owens obtained undergraduate degrees in English and speech, and a master's degree in communication from Western Kentucky University.



KAYLEE CARNAHAN PRICE RUNSWITCH PR

Kaylee Carnahan Price is senior vice president of RunSwitch PR, the largest public relations firm in the commonwealth.

A sought-after consultant, Price offers clients expertise in traditional public relation campaigns as well as public affairs and issue advocacy on the national, state and local levels. Internally, Price is a respected mentor.

She started her career with U.S. Rep. Brett Guthrie in Bowling Green, and currently serves as his campaign manager. Prior to joining RunSwitch, Price worked across the country on campaigns, including Romney for President and Branstad-Reynolds Iowa. Bringing a campaign-style approach to her work at RunSwitch, Price is appreciated by clients for her strategic,

quick work that produces immediate and long-term results. Her brass-tacks approach to grassroots, public affairs projects means clients in many industries trust Price to help them influence government outcomes, both in Frankfort and in Washington D.C.

Price was named PR News' Rising Star Under 30 and has been recognized by several industry associations for her award-winning work. She currently serves as a WKU Political Science Alumni Ambassador and volunteers with her church, Our Saviors Lutheran.

Originally from Illinois, Price moved to Kentucky in 2005 to attend Western Kentucky University. Price and her dog, Governor, have traveled the country, but they and her husband, Adam, now call Kentucky home.



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BRIGITTE BLOM RAMSEY
PRICHARD COMMITTEE

Brigitte Blom Ramsey is the executive director of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Kentucky’s nationally recognized, citizen-led organization that for 40 years has worked to improve early childhood through post-secondary education.

Currently, Ramsey is leading a revitalized movement for better education called the Groundswell Initiative, positioning Kentucky for the economy of the future with excellence, equity and innovation at its core.

Before joining the Prichard Committee, Ramsey directed public policy for the United Way of Greater Cincinnati – Northern Kentucky.



Ramsey served as an elected member of the Pendleton County Board of Education from 1998-2008. She served as a member of the Kentucky Board of Education from 2008-2014, wrapping up her final term as vice-chair of the board. In addition, Ramsey has worked in policy and research on issues related to education, poverty, state taxes and budgets. She’s worked for universities in Ohio and Kentucky, and for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. She holds undergraduate degrees in economics and international studies and a master’s degree in public policy from the University of Kentucky Martin School.

Her most prized award to-date is the 2018 Unity Award given to the Prichard Committee, under her leadership, by the Alpha Beta Lambda Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

LOU ANNA RED CORN
COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

Fayette Commonwealth’s Attorney Lou Anna Red Corn has worked for public safety in her community for more than 32 years. She is the first female commonwealth’s attorney for Lexington, and as an enrolled member of the Osage Nation, she is the first Native American to serve as a commonwealth’s attorney in Kentucky.

Red Corn has tried more than 225 felony cases to juries, including 53 homicides. She helped establish Fayette County’s Child Sexual Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Team in 1989, which is a model for other teams statewide. She helped write the Kentucky Model Protocol for Child Sexual Abuse Multi-disciplinary teams, and she co-authored the Kentucky Attorney General’s Child Sexual Abuse Manual.

She is a founding and current board member of the Children’s Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass, and currently serves as the prosecutor representative on the National Children’s Alliance, a national organization that certifies Children’s Advocacy Centers.

In 2018, the Kentucky Association of Children’s Advocacy Centers recognized Red Corn as one of their Legendary Partners and awarded her the Hero’s Blue Cape for her work on behalf of children. Since being appointed and elected as commonwealth’s attorney, Red Corn established Fayette County’s first Special Victim’s Unit to prosecute offenders who abuse children. She established the DETER program to move substance abusers from incarceration to treatment more expeditiously. Red Corn is graduate of the University of Kentucky College of Law, where she serves as an adjunct professor.



The Rotunda Group Partners,
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CONGRATULATE our Partner,
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SHANNON RICKETT

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

Shannon Rickett is the assistant vice president for government relations at the University of Louisville. In this cabinet-level role, she is directly responsible for all legislative and political issues at the local and state level, including advocacy efforts to the Louisville Metropolitan Government, the Kentucky General Assembly, the governor's office and executive branch agencies, as well as coordinating lobbying activities at the federal level.

Drawing on years of legal, government affairs and political experience, Rickett serves as the strategic intermediary between the university and the larger political enterprise.

Prior to returning to her alma mater, Rickett served as a congressional staffer to U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, of Somerset.

