

Appalachia's Premier Event

SOARSUMMIT23

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BY
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**Creating a
Brighter
Tomorrow**



EVENT GUIDE | OCT. 3-4, 2023 | CORBIN ARENA | CORBIN, KENTUCKY

PRESENTED BY



Appalachian
Regional
Commission



Appalachia's Premier Event

SOARSUMMIT23

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About the Venues



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Corbin Loves Company

Welcome to Corbin! Where the small-town charm of the South meets the ambition of the big city! Corbin is conveniently located at exit 25 off Interstate 75. US Route 25 East and US Route 25 West also run through the city of Corbin making it a gateway of the east and the west. It is home to a newly revitalized downtown with thriving locally owned and operated businesses. It is also home to some amazing eateries with farm-to-table ties.

Corbin is home to Cumberland Falls State Resort Park, the Niagara Falls of the South. It is also just a few miles outside of the Daniel Boone National Forest, where visitors and residents alike can enjoy hiking, horseback riding, and some of the most beautiful waterfalls in the country.

So, whether you want to stay in and explore the city or go out and experience the beautiful hills of Appalachia, Corbin has something for everyone.

The Corbin Arena

The Corbin Arena is a city-owned, multi-purpose, arena with over 100,000 square feet of event space. The arena hosts a wide variety of events including concerts, family events, sports, and trade shows with a capacity of up to 7,000 patrons.

The Corbin Center

The Corbin Center is where business meets recreation in a sprawling 19,744-square-foot facility. The Corbin Center features several classrooms, a boardroom, and a large multipurpose room — home to the Summit's Workshops and panel discussions.

Exhibit Hall

SOAR Summit Exhibit Hall is presented by WellCare. This year's Summit features 108 exhibits, ranging from businesses, organizations, entrepreneurs, colleges, and high schools. Witness a first-hand experience of the great things happening across Appalachia Kentucky.

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Wifi

2023 SOAR Summit WIFI is presented by Rajant and Planet Earth PC.

Network: **SOAR Summit**

Our partners at Rajant have deployed their technology across the Corbin Arena to enhance your Wi-Fi connectivity experience. Simply connect to the SOAR Summit Network and experience connectivity fueled by Rajant's technology and the ingenuity of its Eastern Kentucky workforce.

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Social Media Channels



ShapingOurAppalachianRegion



@SOAR_EKY



@SOAR_EKY

Hashtags

#2023SOARSummit
#appalachia
#thesummitinCorbin
#Corbinlovescompany

Restrooms

Restrooms are conveniently located on each side of the Upper Concourse. There are also restrooms located at the arena's main entrance next to the ticket office.

The Steering Committee

Maggy | Corbin Tourism and Convention Commission
Joshua Ball | SOAR
Suzie Razmus | Mayor of Corbin
Marlon Samms | Corbin City Manager
Jeannie Hensley | Cumberland Valley National Bank
Amber Owens | Whitley County Fiscal Court
Mallory Davis | State Farm Insurance
Deanna Herrmann | London/Laurel Co. Chamber of Commerce
Trent Poole | Eastern Kentucky University
Kristi Balla | The Corbin Arena
Lisa Kersey | The Forcht Group
Roberta Webb | City of Corbin (Retired)
Maria Swafford | Knox County Fiscal Court
Selleigh Moses | University of the Cumberlands

SOAR Summit Reception

The SOAR Summit Reception is presented by Whitaker Bank and will be held at the Pennington Event Center (500 South Main Street) from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, October 3. Corbin's beautiful downtown is all yours as we host a night of music, fellowship, and fun. The event includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, and a cash bar. Corbin's downtown businesses and restaurants have extended hours to allow you to take in all Corbin has to offer.

Shuttles will run continuously to and from the Corbin Arena to downtown Corbin from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

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IGNITE Entrepreneur Mixer

Join KY Innovation for an IGNITE Entrepreneur Mixer at 2nd and Main in downtown Corbin. The networking event is from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and includes a live Middle Tech Podcast recording starting at 7 p.m. Shuttles will run continuously to and from the Corbin Arena to downtown Corbin from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

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Network Lounge

The Summit is a great time to network, and we know that brief introductions can lead to deep conversations and connections. That's why we have partnered with Allsteel to offer a Networking Lounge on the Arena Floor inside the Summit Exhibit Hall. The lounge offers space to converse, share a snack, and build relationships that could help shape the future of Appalachia.

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Snacks and Refreshments

Snacks and beverages will be provided throughout the Summit on the upper concourse at Section 110 and Section 124.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and Lunch will be served each day at the Arena Concourse Concession Area located at Section 110.

Breakfast 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Lunch Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Location Station

We have a dedicated space for lactation needs. To utilize the space, please contact Keriston Smith by phone (606) 625-5846 or by email keriston@soar-ky.org.

Transportation

Complimentary shuttle service is provided during the **SOAR Summit** on October 3. *Shuttles will run during the following times.*

1 p.m. to 5 p.m. to and from the Corbin Arena and the Corbin Center for Summit programming.

5 p.m. to 10 p.m. to and from the Corbin Arena and downtown Corbin for the SOAR Summit Reception.

We love local.

Sweeties Ice Cream and Mini Donuts

Bubby's BBQ

Depot on Main

Tri County Catering

The Wrigley Taproom & Eatery

Folktale Coffee & Bakehouse

The following Farms and Kentucky Proud suppliers are being used for this year's Summit.

Bath County

Mount Pleasant Acres Farm

Boyle County

Good Thymes Farm

Clay County

Old Homeplace Farm

Fayette County

Crooked Row Farm

Weisenberger Farms

Grayson County

Spring Valley Farm

Hardin County

Prayer Mountain Mushrooms

Henry County

Dutch Creek Farms

Laurel County

Laurel County African American Heritage Center

Wildcat Mountain Cheese

Monroe County

Silver Mist Farm

Warren County

Chaney's Dairy Barn

Whitley County

A Cottage Below

Fraleigh Farm

Gentle Acres Farm

KY Blueberry Growers Association Co-Op

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WELCOME LETTERS



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023 SOAR Summit! We are celebrating a decade of progress, innovation and collaboration in Kentucky's Appalachian region. Together, we have faced our challenges head-on and united in our mission to make southern and eastern Kentucky a better place to live for future generations. The fruits of our labor are evident in communities filled with new small businesses, expanded tourism ventures, a skilled workforce, and a more diversified economy.

As we continue to recover and rebuild after the catastrophic flood in Eastern Kentucky last year, funding is being streamlined to improve housing, infrastructure and flood control, while we work with local leaders to dream about projects that can improve each county. The response after the flood, magnified the iconic compassion and determination of Eastern Kentuckians – neighbors helping and uplifting one another. I applaud each individual, business and organization who not only donated money and supplies, but those who showed up with shovels, mops and buckets to help flood survivors rebound.

On this 10th anniversary of SOAR, I want to challenge each community to envision what we can attain over the next decade. The aerospace industry is booming in the mountains, along with greater access to healthcare and education. We are also driving down overdose death rates, with greater prevention and more recovery options than ever before. Continue to plan your work and work your plan, because Eastern Kentucky has the competitive spirit to help us soar into a brighter future.

Keep up the great work!
Hal Rogers
Dean of the U.S. House



Team Kentucky,

Welcome to the City of Corbin and the 2023 SOAR Summit – Collaboration + Uniting As One Eastern Kentucky Region! This annual gathering is an incredible opportunity to build relationships and share ideas as we create the brightest future possible for Appalachian Kentucky. I'm proud that last month, our commonwealth hosted leaders from 13 states for the Appalachian Regional Commission Conference in Ashland, where SOAR's Executive Director, Colby Hall, spoke about this organization's story and powerful impact.

As Governor, and most important, as a Kentuckian, the summit is one of the highlights of my year. SOAR is living proof of what we can achieve when we come together to move the commonwealth forward.

That's why I've stayed laser-focused on the issues that matter most to our families. Our hard work is paying off, in Eastern Kentucky and throughout the commonwealth.

During my administration, we've seen the best two years for economic investment in our history, as well as the most jobs filled in Kentucky's history, and the second- and third-best years for new wages. We've got the largest budget surpluses ever recorded, and our largest Rainy Day Fund ever.

We've secured more than \$1.6 billion in public and private funds to connect every home and business in the state to high-speed internet, and \$500 million for Cleaner Water Projects in every county. We've ensured that Kentucky's coal-producing communities will receive more than \$74 million in coal severance tax funds, the most allocated to these communities in 10 years.

We're delivering on a decades-old promise to four-lane the entire Mountain Parkway, and we just cut the ribbon on the Minnie to Harold connector on KY-680 in Floyd County!

Kentucky was one of only eight states nationwide to see a significant decrease in overdose related deaths last year... and we increased treatment beds by 50%.

We also just celebrated 2022 as the best year ever for tourism, with nearly \$13 billion in economic impact.

We've announced new high-ground communities in Floyd, Knott, Letcher, and Perry counties. And last year, we launched the Team Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief Fund, which has raised over \$13.2 million from more than 41,500 generous donors.

We've been through tough times together. But, in some of our darkest days, I've been reminded of one passage from Psalms: "Weeping may linger in the evening, but joy comes in the morning." Thanks to each and every guest who traveled from near and far to be here at the Summit and thank you to the City of Corbin for hosting this fantastic event once again.

