

2026
ANNUAL REPORT



KENTUCKY PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2026



*"To promote healthy communities
through **advocacy, education, and
leadership.**"*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Members, Partners, and Friends of the Kentucky Public Health Association,

We are pleased to present the 2026 Kentucky Public Health Association Annual Report. It is my distinct honor to introduce this report to you, a culmination of the work that has been done by you, the members of this organization, over the past year. Think of this as a scrapbook of our journey together over the last year. As you are reviewing this document, I hope that you will gain new inspirations for new side quests and activities on our current journey together.

As we reflect on the past year, I am deeply proud of the journey we have taken together as Kentucky's public health community and the accomplishments in advancing health for all Kentuckians that we have achieved. This has been a year defined by resilience, collaboration, and a renewed commitment to protecting and improving the health of every person across our Commonwealth.

Throughout the last twelve months, we navigated complex challenges that tested our systems and our resolve. From addressing ongoing workforce shortages to strengthening our response to emerging and evolving health threats, we demonstrated what is possible when public health professionals unite with purpose. We expanded partnerships with local health departments, advanced conversations around health equity, and continued advocating for the resources needed to support Kentucky's diverse communities. Each step forward was made possible because of your dedication and your belief in the mission and vision of KPHA.

As we look ahead, our journey continues with clarity and determination. The coming year will bring opportunities to modernize our public health infrastructure, elevate the voices of our workforce, and strengthen our capacity to respond to both immediate and long-term health needs. We will continue championing policies that support prevention, equity, and community resilience. Most importantly, we will remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that every Kentuckian - regardless of geography, income, or background - has the opportunity to live a healthy life.

Thank you for your service, your leadership, and your unwavering support of KPHA. Together, we will continue on our journey to building a stronger, healthier future for the Commonwealth.

With appreciation,
Dr. Stephanie Lokits, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC
President, Kentucky Public Health Association



PUBLIC HEALTH IN ACTION

KHDA Opioid Abatement Funding Recovery Community Center Awardees

The Kentucky Health Department Association (KHDA) offered a funding opportunity to three Local Health Departments seeking to launch a Recovery Community Center through a grant with the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Commission. The three local health departments selected for the funding were Boyle County Health Department, Floyd County Health Department and Graves County Health Department. The purpose of the funding was to develop and/or expand recovery support services in Kentucky communities. The grant allowed for services and supports related to harm reduction and overdose prevention as well as support and resources for families touched by substance use disorders.

Each of the LHDs voiced how much the launching of these recovery community centers has built new partnerships in the community and opened up new opportunities to assist families and meet needs of individuals and families touched by SUDs.

Graves County



Graves County Health Department launched the “GCHub” with their award. Public Health Director, Riley Beth Willett was quoted saying, “Our goal is to provide a welcoming place where individuals and families can access resources, receive guidance, and find encouragement no matter where they are on their journey. We want GCHub to serve as a central hub that brings together organizations, services and opportunities that help improve lives and strengthen our community.” GCHub is a free program for anyone affected by drug or alcohol use, including individuals in recovery and their support systems. Through GCHub, participants have access to a variety of services at no cost, including hot meals, food bags, clothing, hygiene supplies, recovery classes, peer support services, transportation assistance, laundry services and much more. The program is designed to reduce barriers, meet immediate needs and connect people with resources that promote recovery, stability and overall well-being.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN ACTION

KHDA Opioid Abatement Funding Recovery Community Center Awardees Boyle County

The Bridge Recovery Community Center in Boyle County was created in response to a need seen through their Harm Reduction Program. While individuals were accessing syringe services, many were also seeking support for housing, employment, recovery, transportation, food insecurity, and other basic needs. Prior to opening The Bridge, approximately one-third of all visits to the Harm Reduction Program were for needs unrelated to syringe services. Boyle County Health Department recognized their community needed a dedicated space for people to access support regardless of where they were in their journey.



In addition to peer support and resource navigation, The Bridge introduced Boyle County's first Double Trouble in Recovery meeting, expanding local support options for individuals navigating both recovery and mental health challenges. The center has also strengthened connections to community resources and created opportunities for individuals and families to engage in a supportive environment focused on hope, wellness, and long-term success.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN ACTION

KHDA Opioid Abatement Funding Recovery Community Center Awardees

Floyd County



The Hub of Floyd County launched recently. This new recovery community center is dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by substance use disorders and is helping strengthen recovery efforts throughout the region. The Hub of Floyd County will provide a safe and supportive environment where people can find encouragement, resources, and a path forward. Recovery community centers play a vital role in improving health outcomes by connecting individuals to peer support, recovery programs, employment resources, transportation assistance, and other services that help individuals achieve and maintain recovery. The impact of The Hub extends beyond the individuals it serves. Strong recovery support systems help rebuild families, improve community well-being, reduce stigma, and foster a culture of hope throughout Floyd County.