Rickett currently serves on the Governor's Scholars Board of Directors and on the University of Louisville Athletic Association Board. A member of the Kentucky Bar Association, Shannon holds a juris doctorate from Baylor Law School and a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Louisville.

She also is engaged in a variety of professional and civic activities in the Louisville area, including participating in the Young Professionals Association of Louisville, the Junior League of Louisville, and is a member of the fall 2019 Ignite Louisville class, a program of Leadership Louisville.

**ELIZABETH ROACH**

ACADEMY OF EYE PHYSICIANS

Elizabeth "Liz" Roach grew up in Midway, in a family dedicated to service and impacting the lives of others. As executive director of the Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, Roach leads the activities of the organization, including legislative strategy, conference planning, membership services and communications, among other responsibilities.

In 2018, she received the Outstanding Executive Director award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. She recently was named vice chair of the American Academy of Ophthalmology Executive Directors' Forum.

In her eight years of service for Kentucky, she worked in several capacities for Gov. Steve Beshear, including deputy speechwriter, press secretary for first lady Jane Beshear, and director of scheduling. Subsequently, she served as development manager at The Council of State Governments.

Based in Lexington, Roach is a graduate of the 2017-18 Leadership Lexington class, a graduate of the 2018-19 Leadership Woodford County class, a board member of the Woodford County Community Fund, a member of the Ruth Slack Roach Scholarship Committee at Midway University, a member of the KVC Kentucky Young Professionals Board, and a member of the young philanthropists organization BGCF365. When not working, Roach writes articles focused on food and beverages, and she travels frequently. She is a graduate of Furman University and the Columbia Journalism School's publishing program.

**GERRY ROLL**

FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN KY

Gerry Roll is the executive director of the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, a community development foundation committed to building community capacity and locally controlled assets in southeastern Kentucky. The philosophy of the organization, which started in Perry County, is based on the principles of rural development philanthropy.

Roll previously served as the executive director for 18 years of Hazard-Perry County Community Ministries.

Roll's work in Eastern Kentucky has been focused on equity in housing, early childhood education and access to health care.

In addition to the community foundation, she has led the creation of a regional Community Housing Development Organization, a federally qualified health center, a quality-rated early care and education system, and a full continuum of other support services for working families.

Roll currently serves on the steering committee for the Appalachia Funders Network and is a member of the Community Advisory Council for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors in Washington D.C.

She is recognized locally, regionally, statewide and nationally as an advocate for rural development and community philanthropy.

Roll lives in Busy with her husband, Dan, who is an architect.

**MARY WHEELER RUBLE**

KENTUCKY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mary Wheeler Ruble currently serves as executive director of the Kentucky Education Association.

Ruble grew up in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York and attended public school in the same school district for all years K-12. She graduated cum laude from Elmira College in 1990, did graduate coursework in English at Bucknell University, and then earned her juris doctorate from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1996.

For most of the last 23 years, Mary has worked with and for the members of the Kentucky Education Association, first as outside counsel with Brooks, McComb and Fields in Lexington, and then as a KEA staff member.

She joined KEA as a staff attorney in 2006, was named assistant executive director for programs in 2010, and was promoted to executive director in 2016.

With the support of elected leadership and colleagues at KEA, and in cooperation with pro-public-education legislators and leaders from other education stakeholder groups, Ruble works to further KEA's mission to unite, organize and empower educators to ensure a quality public education for all Kentucky students.

Ruble lives in Versailles, with her husband, Chip, her daughter, Erin, and her granddaughters, Autumn and Khallie. Her son, Ryan, lives in Chicago with his wife Kelli and their daughter, Sammi.



ATTICA SCOTT
KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

State Rep. Attica Scott, of Louisville, was elected in 2016 to represent District 41 in the Kentucky House of Representatives, and she is the first African American woman to serve in the legislature in nearly 20 years.

In the House, Scott focuses on public education, public safety, health, equity, and girls and women. She is an advocate for fairness, environmental justice, human rights, common sense gun-safety measures, and addressing the needs of people who are left out of government decision-making.

Before being elected to the House, Scott served on Louisville Metro Council and was a featured “Daughter of Greatness” at the Muhammad Ali Center. She graduated from the Bingham Fellows Class of Leadership Louisville, is a Courier-Journal Forum Fellow, and was featured in “People to Watch” in Louisville Magazine.

Scott was honored with the Ms. Foundation for Women “Woman of Vision” Award, is on the Essence Magazine list of #Woke100 women, is on the Higher Heights for America’s Chisholm List of 50 Sisters to Watch, and is a Rise to Run Trailblazer.