Enjoy the 2023 SOAR Summit!
Gov. Andy Beshear

WELCOME LETTERS



Greetings and welcome to the 2023 SOAR Summit!

On behalf of the nearly 8,000 residents who call the city of Corbin home, we thank you for coming and taking part in this outstanding event.

We are so grateful for SOAR and its partners and sponsors for creating a forum where agencies, organizations, businesses and each of us can create, collaborate, and deploy state-of-the-art ideas. SOAR has provided this platform for us to engage in thought-provoking conversations and deepen our understanding of how to create a positive future for Appalachia.

Shaping Our Appalachian Region leads and rallies our communities to find ways to fill the economic gaps left by the devastating decline of the coal industry. We realize that only by working together can we resolve this seminal challenge for our 54 ARC Counties.

“The Many Pieces of the Puzzle that are Being Put Together for the Brighter Tomorrow We Envision” is the 2023 SOAR theme. That’s a big sentence that challenges each of us to dream big dreams that will carry us toward the new frontier. Saddle up and let’s get going!

We hope you’ll take time to visit our beautiful natural wonders, historic sites, and of course, our revitalized downtown district while in Corbin. I am looking forward to a great experience, and can’t wait to show you the unique little town we call home.

Again, we are so glad you are here...Corbin Loves Company!

Suzie Razmus
Mayor, City of Corbin



Hello 2023 SOAR Summit Attendees!

On behalf of the SOAR organization and its Executive Board, I want to welcome you to the 2023 SOAR Summit in Corbin, Kentucky. Thousands of hours of meticulous planning went into setting the stage for your arrival today, and we are so excited to have you with us.

The 2023 SOAR Summit would not have been possible without continuing support from generous corporate partners, event sponsors, and you. We encourage you to interact with our sponsors and others in the SOAR Summit Exhibit Hall. This year’s Exhibit Hall presented by Wellcare features over 100 booths, with tremendous opportunities for networking and learning. The SOAR Summit also features talented speakers, compelling breakout sessions, and delicious food kindly provided by Kentucky and Appalachia Proud growers and farmers.

Each year the SOAR Summit is a reminder that Eastern Kentucky is amazing and much stronger as one united region. SOAR provides the opportunity for all to learn and work together to overcome similar problems in order to achieve common goals. This Summit and SOAR is also about lifting each other up and recognizing that this region has all the tools to make the region a better place to live, work, study, and raise a family. That number one tool is all of you, who have given your time and energy to attend this event.

Answers will begin to become apparent here in Corbin, but it is up to all of us to take something back to our home communities which will spur change and positive growth. SOAR looks forward to partnering alongside you to make all of our communities better, healthier, safer, and more prosperous.

Thanks again for being with us. We are confident the next two days in Corbin will be filled with learning, excitement, and fun.

Kim McCann
Chairperson, Executive Board, Shaping Our Appalachian Region

AGENDA

PRESENTED BY



Monday, October 2 Pre-Summit Session

These events have limited seating and an additional fee aside from the SOAR Summit registration

2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Community and Regional Disaster Preparedness Workshop

Williamsburg Tourism
and Convention Center
650 S. 10 St.
Williamsburg, KY 40769



6 p.m. to 8 p.m. SOAR Summit Opening Reception

Cumberland Mint
244 Cumberland Ave.
Williamsburg, KY 40769



Tuesday, October 3 Summit Day 1

7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration Corbin Arena Main Entrance

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Exhibit Hall Hours Corbin Arena Floor and Concourse



8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Ten Talk Session 1 Corbin Arena Main Stage



10 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. Fireside Chat Nate Morris, Chairman and CEO of Morris Industries

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Speed Pitch Competition Corbin Arena Main Stage



1:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Fireside Chat JP Blevins, former University of Kentucky Basketball Player, Entrepreneur, and Investor

1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Ten Talk Session 2 Corbin Arena Main Stage



4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. Fireside Chat: Talent Development and Workforce in Eastern Kentucky

Join Rajant Chairman, CEO, and Co-Founder Robert Schena, and Rajant employees, Chris Graves and Lindsay Childs, for a stimulating conversation around technology, advanced manufacturing, and talent development in Eastern Kentucky.

Corbin Arena Main Stage

Breakout Workshops

Complimentary Shuttle Service will be provided to and from the Corbin Arena and the Corbin Center throughout the day.

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Let's Get Digital: Unlocking Your Influence on Social Media

Join SOAR's Business and Innovation Team for an interactive workshop on social media. You'll learn about platforms, audiences, and how to select and leverage platforms to engage and interact with customers and/or constituents.

The Corbin Center
222 Corbin Center Dr.
Corbin, KY 40701



3:45 p.m. to 5 p.m. KY Innovation: Resources to Grow Your Business SOAR's Business and Innovation team joins officials from KY Innovation to share resources and incentives supporting startups and existing businesses in Kentucky's 54 Appalachian counties.

The Corbin Center
222 Corbin Center Dr.
Corbin, KY 40701



AGENDA

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3:45 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Growing the Economic Impact of E-Sports in Eastern KY

Join us for a lively discussion around esports and the opportunity Eastern Kentucky has to harness a new engine for economic growth.

Moderator: Mike Johnson, CEO of Appalachian Wireless

Panelists

- Ashley Litteral, Product Manager at Appalachian Wireless
- Nathan Lyttle (The Commish), Founder of Queen City Streams
- Gordy Gregg, Head Esports Coach at the University of Pikeville
- Jacob Ball, Head Esports Coach at the University of the Cumberlands

The Corbin Center
222 Corbin Center Dr.
Corbin, KY 40701

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SOAR Summit Reception

6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Special Remarks

- Lindy Casebier, Secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet

Complimentary Shuttle Service will run to and from the Corbin Arena and downtown Corbin from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

The Pennington Event Center
500 South Main St.
Corbin, KY 40701

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7 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

Middle Tech Live Podcast:

The State of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in EKY

2nd & Main
115 S Main St.
Corbin, KY

PRESENTED BY



7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Ignite Entrepreneurship Mixer

2nd & Main
115 S Main St.
Corbin, KY

PRESENTED BY



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SPEAKER SCHEDULE

Day 1

8:05-8:15	Scott Surber & Amber Decker
8:16-8:26	Dr. Beth Kelly
8:27-8:37	Erik Hubbard & Nathan Nevel
8:38-8:48	Josh Blanton
8:49-8:59	Terry Gray
9:00-9:10	Hilda Legg
9:11-9:21	Mark W. Ryles
9:22-9:32	Whitney Allen
9:33-9:43	David York
9:44-9:54	Meghan Sandfoss
10:22-10:32	Ben Ledo
10:33-10:43	Chuck Hogg
10:44-10:54	Marcie Campbell
10:54-11:04	Scott Stuckey
1:32-1:42	Amanda Clark
1:43-1:53	Leigh Latherow
1:54-2:04	Dr. Jonathan Shores
2:05-2:15	Jochai Ben-Avie
2:16-2:26	Kyle Robinson
2:27-2:37	Brad Kilbey
2:38-2:48	Allison Adams
2:49-2:59	James O. Wilson
3:00-3:10	Ben Smock
3:11-3:21	Matt Brown
3:22-3:32	Dr. George Koob

Day 2

TBA	Steve Lee
TBA	Sandy Slayton

AGENDA

PRESENTED BY



Wednesday, October 4 Summit Day 2

7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Registration

Corbin Arena Main Entrance

8:30 a.m. to Noon

SOAR Summit Plenary

- Congressman Hal Rogers
- Governor Andy Beshear
- ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin
- Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health
- Lincoln Brown, Social Impact Investor, Philanthropist, and Serial Entrepreneur
- TJ Rayhill, Owner of Bluegrass Crickets and 2023 Startup Appalachia Pitch Competition winner
- Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers
- Corbin Mayor Suzie Razmus
- Dr. Ryan Quarles, Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture
- Sandy Slayton, Vice President of Rye Development
- Steve Lee, CEO of SkillUp
- Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron

Panel Discussion

Eastern Kentucky's collaborative approach to access to treatment, training, and re-entry to the workforce.

Moderator: Bill Bryant, Evening News Anchor, WKYT

Panelists

- Congressman Hal Rogers
- Nora Volkow, M.D., Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health
- Dr. George Koob, Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
- Tim Robinson, Founder and CEO of Addiction Recovery Care
- Beth Davisson, Senior Vice President of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- Colby Hall, Executive Director of SOAR

Noon to 3 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Hours

Corbin Arena Floor and Concourse

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**BEST
HOSPITALS**

& WORLD REPORT
U.S. News

CANCER
2023-2024

ADVANCING THE FUTURE OF CANCER CARE

At Markey Cancer Center, our goal is to reduce the cancer burden on Kentucky and its most vulnerable populations. That takes research, prevention, treatment, education and community engagement—and our dedication to that goal is why we will never stop innovating, pushing towards breakthroughs, and providing world-class cancer care to patients across the Commonwealth.

Read more about how we're advancing the future of cancer care: ukhealthcare.com/cancer

 **Markey
Cancer Center**



SOAR CORPORATE PARTNERS

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Groundbreaking by Design.