2026-2027 KPHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee



Dr. Stephanie Lokits,
DNP, APRN, FNP-BC
President-Elect



Meagan Hurst, MPH
President-Elect



Emily Childers
Executive Director



Lisa Pollock, BSA, BBA
Treasurer



Jessica Austin, MPH
Secretary

Executive committee members are elected by organization membership and serve varying terms of office. The executive committee is responsible for ensuring that all organization business is conducted in compliance to the Bylaws and Articles of Corporation, as well as required activities as sanctioned by the American Public Health Association. The executive committee works to uphold the ideals of the organization and continue providing opportunities for membership through advocacy, education, and leadership.

2026-2027 KPHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Directors at Large



Kristy Bolen, MPA



Tyler Caldwell, MPH



**Dr. Chad Eldridge,
DNP, RN, CIC**



**James House, B.S.,
MEP**



**Blake Johnson,
MPH, MSW**



Krista Mevoli, CPH⁺



Paul Royce, B.Acc



**Elizabeth Tennison,
MPH**



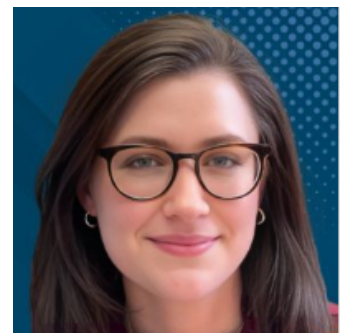
**Dr. Jonathan Vorbeck,
EdD, MPH, CPH**



**Andy Waters,
RS, MPH**



**Dr. Nathaniel Wilson,
PhD, MPH, REHS**



**Madison Yerges,
MPH, MHA⁺**

Directors at Large are elected by membership of the Kentucky Public Health and are responsible for the oversight of all official business of the association. Directors at Large serve a term of four (4) years and must participate on at least one KPHA committee. Directors at large represent the voice of KPHA membership on the Board of Directors and serve the organization by engaging the mission, vision, and values of the Kentucky Public Health Association.

(+) indicates Directors at Large who were elected in 2026.

2026-2027 COMMITTEE CHAIRS



Meagan Hurst, MPH
Blake Johnson, MPH, MSW
Advocacy and Governance Committee *



Brandi Gilley, MPH, RDN, LD
Tyler Caldwell, MPH
Communications Committee



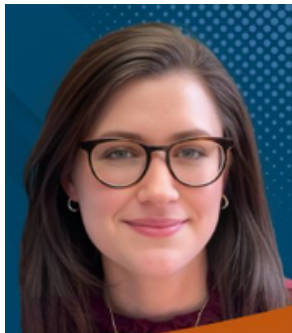
Jenika Andrew
Brittany Parker, MPH
Conference Committee



Kristy Bolen, MPA
Dr. Chad Elderidge, DNP, RN, CIC
Scholarships and Awards
Committee



Dr. Laurel Schwartz, PhD
Madison Yerges, MPH, MHA
Student Engagement Committee



James House, B.S., MEP
Dr. Jonathan Vorbeck, EdD, MPH, CPH
Workforce Development Committee



Committee Chairs shall serve on the Board of Directors and report on the activities of the committee at each meeting of the Board and at the Annual Meeting, in person or by written report. Committee Chairs are appointed by the President and serve a term that shall coincide with the term of the appointing President.

* Advocacy and Governance Committees are currently operating as a Special Committee as of June 2026; Finance Committee was transitioned to a Special Committee in 2024 and is chaired by the Treasurer.

Committee Members

We would like to thank the following individuals for their contribution to organizational growth through their service on KPHA committees. Committee membership is voluntary and open to all KPHA members. For more information on how to join a KPHA Committee, visit www.kpha-ky.org.