She serves on the Advisory Council of Emerge Kentucky and the Community Advisory Committee of University of Louisville’s Department of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies. She also served on the Board of Directors of the La Casita Center.

Her proudest accomplishment is being a mom to Advocate and Ashanti.



RENEE SHAW
KENTUCKY EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Renee Shaw is managing producer of KET’s public affairs programming and content, currently serving as moderator of KET’s “Kentucky Tonight,” “Connections” and “KET Forums.”

Since 2001, Shaw has been the producing force behind KET’s legislative coverage that has been recognized by the Kentucky Associated Press and the National Educational Telecommunications Association. She hosts KET’s live election night coverage, and is a contributing producer and host on other programs.

An Ohio Valley Regional Emmy Award winner, Shaw earned the Anthony Lewis Media Award from the Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy for her work on criminal justice reform in 2014.

In 2015, she received the Green Dot Award for her coverage on domestic violence and human trafficking, and in 2017, Shaw was inducted into the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame. In 2018, KET earned a national media award from Mental Health America for its multi-dimensional content on the opioid epidemic shepherded by Shaw.

A former adjunct professor at Georgetown College, Shaw traveled to Cambodia in 2003 to help train emerging journalists as part of an exchange program at Western Kentucky University. Shaw is a 2007 graduate of Leadership Kentucky, and a long-time member of the Frankfort-Lexington Chapter of The Links Inc. She has served on the boards of the Kentucky Historical Society, Lexington Minority Business Expo, and Board of Governors for the Ohio Valley Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.





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ASHLEY SPALDING**KY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC POLICY**

Kentucky native Dr. Ashley Spalding is a senior policy analyst at the Kentucky Center for Economic Policy, which is based in Berea. She joined the staff in October 2011. Spalding has conducted research on social and economic policies affecting low-income families for more than 15 years.

Her doctoral and postdoctoral research projects at the University of South Florida focused on low-income housing and education, respectively.

During her tenure with KCEP, she has authored numerous research reports, op-eds and blogs on policy issues ranging from education to criminal justice to Kentucky's state budget. In doing so, she has become a trusted resource for statewide and local media, where she is extensively cited. Spalding advocates to the Kentucky General Assembly for policies that improve the lives of Kentuckians, and she works with coalitions across the state to bring people-focused policies from theory to reality.

Spalding holds a Ph.D. in applied anthropology from the University of South Florida, an M.A. in anthropology from the University of South Carolina and a B.A. in English from Samford University. She graduated from Central Hardin High School in Elizabethtown.

Spalding lives in Berea and is a proud parent of three public school children.

**LEIGH ANN THACKER****TOP SHELF LOBBY**

A partner at Top Shelf Lobby, Leigh Ann Thacker specializes in lobbying both the executive and legislative branches of Kentucky government.

Her ability to help cultivate successful client relationships with government officials has resulted in helping clients succeed in a wide range of issues over the years.

Thacker has been lobbying the Kentucky General Assembly for 18 years, and she previously lobbied The Commonwealth Group, based in Louisville, which she left to found Southern Strategy Group in 2005.

Thacker served as the managing partner in Southern Strategy Group until joining Top Shelf Lobby, which is based in Frankfort, in the fall of 2014. Working with partners Marc Wilson and Kevin Peyton, Top Shelf recently achieved an \$8 million increase in state funding for The Children's Alliance, and worked to pass a law that removes the specialty co-pay from visits to physical therapists.

Thacker has lobbied issues ranging from broadcasting to energy to financial services and insurance just to name a few. The wide variety of issues has allowed her to establish relationships across state government in many cabinets and agencies.

She is a former law clerk to the Kentucky Supreme Court.

Thacker, a Kentucky native, received a bachelor's degree from Western Kentucky University and a law degree from the University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law.

**DEBBIE WAKEFIELD****CITY OF SPRINGFIELD**

Mayor Debbie Wakefield was elected to her office in 2016 after serving on the Springfield City Council for three terms, beginning in January 2009.

Wakefield is the city of Springfield's first female and first African American mayor.

A native and life-long resident of Springfield, Wakefield works for the Farm Service Agency, where she's been for 21 years, and currently works as an administration officer in the agency's Lexington office.

As mayor, Wakefield tries to inspire young people and regularly speaks to groups of young people, including in Washington County Schools.

She also is a member of the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Trail Area Development District and is a member of the Kentucky Association of Economic Development. She also served on the board of directors for the Heartland Parkway, a proposed connector road between the Bluegrass Parkway and the Louie B. Nunn Parkway in Central Kentucky.

Wakefield graduated with a business degree from Campbellsville College (now Campbellsville University) and later earned her master's degree in business administration from there as well.