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Starlink project is changing lives

In 2022 and 2023, SOAR partnered with the Kentucky Department of Public Health to provide Starlink Internet dishes and a year of prepaid service to 90 low-income senior households in remote communities in three Eastern Kentucky counties. With reliable connectivity, many of these individuals were able to access telehealth services for the first time.

“Starlink has made such a huge impact on my life. My parents can schedule and take doctor appointments without leaving the house! Also, I can do my job at the elementary, because I have access to Google Classroom. Starlink is amazing!”

Mack McCoy
Martin County Resident



From left, Colby Kirk, former Martin Co. Judge Executive, Mack McCoy, Starlink recipient, and Joshua Ball, SOAR COO.

60
Systems
Installed

In Partnership with:



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Where Game Changers are made.

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- **NATIONALLY RANKED** academic programs
- **KENTUCKY'S UNIVERSITY:** 1 year after graduation, nearly 70% of EKU grads employed in Kentucky
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LET'S TALK

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Congressman Hal Rogers

REPRESENTATIVE (R-KY 5TH DISTRICT), SOAR CO-PRINCIPAL OFFICER

Hal Rogers, representing Kentucky's 5th Congressional District since 1981, holds the record as Kentucky's longest-serving Congressman. He's been re-elected 21 times. On September 2, 2021, he became the longest-serving Member of Congress from Kentucky, and on March 18, 2022, he became the Dean of the U.S. House of Representatives due to his extended tenure. Rogers focuses on economic development, job creation, combating drug use, conserving Appalachia's natural beauty, engaging with constituents, and promoting regional interests.

Born in rural Kentucky, he represents a disadvantaged district, but his efforts have spurred successes. Initiatives like Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Operation UNITE, and Southeast Kentucky Economic Development have united communities, addressing the environment, drug issues, small businesses, and tourism. During his chairmanship of the House Appropriations Committee (2011-2016), Rogers curtailed government spending, oversaw federal agencies, and restored fiscal discipline. His leadership resulted in a historic \$126 billion reduction in discretionary spending since 2010. He championed regular order, conducting 650 oversight hearings and considering 2,000+ appropriations bill amendments. Rogers boasts almost 40 years on the Appropriations Committee, with roles on over ten subcommittees, including leadership positions.

In 2003, he headed the Subcommittee on Homeland Security, advocating for first responders, FEMA accountability, immigration enforcement, and border security. Whether in Washington or his home district, Rogers remains dedicated to fiscal responsibility, economic growth, national defense, and America's prosperous future.



Governor Andy Beshear

GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY, SOAR CO-PRINCIPAL OFFICER

Raised in Kentucky's Fayette, Franklin, and Clark counties, Andy Beshear graduated from Henry Clay High School. Influenced by his parents' public service and his grandfather's Baptist ministry, he values family and faith.

He achieved a magna cum laude degree from Vanderbilt University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia School of Law. Andy worked in D.C. at an international law firm, where he met his wife, Britainy. Returning to Kentucky, he excelled at Stites & Harbison, focusing on consumer advocacy and youth organization protection.

In 2016, Andy became Kentucky's 50th Attorney General. He fought the opioid epidemic, suing manufacturers, launching the Kentucky Opioid Disposal Program, and prosecuting rogue doctors. He prioritized child safety, arrested predators, and educated on abuse prevention. Andy advocated for seniors, healthcare access, and affordable drugs.

Addressing the rape kit backlog was vital. Settlements funded testing and lab upgrades, with a successful cold case unit launch, clearing Kentucky's backlog.

As an independent voice, Andy defended the constitution, education, and pensions. Transparency was key to his open governance approach. Andy and his wife Britainy are actively engaged in their church and local organizations, raising two children.



Lindy Casebier

SECRETARY OF THE TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET, KENTUCKY

Lindy Casebier, a Louisville native, was appointed by Gov. Beshear in February 2023 as the Secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet. Secretary Casebier was appointed as Deputy Secretary for the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet in December 2019 after many years as a public school educator, administrator, legislator and non-profit director. Casebier previously served in senior roles within the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet. For 18 years, Casebier represented Louisville in the Kentucky General Assembly, where he chaired the Senate Education Committee. Prior to joining the Beshear administration, he served as executive director of Louisville Visual Art.



Robert Stivers

KENTUCKY SENATE PRESIDENT

Senate President Robert Stivers was elected to the Senate in 1997. He represents the 25th District, which encompasses Clay, Jackson, Knox, Lee, McCreary, Owsley, and Whitley counties.

President Stivers was elected by his colleagues to serve as Senate Majority Floor Leader in 2008, a position he held until being elected as Senate President in 2013. As the Senate President, Senator Stivers represents the entire body of the Kentucky State Senate in any official state business.

In 2015, President Stivers was honored by Governing Magazine as a Public Official of the Year for his work in the General Assembly. In 2016, he was named the Chair of the Southern Legislative Conference and in 2018 served as the Chair of the Council of State Governments, a national organization. The President currently serves as Chair of the Senate President’s Forum.

President Stivers serves as chairman of the Senate Committee on Committees and Rules Committee and the co-chairman of the Legislative Research Commission. Additionally, President Stivers is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Education Committee and was most recently appointed as co-chair to the Bourbon Barrel Taxation Task Force during the 2022 Interim.

President Stivers was the Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney from 1989 to 1993. He has served as a member of the Kentucky Appalachian Council, the Kentucky Appalachian Commission, the Early Childhood Development Council, the Governor’s Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, the OxyContin Task Force, the Evidence Committee (University of Louisville Law School), the Corrections & Public Safety Task Force of the Council of State Government, the Fiscal Affairs and Government Operations Committee of Southern Legislative Conference, the Southern States Energy Board.

He graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in industrial management and a minor in economics. He earned his law degree from The University of Louisville Louis D. Brandeis School of Law and is a practicing attorney in Manchester. He is married to Regina Crawford Stivers and between the two of them, has seven children and 10 grandchildren.



Dr. Ryan F. Quarles

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER

Dr. Ryan F. Quarles serves as Kentucky’s Commissioner of Agriculture. First elected to that position in 2015, he was re-elected in 2019, winning 117 of 120 counties.

Under his leadership, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) started several new programs, including initiatives to combat hunger and connect Kentucky farmers to new markets.

Quarles’s outspoken advocacy for farmers has been recognized on the regional and national level. He has served as President of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), as President of the Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture (SASDA), and as Chairman of the Republican Agriculture Commissioners Committee (RACC).

Quarles graduated from the University of Kentucky in 2006 with three undergraduate majors and two graduate degrees. In 2008, he graduated with a master’s degree in higher education from Harvard University. He received his law degree from the University of Kentucky and a doctorate in higher education from Vanderbilt University in 2018.

From 2010 to 2014, Quarles served as a member of the House of Representatives. A native of Scott County, he grew up on his family’s farm in central Kentucky, an area where they have lived and farmed for more than 200 years.

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Daniel J. Cameron KENTUCKY ATTORNEY GENERAL

Daniel Jay Cameron is Kentucky's 51st Attorney General, making history as the first Black American independently elected to statewide office in Kentucky. He's also the first Republican elected as Attorney General since 1948. Leading around 200 employees in seven state offices, he's dedicated to upholding the Commonwealth's laws, safeguarding Kentuckians, combatting the drug crisis, and advocating for the vulnerable, including victims of child abuse and human trafficking.

Before becoming Attorney General, Cameron served as legal counsel to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, playing a key role in confirming conservative federal judges, including Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch. Recognized for his commitment to law enforcement, he was named "Legislative Staffer of the Year" by the Kentucky Narcotics Officers Association and received the endorsement of the Kentucky Fraternal Order of Police.

Cameron's roots are in Elizabethtown, where he graduated from John Hardin High School. He pursued higher education at the University of Louisville, where he also played football, and earned his law degree from the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law. Following graduation, he completed a federal judicial clerkship and practiced law in Frost Brown Todd's Louisville office. He currently resides in Louisville with his wife and son.



Robert Schena CHAIRMAN, CEO, AND CO-FOUNDER, RAJANT CORPORATION

In 2001, Robert Schena co-founded Rajant Corporation, a pioneer in Kinetic Mesh® Networks. Under his leadership, Rajant has grown from a small startup in Wayne, Pennsylvania to an international presence across various sectors including military, industry, transportation, utilities, and telecommunications. Today, Rajant operates in 75+ countries with global partners and multiple U.S. offices.

In 1999, Schena co-founded Airclic, Inc., raising \$15 million with support from Goldman Sachs and Blue Capital Management. Airclic was later acquired by Motorola and Symbol Technologies, resulting in a \$287 million financial round and significant intellectual property transfer. In the same year, he contributed to the founding of World Wide Packets, a Gigabit Ethernet company.

In 1996, Schena secured an FCC license for his company to offer an Open Video System, marking a pioneering achievement. In 2004, he successfully influenced U.S. telecommunications regulations, securing the first FCC license for broadband services via a Canadian satellite.

In 1992, Schena founded FutureVision of America (FVA), partnering with Bell Atlantic to launch the first video dial tone and digital TV over television, which was later sold to Bell Atlantic. Before FVA, Schena held various roles, including CFO, Treasurer, VP of Finance, and VP of Marketing at Harron Communications.