Advocacy	Awards	Communications	Conference
Tara Gross Joshua Horton Meagan Hurst Blake Johnson Dr. Danielle King Dr. Stephanie Lokits Dr. Julie McKee Jessie Parker Lisa Pollock Andrea Renfrow Jennifer Robinson Elizabeth Tennison	Carissa Adams Jessica Austin Kristy Bolen Carrie Conia Dr. Kelly Giesbrecht Meagan Hurst Karen Lencki Lisa Pollock Paul Royce	Tyler Caldwell Kyra Dailey Dr. Danielle King Joshua Horton Meagan Hurst Brandon Link Brittany Parker Lisa Pollock Elizabeth Tennison Emily Thompson Kim Yazell	Tracy Aaron Carissa Adams Brittany Bell Abigail Belt Kristy Bolen Janie Cambron Carrie Conia Brandi Gilley Jennifer Gulley Meagan Hurst Dr. Laurie Larkin Lisa Pollock Sara Robeson April Thomas Madison Yerges
Finance	Governance	Student Engagement	Workforce Development
Ron Cimala Joshua Horton Meagan Hurst Paul Royce Andrew Waters	Laura Foley Joshua Horton Dr. Danielle King Dr. Stephanie Lokits Lisa Pollock Paul Royce	Nicole Barber Lindsey Brewer Janie Cambron Xiuhua Ding Elizabeth Gordan Meagan Hurst Grace Lartey Lisa Pollock Sara Robeson Dr. Tammi Thomas	Denise Beech Deena Bell Dr. Deniece Bell Dr. Lyndsey Blair Janie Cambron Ashley Carroll Savanna Clark Carrie Conia Mariah Ervin Rudrani Ghosh Brandi Gilley Tara Gross Jennifer Gulley Kendra Helm Carol Huckelby Meagan Hurst Tom Kollmer Karen Lencki Dr. Molly McKinney Bj Newbury Brittany Parker Lisa Pollock Marcy Rein Andrea Renfrow Jennifer Robinson Dr. Laurel Schwartz Dr. Madeline Tomlinson Sharon Trivette

2026 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At the Kentucky Public Health Association, our members are at the heart of everything we do. As we grow, our vision is to build a vibrant, inclusive, and statewide network of public health professionals who reflect the communities we serve. To learn more about our key membership outreach goals, membership types, and more, click the link below!

Individual	94
Lifetime	132
Bronze Level Organization	203
Diamond Level Organization	367
Gold Level Organization	36
Silver Level Organization	136
Retiree	4
Students	38
Platinum	19
Total	1,030

JOIN NOW >

LEARN ABOUT KPHA COMMITTEES

ADVOCACY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE*

The Advocacy and Governance Committee shall recommend policy and advocacy priorities to the Board of Directors, and work to advance the priorities selected by the Board of Directors. The joint committee shall also make recommendations to the Board with amendments to the bylaws, modifications to the policies and procedures manual, onboarding new officers and board members, and modifying the strategic plan. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) of the Advocacy and Governance Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors. The President-Elect shall serve as a member of the Advocacy and Governance Committee.

Meagan Hurst and Blake Johnson serve as chairpersons of the Advocacy and Governance Special Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee shall be responsible for managing internal and external communication of the Association, including social media campaigns to promote public health, establishing a branding policy for the Association, and compiling the mid-year and an annual report of Association activities. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Communications Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors

Brandi Gilley and Tyler Caldwell serve as chairpersons of the Communications Committee.

(*) - indicates a special committee

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Awards and Scholarship Committee shall be responsible for soliciting nominations for the annual awards of the Association, shall review the nominations and determine the awardee. The awards shall be presented at the annual conference. The Awards and Scholarship Committee shall be responsible for advertising available scholarship opportunities, accept applications for scholarships, and award scholarships based on available funding. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Awards and Scholarship Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

Kristy Bolen and Dr. Chad Elderidge serve as chairpersons of the Awards and Scholarship Committee.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The Conference Committee shall plan, promote, and execute the conferences and annual meeting of the Association. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Conference Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

Jenika Andrew and Brittany Parker serves as chairpersons of the Conference Committee.

Interested in getting involved?
Join a Committee!
Complete the
[Committee Volunteer Form](#)

A representative will be in
touch with information about
the committee.

LEARN ABOUT OUR COMMITTEES

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Elections Committee shall consist of five (5) members of the Association whose duties shall be to identify persons qualified for and interested in serving as officers of the Association. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Elections Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

Brandon Link serves as chairperson of the elections committee.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Student Engagement Committee shall be responsible for promoting the interest and involvement of higher education students in Kentucky with a concern for public health. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Student Engagement Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

Dr. Laurel Schwartz and Madison Yerges serve as chairpersons of the Student Engagement Committee



FINANCE COMMITTEE*

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing the annual operating budget of the Association, tracking all revenues and expenditures of the Association, identifying additional streams of revenue for the Association, and reviewing the membership fee structure. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chair of this committee. The President shall appoint the other members of the Finance Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

Lisa Pollock and Brittany Parker serve as chairpersons of the Finance Committee.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Workforce Development Committee shall be responsible for increasing workforce development opportunities for public health professionals statewide, including identifying and developing opportunities for the Association to host and sponsor trainings. The President shall appoint the Chair(s) and other members of the Workforce Development Committee, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors.