She is the daughter of Billy and Mary Wakefield.

**ASHLI WATTS****KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Ashli Watts was named president and CEO for the Kentucky Chamber, the state's largest business association, earlier this month. Watts joined the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce in November of 2012, and during her tenure as senior vice president of public affairs at the chamber led efforts in passing significant pieces of legislation, such as felony expungement in 2016, right to work legislative in 2017, workers' compensation reform in 2018, and reinstating arbitration agreements in 2019.

As part of the chamber's leadership team, the Kentucky Chamber was named National State Chamber of the Year in 2017.

Prior to joining the Chamber, she worked at the Kentucky Bar Association and the Legislative Research Commission.

Watts graduated from Campbellsville University with a bachelor's degree in political science and history in 2004, and she holds a master's degree in public policy and administration from the University of Louisville.

She served as the commencement speaker for Campbellsville University's graduation in 2019 and also was awarded the Algernon Sydney Sullivan award.

Watts is a 2016 graduate of Leadership Kentucky and currently serves on the boards for Campbellsville University and Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky.

She lives in Frankfort with her husband, Ryan, and two children, Emma and Carter.



ROBIN WEBB
KENTUCKY SENATE

An Ashland native, state Sen. Robin L. Webb served in the Kentucky House of Representatives (1999-2009), where she was the second-ranking member of the Appropriations and Revenue Committee, before being elected to the 18th District Senate seat in 2009.

She represents the Southern Legislatures on the Council of State Government Legal Task Force, and is on the CSG's Government Energy and Environment Committee. She also serves on the National Conference of State Legislatures' Law and Justice Committee.

Webb, a Grayson attorney, serves the Kentucky Bar Association in several ways, including the Committee for Domestic Violence and Child Protection, and the KBA Foundation Board. She has received many awards for her work in the horse industry, from Northern Kentucky University and Morehead State University (her alma maters) worker protection, and support of public education, community development, and 4-H and Extension services. She has served as a member of the Kentucky Southern Baptist Foundation Board, Northeast Red Cross, is a certified 4-H livestock and equine instructor, and is active on many organizations. She was the first female president of the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses and serves on its executive council. An avid horsewoman and dog owner, she serves as the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeder's and Exhibitors Performance Advocate of the Year and as vice president of the breeders association.



SUSAN WESTROM
KY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Kentucky state Rep. Susan Westrom, of Lexington, has worked for decades to improve Kentucky lives.

Soon after being sworn into her first term as Kentucky's 79th District representative in 1999, the then-social worker with a knack for politics was the primary sponsor of major juvenile justice legislation, improving child detention for non-criminal, or status, offenses. That legislation became law, as did others she sponsored early in her legislative career to change the way Kentucky regulates assisted-living facilities and promotes public health in schools. Westrom pushed for a state-wide smoking ban beginning in 2011 and several years thereafter – a bipartisan effort that continues to gain political traction today. That same tenacity led to the creation of the Kentucky Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel just one year after Westrom led efforts to create the panel in 2012.

She was inducted into the University of Kentucky College of Social Work Hall of Fame in 2019 for her years of advocacy and legislative support.

Other accomplishments include the passage of policies benefiting Kentucky's signature equine and bourbon industries, with her support for Kentucky's Bourbon industry earning her induction this year into the selective Order of the Writ society for Kentucky Bourbon enthusiasts. Westrom was chair of the Kentucky Democratic Party in 2003.





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ANNA STEWART WHITES**ANNA WHITES LAW OFFICE**

Thirty years ago, Anna Stewart Whites' first client was the Community Action Agency's health and wellness programs, and her second was the politician Greg Stumbo. That set her feet on the dual paths of health law and politics.

Whites works with politicians, across the aisle, because it takes a bipartisan effort to advance health care. She also provides pro bono assistance to the Kentucky Office of Autism and organizations that support people with autism to ensure that this community is a respected and integral part of our communities.

She is proudest of organizing connections and brainstorming sessions between Kentucky's Democratic county party chairs after the 2016 election and of educating young people on how to effectively participate in the political arena. Whites emphasize the importance of faith and communication to every group she leads. Dissent and discussion are not valued enough in politics, and she believes those elements are essential to good decision-making.

Her favorite work in 2018-19 was chairing statewide committees to draft regulations and implementation guidance for the new state Telehealth laws. Telehealth is one of the most effective ways to ensure that everyone, no matter how rural or low income, has immediate access to care via their computer or smart phone. Whites, of Frankfort, is a graduate of Centre College and the University of Kentucky College of Law.