Schena was appointed to Pennsylvania's Ben Franklin Technology Board by Governors Ridge, Rendell, and Wolf. He serves on the Board of the Methodist Home for Children and was part of Governor Corbett's Marcellus Shale Transition Team in 2010. He also sits on the Kentucky EPSCoR Board and the Morehead State University Foundation Board.

Schena holds a B.A. in Business Administration from Temple University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a sought-after lecturer on broadband communications for professional and corporate audiences.



T.J. Rayhill FOUNDER OF BLUEGRASS CRICKETS, ENTREPRENEUR

T.J. Rayhill possesses an innate fervor for bucking conventional trends. His journey began at the tender age of 19 when he inaugurated a bookstore, and from there, he embarked on a series of ventures that included the inception of a food truck, a boutique gift shop, and even a restaurant. These diverse undertakings ultimately paved the way for his latest and most audacious enterprise: the establishment of Bluegrass Crickets, heralded as Kentucky's pioneering Commercial Cricket Farm.

In the realm of Bluegrass Crickets, a novel and forward-looking initiative, the farm specializes in cultivating organic crickets, catering to both the bait and feed industries. This groundbreaking endeavor, however, does not stop there. The visionary trajectory of Bluegrass Crickets is set to extend into the realm of human consumption, with plans underway to produce crickets that will contribute to the culinary landscape. This audacious expansion into the realm of edible insects speaks volumes about TJ's unflinching spirit of innovation and his unrelenting dedication to forging paths less traveled.



Dr. Nora D. Volkow

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE (NIDA)
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Dr. Nora D. Volkow is the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health, the world's largest funder of research on drug use and addiction.

Her pioneering work as a research psychiatrist using brain imaging has shown that drug addiction is a brain disorder. She has studied how substance use affects brain functions, particularly the dopamine system's impact on reward and self-control in addiction. Her research has also contributed to understanding obesity, ADHD, and aging.

Born in Mexico, she earned her medical degree from the National University of Mexico. She trained at New York University and held leadership roles at the Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory. She was also a professor at The State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Dr. Volkow has published extensively, received numerous awards including the Nathan Davis Award, and is a member of prestigious organizations like the National Academy of Sciences. She was recognized by Time, Newsweek, and Fortune magazines for her influential contributions to brain imaging and addiction science.



JP Blevins

ENTREPRENEUR AND INVESTOR

Edmonton, Kentucky native JP Blevins graduated from Metcalfe County High School in 1998, during which time he earned First Team All-State distinctions during both junior and senior years. His collegiate journey led him to the University of Kentucky Basketball Team from 1998 to 2002, where he graduated in 2002 with Magna Cum Laude distinctions.

Blevins relocated to Wilmington, NC in 2010, and embarked on a path of entrepreneurial ventures. Notably, he played a pivotal role as a seed-round investor in the success stories of Live Oak Bank and the global banking software provider NCino. These ventures have since flourished into publicly traded companies listed on Nasdaq, boasting peak market caps of \$4 billion and \$7 billion respectively.

His tenure at Live Oak Bank has been one of steady growth, beginning from the ground floor and attaining the prestigious position of Chief Revenue Officer in Live Oak's C-suite by 2017. After a decade in North Carolina, he returned to his Kentucky roots a few years ago, reestablishing his permanent residence in Lexington.

His current endeavors include a spectrum of interests. He's deeply engaged in overseeing Maximus Capital, a trading fund he founded, while also actively participating in diverse private investment opportunities. Equally close to his heart are his philanthropic pursuits, through which he strives to make a meaningful regional impact.

He is happily wed to Grace Blevins, and together, they are blessed with two sons, John Paul and Marshall.



Lincoln Brown

ENTREPRENEUR AND INVESTOR

Lincoln Brown is a social impact focused investor, philanthropist, and serial entrepreneur. He has started four businesses, of which three succeeded and in aggregate, have generated over \$1.5 Billion in revenue. These businesses were in Mobile Gaming, Precision Healthcare, and Early Childhood Development. He is currently the Chairman and Co-Founder of KidStrong, the largest early childhood development program in the United States, with 110 locations nationwide. In addition, he co-founded Grant Ready Kentucky, with a focus on underserved areas in Kentucky. He also serves on the board of Rare, an international environmental conservation nonprofit. Lincoln graduated from the Wharton school with a BSE in Economics and double concentration in Finance and Management.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Nate Morris

CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF MORRIS INDUSTRIES

Nate Morris serves as the Chairman and CEO of Morris Industries and is the Founder of Rubicon Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: RBT).

Morris Industries is a privately held conglomerate headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky. Morris Industries is reimagining the industrial economy while leveraging the power of business to solve some of America's biggest challenges, including environment conservation and national security.

Prior to Morris Industries, Morris founded Rubicon Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: RBT), one of America's largest waste and recycling companies with operations spanning all 50 U.S. states and 20 countries. Rubicon delivers cost and taxpayer savings to our business and government partners worldwide. Founded in 2009 with only a \$10,000 line of credit, Morris served as CEO for over 12 years. Rubicon was named "One of the World's Most Innovative Companies" by Fast Company, an "Industry Disruptor" by Inc. Magazine, and a Great Place to Work™ 5 consecutive years.

Morris graduated from George Washington University, studied public policy at Princeton University, and studied business at Oxford University. He was elected Phi Beta Kappa and is a Fulbright Specialist Scholar. Morris holds an honorary doctorate of letters from the University of Pikeville. Morris currently serves as the Entrepreneur in Residence at the University of Kentucky's Gatton College of Business and Economics.

Morris was the first Kentuckian to be named to Fortune Magazine's 40 Under 40 list and is a regional winner of Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of Year Award. He is also the youngest inductee ever to the Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame.

Nate Morris is the founder of the Morris Foundation whose mission is to provide access to the American Dream for all Kentuckians.

PANELISTS SPEAKERS



HAL ROGERS
KENTUCKY
CONGRESSMAN
5TH DISTRICT



BILL BRYANT
WKYT EVENING
NEWS ANCHOR



BETH DAVISSON
SENIOR VICE
PRESIDENT OF
THE KENTUCKY
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE
FOUNDATION



NORA VOLKOW
DIRECTOR OF THE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE
ON DRUG ABUSE
(NIDA) AT THE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES
OF HEALTH



TIM ROBINSON
FOUNDER AND CEO
OF ADDICTION
RECOVERY CARE



COLBY HALL
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF SOAR



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PRESENTED BY  UNIVERSITY OF THE CUMBERLANDS

TenTALK SPEAKERS



Allison Adams

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY KENTUCKY

Before becoming Chief Operating Officer at the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, Allison Adams was the Public Health Director for the Buffalo Trace District Health Department. She holds a master's degree in public administration and is also a registered nurse. Additionally, Adams served as president of the Kentucky Health Department Association and led a joint effort for public health transformation legislation. In her current role, she works to affect policy and programs to create widespread change for improved health in Kentucky.



Whitney Allen

DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL QUALITY, UNITEDHEALTHCARE

Whitney Allen is a lifelong native of Appalachia. Raised in Laurel County, she graduated from Georgetown College with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Health Science. She worked at CHI Saint Joseph Hospital in London out of college and obtained her EMS training and certification. She then joined the team at Grace Health, a local Federally Qualified Health Center, establishing their outreach program and managing marketing and communication efforts. Whitney went on to a state-level position at the Kentucky Primary Care Association, leading advocacy efforts for rural health clinics and managing multiple contracts. Whitney joined the UnitedHealthcare team in 2019 and has held multiple positions including Community Engagement Manager, Director of Enrollee Services, and a national role serving as a consultant for Community Strategy. Whitney has recently re-joined the local KY team at UnitedHealthcare serving as the Director of Clinical Quality. Whitney lives in London with her husband, two children, black lab Piper, and a host of farm animals.



Jochai Ben-Avie

CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, CONNECT HUMANITY

Jochai Ben-Avie is the Co-Founder and CEO of Connect Humanity, a nonprofit fund to accelerate digital equity. He is also a Truman National Security Fellow, a Non-Resident Fellow at the Atlantic Council's DFR Lab, a WEF Global Shaper, and a Code for Science & Society Board Member. He was previously Mozilla's Head of International Public Policy and led the Firefox maker's open-source funding arm, where he spearheaded Mozilla's work on connectivity around the world. Before Mozilla, he was the inaugural Policy Director at Access Now, which under his leadership grew to become one of the largest global digital rights organizations.



Josh Blanton

PLANT MANAGER, VESUVIUS USA

Josh Blanton is the Plant Manager of Vesuvius USA, a global supplier to the steel industry. He is also currently serving his second term as City Commissioner in Ashland, Kentucky. As the fourth generation of his family to work for a major steelmaker in Ashland which closed unexpectedly in 2016, Josh offers a unique perspective on the changing dynamics of economic development and revitalization in eastern Kentucky. While examining the evolution of manufacturing and business trends throughout the state and country, Josh will also share insights about how the team in Ashland is creating momentum, excitement, and progress.



Matt Brown

PRESIDENT, ARC HEALTHCARE

Matt Brown serves as President of ARC Healthcare. He oversees the 1,000+ employee organization that operates a network of more than 30 addiction treatment facilities across 23 Kentucky counties. He has been involved in the development of ARC’s program expansion since May 2015, during which ARC has opened well over 20 programs.

Matt has a deep and personal understanding of addiction and the recovery process. He began his recovery journey in May 2014 after an 18-year battle with addiction. Like many of ARC’s employees and management, he personally received long-term care from the company.

Matt holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Kentucky in Health Sciences and a Master’s Degree in Physical Therapy from the UK. Prior to coming to ARC, had a 12-year career practicing in the field of physical therapy. He helped launch and operate several successful physical therapy start-ups, is co-founder and board chair of Rise Above (a community-oriented non-profit), and founded The Table Church in Louisa, KY.

Matt and his wife Summer, an elementary school assistant principal, live in Louisa, KY, and are committed to seeing people and families come out of the cycles and traumas of addiction. They know that people can live a life of purpose and destiny.



Marcie Campbell

VP MARKETING & INTAKE, ONE SENIOR CARE

I received my Master’s in Social Science Administration from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. I have worked as a Master’s level clinician with children diagnosed with autism as well as being an Executive Director of a behavioral health agency serving families in rural Pennsylvania. I have worked with the One Senior Care family since 2016, which includes operations experience as a Center Manager as well as working as a Master’s Level Social Worker on the PACE Interdisciplinary team of LIFE – Northwestern Pennsylvania (NWPA). I held the position of Director of the Outreach and Intake team of LIFE-NWPA prior to my current role as Vice President of Marketing & Intake for One Senior Care. I look forward to serving the senior population in Eastern Kentucky through our Mountain View PACE program of One Senior Care.



Amanda Clark

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MANAGER, KENTUCKY POWER

Amanda Clark is an External Affairs Manager at Kentucky Power. Before joining Kentucky Power, she was the Vice President of Operations for Ashland Alliance.

Amanda is a Commissioner in the City of Ashland. Amanda serves on the executive board for TENCO Workforce Development. She is the vice-chair for Visit Ashland. Amanda is an executive board member for CMH 23. She also serves on the advisory committees for the Highlands Museum and Discovery Center.

Amanda serves on the Board of the Kentucky Association for Economic Development. She is an Appalachian Regional Commission Appalachian Leadership Institute and Leadership Kentucky Alumnus.



Amber Decker

YOUTH PROGRAMS COORDINATOR/COMMUNITY LIAISON, THE CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Amber Decker is the Youth Programs Coordinator/Community Liaison for The Center for Rural Development. She focuses on helping create a foundation of success for youth in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. Her background is in Youth Development and Project Management. She lives in Bronston Kentucky with her partner Travis and their sons Bryson and Townes.



Terry Gray

DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL PROGRAMMING AND REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP, EKU

Terry Gray is an accomplished professional in the field of higher education, with a passion for empowering students and promoting community development. Terry earned his Bachelor of Science in Economics from Centre College and his Masters in Educational Leadership from EKU.

Currently residing in Manchester, KY, Terry is the Senior Director of Regional Programming and Regional Stewardship at EKU, a position he has held since July 2003. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing a wide range of programs and initiatives that promote educational and economic development throughout the region, including EKU's Corbin and Manchester Regional Campuses. Terry's dedication to the region earned him the 2023 President's Excellence in Engagement Award. EKU also honored Terry with the inaugural Distinguished Service Award in 2021.



Chuck Hogg

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, ALL POINTS BROADBAND

Chuck is All Points' Senior Vice President and Director of Acquisitions. He leads our industry engagement and M&A activities. Prior to joining All Points, Chuck co-founded and spent 13 years growing Shelby Broadband, a highly successful hybrid-fiber-wireless company acquired by All Points in 2018.

Chuck is a recognized industry leader and serves on the Board of the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association and earned his BSBA in Information Systems from Xavier University. Chuck is a husband and proud father of three, and currently resides in Shelbyville, Kentucky.



Erik Hubbard

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BACKROADS OF APPALACHIA

Erik Hubbard is the Executive Director of Backroads of Appalachia. Growing up in Eolia, KY in Letcher County, Erik loved writing his motorbike through the beautiful backroads of Eastern KY as a teenager. Son of a paralyzed coal miner, his Dad moved him to TN at age 17 so he'd have more opportunities. Erik joined the Navy, saw the world, earned his degree in Civil Engineering, and started working for the Railroad; but, he always wanted to find a way to return to Eastern Kentucky. Erik loves motorcycles and motorsports so over the past 10 years he has worked with state and local tourism agencies to map, trademark, and promote motorsports trails encouraging visitors to experience some of the most beautiful roads in Appalachia. In 2020, he officially helped found Backroads of Appalachia, a non-profit organization with a passion and empathy for the Appalachian region driving economic development, job training, and opportunity to the poverty-stricken areas of Appalachia through tourism and motorsports.



Dr. Beth Kelly

RESEARCH DIRECTOR, KENTUCKY CENTER FOR STATISTICS

Beth Kelly serves as Research Director at Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS), where she joined as a Research Analyst in 2019. She focuses her research on critical and timely questions related to the Commonwealth that leverage the breadth of our data sources. As Research Director, Dr. Kelly is responsible for the overall planning of all reports and analyses produced by KYSTATS. Prior to her employment with KYSTATS, Dr. Kelly was a mathematics professor at Berea College. She is a native Kentuckian, a graduate of Indiana University with a BA in Mathematics and a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Washington.



Brad Kilbey

CEO, ACCELECOM

Brad Kilbey is the CEO of Accelecom, bringing over 25 years of leadership experience in the technology sector. With a strong background in building and scaling companies, Brad has held executive and leadership positions at Zayo Group, Windstream Communications, Level 3 Communications, and MCI Communications. Throughout his career, he has led sales, business development, marketing, product, finance, and operations organizations.

Originally from Canada, Brad and his family have lived in the Washington DC area for the past 25 years (Brad’s wife is an Educator, his oldest son attends the University of Kentucky, and his youngest son is a rising Senior in High School). Brad completed his undergraduate at Ohio University, his Master of Business Administration at Marymount University, and participated in Executive Development studies at the University of Denver.

Brad is deeply passionate about volunteering and actively supports organizations dedicated to Veterans, First Responders, and their families.



Dr. George Koob

DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

Dr. George F. Koob, Ph.D., is a renowned authority on alcohol, stress, and the neurobiology of addiction. He currently directs the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), leading national efforts to combat alcohol-related public health issues. Dr. Koob oversees diverse alcohol research, spanning basic science, epidemiology, diagnostics, prevention, and treatment.

With a Ph.D. in Behavioral Physiology from Johns Hopkins University (1972), Dr. Koob previously chaired the Scripps’ Committee on the Neurobiology of Addictive Disorders and directed the Alcohol Research Center at the Scripps Research Institute. His early career involved research at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies. He also held post-doctoral positions at the University of Cambridge.

Initially studying the neurobiology of emotion and reward processing, Dr. Koob applied this knowledge to alcohol and drug addiction. His groundbreaking research expanded our understanding of the neural circuits involved in addiction and why some individuals progress from use to misuse. He authored over 750 peer-reviewed papers and co-authored “The Neurobiology of Addiction,” a seminal textbook on addiction neurobiology.

Dr. Koob’s exceptional contributions have earned him numerous accolades, including the E.M. Jellinek Memorial Award (2018), election to the National Academy of Medicine (2017), and the Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur (2016) for fostering scientific collaborations between France and the U.S. He has also received awards from the Research Society on Alcoholism, the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, and La Fondation Ipsen for his lifetime achievements in alcohol and addiction research.



Leigh Latherow

ATTORNEY, VANANTWERP ATTORNEYS, LLP

Ms. Leigh Latherow was raised in Harlan, Kentucky, and has a passion for the people of Appalachia. She is an attorney with VanAntwerp Attorneys, LLP, in Ashland, with a focus on employment law, and is licensed in Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. She has had two appearances before the Supreme Court of the United States. She has the highest peer rating standard of AV-Preeminent and has been selected as a Kentucky Super Lawyer for 7 years. She has served on a number of non-profit boards, is married to her best friend, David, and has three successful children.



Ben Ledo

VICE PRESIDENT OF ENTERPRISE SALES, MAKEMYMOVE

Ben Ledo is the Vice President of Enterprise Sales at MakeMyMove. In this role, he helps communities and community leaders unlock the power within to market themselves, and attract and recruit new citizens, primarily those with remote jobs.

Ben started his career in state government spending 5 years in the Governor’s Office during the Mitch Daniels Administration. Following his time in public service, Ben joined the small but growing company of Angie’s List. Spending 9 years in numerous leadership capacities, he helped grow Angie’s List into a public company that employed over 2,500 people in Indianapolis. Following the acquisition of Angie’s List by AIC, Ben took a role in expanding a family-owned and operated trucking and logistics company from Fort Wayne to Indianapolis until he joined the team at MakeMyMove.

Ben has a B.A. in Political Science and Economics from Indiana University. He and his wife live in Indianapolis and are the proud parents of three young boys.