**AMY WICKLIFFE****MCCARTHY STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS**

Amy Wickliffe brings more than 15 years of political and lobbying experience to the McCarthy Strategic Solutions team, a bipartisan government affairs firm, serving clients at the local, state and federal levels of government.

She has been lobbying the Kentucky General Assembly since 2005, and previously served as chief of staff to former first lady Glenna Fletcher, as statewide finance director for Gov. Ernie Fletcher, and she has worked on a number of political campaigns throughout her career.

As a lobbyist, she advocates for clients representing various industry sectors, including non-profits, pharmaceuticals, real estate, workers' compensation and crime victims' rights, just to name a few.

Wickliffe, of Lexington, served as finance chair for the Republican Party of Kentucky in 2016 and is past chair of Dress for Success Lexington, a non-profit dedicated to improving the lives of disadvantaged women. She currently serves on the Midway University Board of Trustees.

She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Transylvania University and an MBA from Midway University.

In 2018, Wickliffe received the national Excellence in a State Issue Campaign Award from Professional Women in Advocacy for her work on Marsy's Law for Kentucky.



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ELLEN WILLIAMS

ELLEN WILLIAMS LLC

Ellen Williams' 40-year career has taken her from the U.S. Capitol to the White House and back home, where she has served as chair of the Republican Party of Kentucky (1999-2004), vice chair of the Kentucky Public Service Commission, and commissioner of the Department of Local Government before forming her own boutique government relations firm in 2006. She was twice confirmed by the U.S. Senate for two terms on the United States Postal Board of Governors.

Williams has continued to serve local governments through her representation of the Kentucky Association of Counties and the Kentucky County Judges Association. She represents the largest employee-owned company in the United States, Bowling Green-based Houchens.

Early in her career, Williams worked on Capitol Hill, then got her big break when Lee Atwater and Ed Rollins, managers of the Reagan-Bush '84 campaign, hired her as the a voter programs director. From there, she went on to run U.S. Senate campaigns, two presidential inaugurations, two President's Dinner fundraising events, worked for the National Republican Senate Campaign Committee, the Republican Governor's Association, and in the White House for Vice President George H.W. Bush. So, in 2000, it was special for Williams, then chair of the RPK, to be a delegate to the Republican National Convention, and serve on the platform committee, when George W. Bush received the nomination for president. Williams lives in Anderson County with her sons, Sam and Joey.

**DEBORAH YETTER**

COURIER JOURNAL

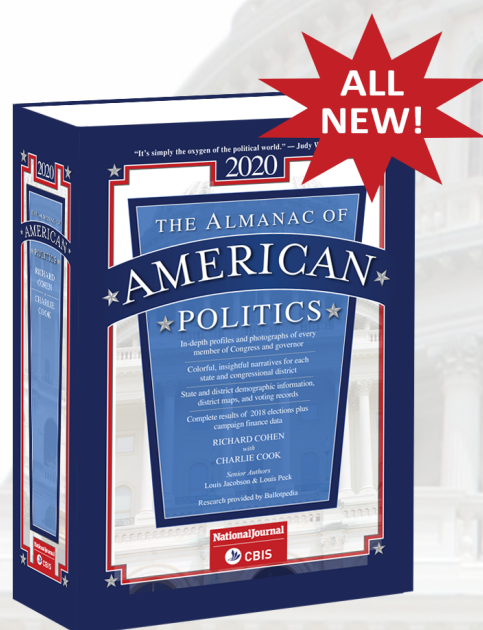
Deborah Yetter is an award-winning reporter who has worked at the Courier Journal since 1984. She also has worked as an editor and editorial writer, and currently covers health, human services and state government.

Yetter has focused extensively on child abuse and problems with Kentucky's child welfare system, and her reporting has helped bring about reforms in juvenile justice, child welfare and other areas of human services.

She also has reported on Medicaid's key role in public health in Kentucky, including mental health, addiction and people with disabilities. Yetter reports on the Kentucky General Assembly and key committees involved in health, human services and justice. That coverage includes a long-running political debate over abortion laws in Kentucky and resulting litigation.

Starting in 2009, Yetter was involved in reporting that helped shed light on the secrecy of the state's child welfare system. The Courier Journal, joined by other media outlets, eventually won a seven-year legal battle to gain access to the state's records of children who die or are seriously harmed from abuse or neglect, a major advance in bringing outside scrutiny to many tragic cases.

Her work earned her the prestigious James Madison Award for Service to the First Amendment in 2017 and the David Richart pathways to Justice for Children Award in 2015, among other service and writing awards.

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