Steve Lee

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SKILLUP COALITION

Steven is the Chief Executive Officer at SkillUp Coalition, a non-profit technology platform whose mission is to ensure that every worker has high opportunity employment. Prior to joining SkillUp, Steven was the Managing Director, Income Security at the Robin Hood Foundation, where he oversaw \$40 million in grants. Prior to joining Robin Hood, Steven was an Associate Partner at Bain and Company, providing strategic advice to financial services, technology, consumer goods, media and non-profit clients. Prior to Bain, Steven founded ThreeToEight, an educational software company. Prior to founding ThreeToEight, Steven was a corporate lawyer at O’Melveny & Myers LLP, an international law firm. Steven holds a B.A. and J.D. from Duke University, and an M.B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley.



Hilda Legg

CONSULTANT, LEGG STRATEGIES

Hilda Legg has dedicated her career of over 40 years to Rural Economic Development, with an emphasis on the build-out of true broadband, economic opportunities, and education for the families who live in rural communities across the country. She has served under 4 United States Presidents in efforts to enhance the economic and educational opportunities for rural residents and to strengthen agriculture-driven economies to sustain a strong and healthy rural America. Ms. Legg brings vast knowledge and a wide variety of skills from experience in public, non-profit, and private industries. She currently works as a Consultant, for Legg Strategies, in Lexington, KY.

TenTALK SPEAKERS



Nathan Nevels

MCCREARY COUNTY DEPUTY JUDGE EXECUTIVE

Nathan Nevels is a retired educator who was born and raised in McCreary County. After being laid off from the McCreary County school district, he moved to Somerset and worked as a school administrator and teacher there until he retired in 2014. He had been eager to move back home to McCreary County, so in 2019, when his friend Jimmie Greene was elected Judge/Executive, he accepted the position of Director of Economic Development and Deputy Judge. The entire downtown is now occupied with businesses, the county has rebuilt their infrastructure, and tourism is thriving thanks to the partnerships they have developed with Backroads of Appalachia, Burnside Tourism, See Somerset, the Kentucky Wildlands, and others.



Kyle Robinson

FOUNDER AND OWNER, PRINT MY THREADS

Kyle Robinson, founder of Print My Threads in Flatwoods, KY, believes in the t-shirt's profound impact. Over 15 years, the company partnered with Kentucky businesses and nonprofits to use custom apparel for good. Notable efforts:

- KY Flood Relief: Donated labor for 5,000+ t-shirts, raising an extra \$6,000. Managed an online store, adding \$4,900.
- COVID Small Business Aid: Launched Local Lifesaver Campaign, helping 48 businesses raise over \$6,000 during the pandemic.
- KY Parks Club: Partnered with Kentucky State Parks Foundation, sending 7,000+ kids on educational trips.

Print My Threads strives for a balanced approach, focusing on economic growth, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. Robinson's mantra: "Make things better by making better things." They've grown sustainably, offering order fulfillment and logistics support to let clients thrive. From a one-car garage in 2009, they now operate out of a solar-powered warehouse once used as a local skating rink.



Mark W. Ryles

CONSULTANT, KENTUCKY EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

In 1993 he became Director of Facilities Management for the Kentucky Department of Education, serving 17 years. While Director, he facilitated the replacement and reconstruction of over 65% of Kentucky's K-12 infrastructure. He was instrumental in the development of energy-efficient schools, and wireless technology systems.

He is currently a school facility consultant for the Kentucky Educational Development Corporation and the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative.

Mark is married with 3 children and 6 grandchildren.



Meghan Sandfoss

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KENTUCKY OFFICE OF BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT

Meghan Sandfoss is the Executive Director of the Kentucky Office of Broadband Development, a role to which she was appointed in September 2022 by Governor Andy Beshear. In this role, she oversees planning and implementation of federal funding for the deployment of broadband infrastructure totaling over \$1.4 billion. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a master's degree in Community Planning from the University of Cincinnati. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Sanfoss has nearly 20 years of experience in government and public administration. She previously held a senior leadership position at the Northern Kentucky Area Development District, where she oversaw a variety of local, state, and federal programs in the areas of transportation planning, infrastructure development, comprehensive planning, and community and economic development. She resides in Covington, Kentucky with her husband and 2 children.



Dr. Jonathan Shores

CHIEF ENROLLMENT OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF THE CUMBERLANDS

Dr. Shores has spent over two-thirds of his life working in higher education and has experience helping over 200 collegiate institutions reach record levels of enrollment, working both with and directly at numerous colleges. At the University of the Cumberland, he serves as the Chief Enrollment Officer and Executive Vice President. Prior to joining the team at the University of the Cumberland, he served as a Senior Vice President at a higher education consulting firm and also previously worked at three different private colleges, most recently as Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing.

He is a proud graduate of Campbell University’s Lundy-Fetterman School of Business with a Bachelor’s degree in Trust and Wealth Management and an MBA in Marketing. Additionally, he has an earned Ph.D. while his dissertation focused on the most effective marketing and recruiting strategies to recruit prospective students to private colleges.

Dr. Shores is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force, where he still serves in a reserve component as a Chief Master Sergeant, the highest enlisted rank in the Air Force. In the Air Force, he serves as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Air Mobility Command 4-star General at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. He has been to over 40 countries and has deployed and/or assisted in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Joint Forge, and Operation Coronet Oak.



Sandy Slayton

VICE PRESIDENT, RYE DEVELOPMENT

Sandy Slayton is a Vice President at Rye Development and Rye’s Project Manager for the Lewis Ridge Project, a closed loop Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project planned in Bell County. Sandy has been working in the areas of environmental permitting, compliance, and hydropower for over 20 years, on projects including installing hydropower retrofits on existing dams, relicensing existing hydropower, and development of new closed loop pumped storage. She has a BA in Environmental Science from University of Virginia and an MA in Ecology from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Ben Smock

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, CANOPY

Ben Smock’s hometown is Louisville, KY. He holds his MBA from the University of Louisville and Bachelor’s Degree in Business Management from the University of Kentucky.

As an experienced nonprofit professional with over 10 years of industry experience, Ben took over as Director of Development for Canopy, a Kentucky-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to grow Kentucky businesses to positively impact people, our planet, and our future. Canopy was formed in 2017 to create accessibility to the global Good Business movement, and to position Kentucky as a premier ecosystem for social and environmental enterprise. Utilizing his experience and educational background, Ben has helped Canopy grow into a statewide organization increasing its reach, relevance, and revenue.

Under his tenure, Canopy has raised over \$1,500,000 in philanthropic revenue and secured 28 Canopy Certified companies across Kentucky.

Ben is also the President of Venture Connectors, Louisville’s largest and longest standing entrepreneurial networking organization whose purpose is to advance inclusive and accessible entrepreneurship. In 2023, Ben was recognized as one of the Louisville Business First Forty under 40.



Scott Stuckey

FOUNDER/CEO, FAIR CHANCE WORKS

Dr. Scott Stuckey is considered an expert in performance-based learning and assessment. The technology associated with Fair Chance Works PBC (FCW) grew out of his pioneering research on the use of digital-capture technology to improve expressive communication and conceptual understanding. The impetus for FCW, a public benefit corporation, came after a highly successful one-year pilot project where our technology and services were delivered to nearly 100 individuals at several long-term recovery centers in Eastern Kentucky. Under Scott's leadership, FCW's current research and development is focused on creating a hiring platform designed exclusively for fair and second chance job seekers and employers.



Scott Surber

BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY LIAISON, THE CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Scott Surber is the Broadband Technology Liaison for The Center for Rural Development. He works with local government officials, fiberboards, Area Development Districts, and other organizations in an effort to see improved broadband throughout The Center's 45 county service territory.



James O. Wilson

ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR, ELIJAH J. MCCOY MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

Assistant Regional Director of the Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional Office, James O. Wilson joined US Patent and Trademark Office in January of 1989. He received his BS Degree in Zoology from Howard University in 1984 and an MS Degree in Cellular and Molecular Biology from the University of Michigan in 1987.

In 2002, Mr. Wilson became a TC 1600 Supervisory Patent Examiner, and, in 2007, he served as a managerial Detailee in the Office of the Commissioner for Patents. Mr. Wilson has also served as the Acting Director of the Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional Office, Oct. 2018-September 2019.



David York

TECH EMPLOYER SPECIALIST, EASTERN AND CENTRAL KENTUCKY

David York is originally from Jackson County, Kentucky, and has a background in middle and high school public education. Some of the most powerful experiences he's ever had involve helping someone gain the tools they need to pursue their dreams and helping them use those tools to better themselves and their communities. Technology gives people these tools and allows people to continue this cycle of growth. He's proud to help grow the pool of tech talent in Kentucky with Code Kentucky, and give people what they need to succeed in an increasingly digital world!

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GOOD TO KNOW

The Startup Appalachia Pitch Competition is an opportunity for young companies with a unique product or service to further grow their business with the help of outside funding. By participating in the pitch contest, startups will have the chance to prove the validity of their concept to potential lenders and investors.

GRAND PRIZE \$10,000
SECOND PLACE \$5,000
THIRD PLACE \$2,000

COMPETITION Date TBA



Location TBA

Finalists selected will make their pitch at the Startup Appalachia Pitch Competition .

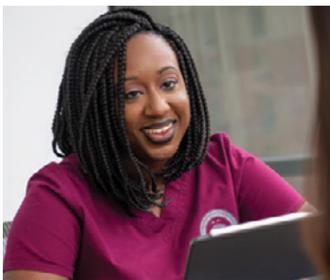
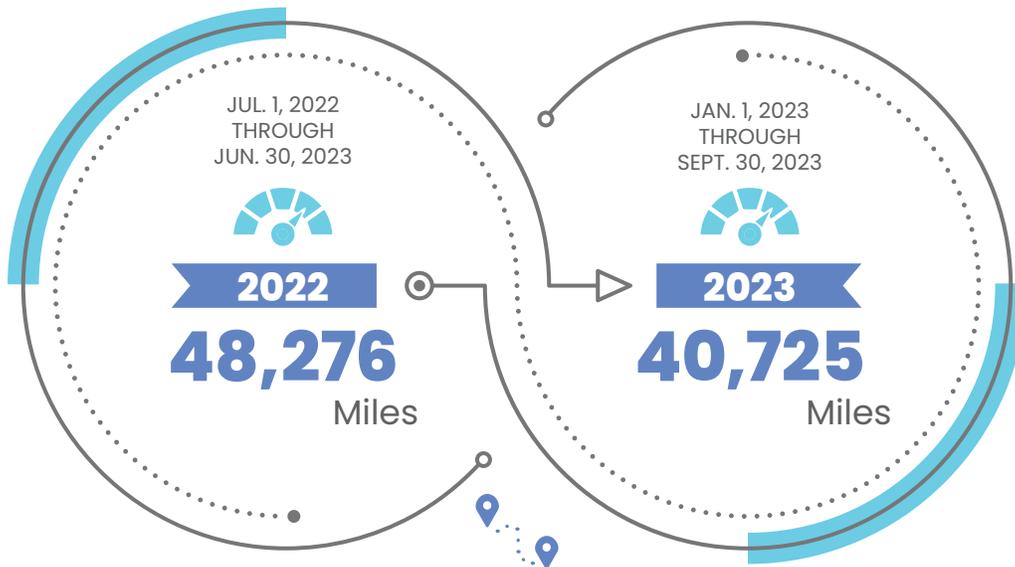
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SOAR Healthcare Events



APPALACHIAN
NURSING
ACADEMY

July 9 - 21, 2023
UNIVERSITY OF PIKEVILLE
PIKEVILLE, KY

APPLICANTS	80
COUNTIES	17
HIGH SCHOOLS	30
GRADUATES	25



Several students arrived without a clear idea of which area of medical training they intended to pursue, but they departed with a clear sense of their desired path.



SOAR

We've created great content to help you take the next step.
DOWNLOAD FREE today!

The Complete Guide to
Entrepreneurship In Eastern Kentucky



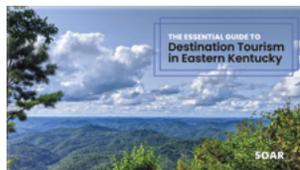
The Remote Work Playbook for
Eastern Kentucky Leaders



The Grants 101 Playbook
for Eastern Kentucky



Destination Tourism in
Eastern Kentucky



The Eastern KY
Healthcare Action Plan



Getting Funded: The 2022 Manual for
Writing & Winning Broadband Grants



The Youth Entrepreneurship
Program Plan for Eastern Kentucky



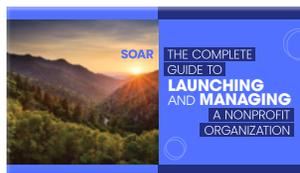
The Digital Equity Action Plan
for Eastern Kentucky



Ultimate Cheat Sheet for Kentucky Business
Incentives and Funding Opportunities



The Complete Guide to Launching and
Managing A Nonprofit Organization



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Audiology
(606) 430-2209

AVA Center
(606) 218-2256

Dermatology
(606) 430-2210

Diabetes Education
(606) 430-8120

Diagnostic Center
(606) 430-4673

Ear, Nose & Throat
(606) 430-2209

Endocrinology
(606) 430-2208

ER/Trauma Center
(606) 430-3500

Gastroenterology
(606) 430-2202

Heart & Vascular Institute
(606) 430-2201

Home Medical Equipment
(606) 430-4750

Infectious Disease
(606) 430-2208

Lawson Cancer Center
(606) 430-2212

Mettu Children's Hospital
(606) 430-2100

Neonatal Intensive Care
(606) 430-3500

Nephrology
(606) 430-2208

Neurology
(606) 430-2208

Neurosurgery
(606) 430-2208

Obstetrics/Gynecology
(606) 430-2207

Optometry/Ophthalmology
(606) 430-2209

Orthopedic Surgery & Sports Medicine Institute
(606) 430-2206

Palliative Care
(606) 430-4836

Pediatrics
(606) 430-2230

Pharmacy/Specialty Pharmacy
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Speech Therapy
(Adult & Pediatric Patients)**
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**PMC Grundy
Specialty Clinic**
(276) 935-1640

**PMC Prestonsburg Primary Care
& Urgent Care Clinic**
(606) 886-8175

**PMC Prestonsburg
Specialty Clinic**
(606) 886-1495

PMC Primary Care Clinic
(606) 430-2213

**PMC South Williamson
Primary Care & Specialty Clinic**
(606) 237-3969

**PMC Urgent Care & Family
Wellness Center**
(606) 430-2230

**PMC Whitesburg
Specialty Clinic**
(606) 633-7355

**Plastic & Reconstructive
Surgery**
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Podiatry
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Pulmonology
(606) 430-2208

Rheumatology
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Stroke Center
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Urology
(606) 430-2202

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Center**
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Women's Health
(606) 430-2207

Wound Center
(606) 430-4721

**PIKEVILLE
MEDICAL CENTER**

pikevillehospital.org



SOAR INNOVATION *at Work*

Startups Launched	11
Startups Scaled	12
Served	408
Referred	49
Advanced	12
New Businesses	11
New Jobs	28
Events	27
Attendees	2,157
Startups Funded	19
Amount Invested	\$201k

Powered By  **KY INNOVATION**

StartUP Appalachia

Regional Business Pitch Competition

By the Numbers

Number of Applicants: **28**

Counties Represented: **14**

Number of Finalists: **7**



Jessy Workman talks about her experience with SOAR

"I began forming the idea for my social enterprise before **SOAR** told me that was what my idea was called. Through some google searching on "How to start a non-profit" I quickly found **SOAR**'s vast library of business resources and downloaded the "Grant Writing 101 Playbook" It wasn't long after I received a call from the Business Innovation Team asking what I was hoping to use the information for. As I explained my idea for a permaculture farm that would address food deserts in Eastern Kentucky and offer on-site employee housing to moms leaving domestic abuse, I was immediately given the opportunity to utilize all of the fantastic business support resources **SOAR** provides. Latasha led me through simple business plans and guided me as I developed and revised it into a functional document. She



**Jessy
WORKMAN**
Founder and Owner
OASIS

helped me track down the consultants I needed to determine the business structure that worked best for me and has checked in and supported me every step of the way. Kacy's financial forecasting support helped me create our first budgets and plan for our path to fundraising. From the planning to execution **SOAR** has had a hand in every aspect of helping launch my vision from a dream into a reality. Most recently we've pinned down branding and created a website to launch the whole project into the world. It's been the most exciting and fulfilling experience. I'll never be able to express how grateful I am to the whole team for helping me create a real, tangible way to achieve my dreams and working with me as a mom to lay the foundation for my family's future. I can't wait to see the rest of the picture unfold.



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SOAR hosts Country Music Highway Tribute, a benefit for the arts

The Country Music Highway Tribute Show began in early 2022 as part of the SOAR Summit in Ashland, with a focus on promoting tourism and downtown revitalization. In 2023, SOAR organized a gathering along the Country Music Highway to honor legendary stars and showcase emerging talent. This led to three concerts in Paintsville, Whitesburg, and Prestonsburg at the Mountain Arts Center. The show also aimed to support arts and music organizations, granting \$7,000 to organizations in the southern Highway area, thanks to sponsors.

70+

Performer
Applications

55

Local Arts &
Craft Vendors

30

Local Food
Vendors

cmhtributeshow.com

Connect Humanity is a nonprofit impact fund advancing digital equity.

We combine investments, grants, and technical guidance to support underserved communities in the US with the capital and knowledge they need to get connected to broadband and thrive in a digital society.



Committed to Connecting Appalachia

In partnership with SOAR, our **Appalachia Digital Accelerator** supports communities across the region to plan next-generation broadband networks.

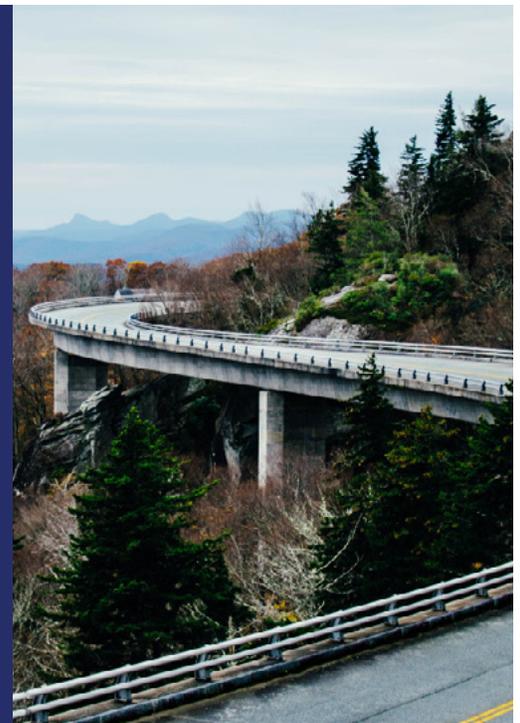
We are actively seeking to invest in broadband projects in Appalachia and can work with a range of partners, including Internet Service Providers (ISPs), municipalities, co-ops, nonprofits & others.

With our flexible approach, we can build bespoke deals that sustainably finance the right technology to meet a community's specific needs. Whether you need a capital match on a grant, a line of credit, or something else entirely, we may be able to help.

If you're a community leader, investor, or a service provider passionate about bridging Appalachia's digital divide, **let's talk.**



info@connecthumanity.fund
www.connecthumanity.fund



 **Connect
Humanity**

SOAR Events

The Plan is working – community built, community driven

Our communities know if they are going to regain economic stability, it has to be an inside job. Since 2013, we have crossed county lines to coordinate ideas and join forces, gaining regional consensus for a sustainable and widespread plan. We believe in the future of Appalachia. And thanks to you, we're proving it.

impact.

GRANT Workshops 2023

HAZARD
MOREHEAD
PRESTONSBURG
SOMERSET

ATTENDEES

248

COUNTIES

55

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

133

TOTAL TRAINING HOURS

3,968

STATES SERVED

5

40%
First-time
SUMMIT
Attendees

SOARSUMMIT

October 13 - 14, 2022
PIKEVILLE, KY

ATTENDEES

1,369

COUNTIES

60

STATES

15

BUSINESSES & ORGANIZATIONS

380

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$500K+

SOARGala Celebrating Appalachia

PRESTONSBURG, KY
APRIL 29, 2023

ATTENDEES

400+

COUNTIES

54

NUMBER OF AWARDS

25+

NOMINATIONS

366

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$150K+

EDUCATE. EMPLOY. EMPOWER.

The **Kentucky Community and Technical College System** is proud to introduce Education First Employers, a network of Ky companies offering benefits to students to help them complete their educational credentials and reach their career goals.

Interested companies should contact:
Kelly Heckman | kelly.heckman@kctcs.edu



kctcs.edu/efe

KCTCS is an equal opportunity employer and education institution.

Highlighting Kentucky agriculture's statewide economic contributions

KENTUCKY Food & Agriculture



KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

kyagr.com

Farmers' markets



\$15M SALES ACROSS KENTUCKY (2022)

170 FARMERS' MARKETS | **115** KENTUCKY COUNTIES

Forest products



\$13.5B TOTAL ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

49,109 TOTAL JOBS SUPPORTED | **\$3.2B** IN PAID WAGES

Beef



\$1B IN CASH RECEIPTS TO KY PRODUCERS (2022)

38,000 BEEF CATTLE PRODUCERS | **727M** POUNDS OF BEEF

The food and agriculture industries combine to contribute:

\$111.3B
OF TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

684,547
JOBS SUPPORTED

All data reflects combined impact between direct, indirect and induced economic sources. Data collected from Feedingtheeconomy.com, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the Food Industry Association, the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, and the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry.

SOARSUMMIT23

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CUMBERLANDS

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Exhibit Hall

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Day 1 Lunch

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Reception

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Day 2 Breakfast

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Day 1 Breakfast

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Videos

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Future of the Region

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Program

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Registration

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Speed Pitch

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1A	KY Innovation
2A	KY APEX Accelerator
3A	Kentucky Small Business Development Center
4A	Tunezle
5A	Bluegrass Crickets
6A	Fair Chance Works
7A	GITT Apparel
8A	Black Box Energy Solutions
9A	Mountain Association
10A	WellCare
11A	Kellene Turner Art, LLC
12A	Canopy
13A	Invest 606
14A	Addiction Recovery Care
15A	Second Chance Auto
16A	3 Sisters Events
17A	Destinations By Design
18A	Allsteel
19A	University of the Cumberlands
20A	Mary E. Martin Diabetes Center of Excellence
21A	Beacons of Hope
22A	KCTCS
23A	Baptist Health Corbin
24A	MSU Space Science Center
25A	Rajant
26A	Accelecom
27A	Whitaker Bank
28A	Whitley County Tourism
29A	Kentucky League of Cities
30A	Slope Master Innovations
31A	United States Patent and Trademark Office
32A	Lake Cumberland Tourism
33A	Cumberland Gap Region Tourism Association
34A	First Frontier Appalachian Trails
35A	Backroads of Appalachia
36A	CMH 23
37A	Eastern Highland North Region Tourism
38A	Kentucky Wildlands
39A	Daniel Boone Country Region Tourism

Concourse

1C	OPEN
2C	Camp Hero
3C	WYMT
4C	Appalachian Challenge Academy
5C	Southeast/South-Central Educational Cooperative
6C	Partners for Rural Impact
7C	KEDC
8C	Pikeville High School Healthier Lives Thrive
9C	Craft Academy FIRST Technical Robots
10C	Craft Academy Hazel Green Academy Revitalization Project
11C	Bell County High School How to be a Bobcat
12C	Somerset High School Solar Car

13C	Red Bird Mission
14C	Challenger Learning Center of Kentucky
15C	TEK Center
16C	The Center for STEM+eXcellence
17C	Pineville High School Mountain Lion News and Media
18C	Knott Central High School Be Kind to Your Mind
19C	Kentucky Campus Compact
20C	KY Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA)
21C	UK Appalachian Center
22C	UnitedHealthcare
23C	SOAR Office of Digital Equity
24C	Kentucky Association of Counties
25C	Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts (KCADD)
26C	Kentucky Division of Abandoned Mine Lands
27C	Kentucky Department for Public Health
28C	Ramey-Estep/Re-group
29C	One Senior Care (Mountain View PACE)
30C	Operation UNITE
31C	KY HELP Statewide Call Center
32C	Community Trust Bank
33C	KY Office of Adult Education
34C	KY Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services
35C	University of Pikeville Elliott School of Nursing
36C	NKU Dept. of Physics, Geology, & Engineering Technology
37C	Qk4
38C	Make My Move
39C	Code Kentucky
40C	Management Advisors, Inc.
41C	Forcht Bank
42C	Groups Recover Together
43C	UA Local 248
44C	USDA Rural Development
45C	Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program
46C	KCEOC Community Action Partnership
47C	The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development
48C	Friends Drift Inn
49C	BrightView Health
50C	American Business Systems
51C	SKED
52C	Mountain Comp. Care Center Healthy Workforce Grant
53C	Mountain Comp. Care Center Hidden in Plain Sight
54C	Goodwill Industries of Kentucky
55C	Kentucky Prescription Assistance Program
56C	SKED
57C	AdventHealth
58C	Volunteers of America Mid-States
59C	1 Clay County
60C	Eastern Kentucky University
61C	Kentucky State University
62C	Morehead State University
63C	Union College
64C	Nesbitt Engineering
65C	Appalachian Regional Healthcare
66C	Isaiah House
67C	Reliance Works



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recovery rebuilt my
FAMILY



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THERE'S MORE TO
SOAR

Join **the** team and help us grow the region.

Use your device's camera to scan the code to find out more.



» **GIVE YOUR TIME**

Whether you donate your time or services to our office staff, or volunteer with one of our local partners, giving your time will help move Eastern Kentucky forward. Just reach out if you'd like to volunteer your time or services.

» **MENTOR STUDENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

Coming alongside youth in Eastern Kentucky to help them understand the importance of education and the value of our region is one of the most rewarding things you can do. Contact us to see how you can get involved with mentoring local students.

» **WORK WITH US**

SOAR is seeking enthusiastic team players who are excited to give back to their communities and expand their professional experiences. Reach out to our team if you're interested in an open role or internship.

» **BECOME A PARTNER**

Eastern Kentucky businesses can give back in a special way by supporting SOAR through sponsorships. Different levels of support means every business that wants to partner with SOAR has the ability to do so.

» **MAKE A DONATION**

Every dollar counts when it comes to moving Eastern Kentucky forward. Your contributions will go directly towards supporting our work across the region. And because SOAR is a 501(c)3, 100% of all monetary and in-kind gifts are tax deductible.

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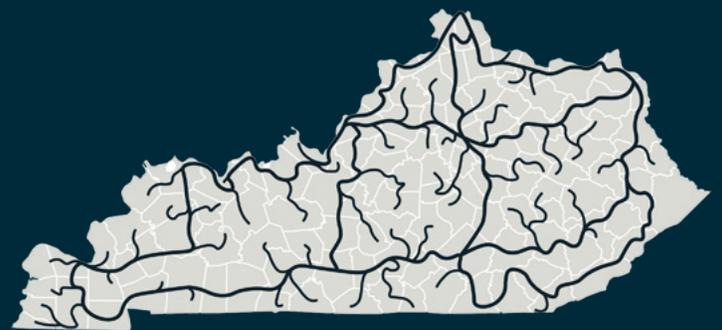
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- Travis Tritt
- Zach Williams

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- Alex Miller
- Crystal Gayle

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