James House and Dr. Jonathan Vorbeck serve as chairpersons of the Workforce Development Committee.

(*) - indicates a special committee

KPHA STUDENT DAY 2026

GAME ON: TOGETHER FOR HEALTH

Event Overview

As part of the 78th Annual Kentucky Public Health Association (KPHA) Conference, Student Day embraced this year's theme, "Game On: Together for Health," by bringing students together to explore career pathways, build professional networks, and gain insight from leaders across the field.

ATTENDANCE AND REPRESENTATION

- **Total Student Day attendees:** 41 students
 - **Number of students who attended the full conference:** 21
- **Schools represented:** 6 institutions
- **Levels of study:** Undergraduate, Graduate, and Doctoral

PROGRAMMING

Sessions focused on collaboration and preparing the next generation of public health professionals.

Sessions included:

- Student and Professional 3-Minute Thesis Competition
- How I Got Here: Career Journeys from the Public
- Health Workforce
- Career Pathway Lunch and Learn
- Beyond the Degree: Turning Public Health Training into a Career
- Public Health in Practice: Table Talks from the following programs:
 - Public Health Program Evaluation
 - Federal Careers and Public Health Preparedness and Response
 - Population Health
 - Kentucky Department for Public Health Student Internship Opportunities
 - Maternal and Child Health
 - Epidemiology
 - Local Health Departments
 - Kentucky Public Health Association



KDPH staff member Rebecca Vogt previously served as a student intern through the KDPH student internship program!

KPHA STUDENT DAY 2026

GAME ON: TOGETHER FOR HEALTH

KEY INSIGHTS FROM STUDENT FEEDBACK

What students valued most:

- Exposure to diverse public health careers
- Opportunities for networking and meaningful discussions with field professionals Educational connections to real-world public health work
- Engaging and relevant session topics

Suggestions for future programming:

- More interactive, skill-based sessions (e.g., mock interviews, role-playing scenarios) Greater representation of research careers
- Increased offerings throughout the year to support professional development



KPHA Student Day speaker group photo.



KPHA Student Day group photo.



University of Kentucky student Tristan Ntego, MS, networking with other students and professionals.



Panelists Sara Jo Best and Chase Barnes participate in discussion with the audience.

Interested in joining the Student Engagement Committee?

Maddie Yerges, MPH, MHA

Student Engagement Co-Chair
madison.yerges@ky.gov

Laurel Schwartz, DrPH

MPH Student Engagement Co-Chair
laurel.schwartz@eku.edu

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The KPHA Workforce Development (WFD) Committee remained actively engaged throughout the year in advancing workforce development initiatives across Kentucky's public health system. With an active membership of more than 30 public health professionals, educators, students, and partners, the committee continued to serve as a forum for collaboration, professional growth, and workforce development planning.

A major focus of the committee's work was supporting student and workforce engagement through educational programming and professional development opportunities. In partnership with the Student Engagement Committee, the WFD Committee helped plan and deliver Student Day at the KPHA Annual Conference. Programming focused on public health career pathways, workforce experiences, and strategies to support students and early-career professionals as they transition into the workforce.

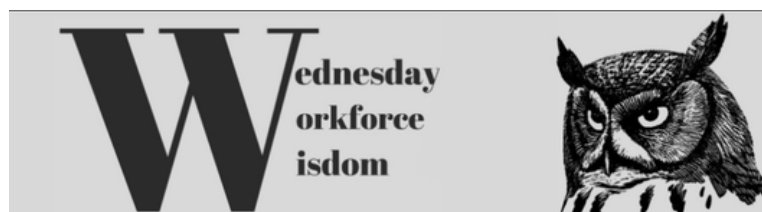


Presenters Madison Yerges and Jon Vorbeck at KPHA's Student Day, a collaborative event between the Workforce Development and Student Engagement Committees

Committee members also contributed to conference programming by serving as moderators for workforce-focused sessions throughout the annual conference. These efforts helped facilitate discussions on workforce challenges, emerging trends, and professional development opportunities while strengthening connections among students, practitioners, educators, and public health leaders.

In addition to conference activities, the committee contributed to KPHA communications by developing and publishing 12 Workforce Wednesday features. These monthly spotlights provided workforce development resources, professional insights, and career-related information for KPHA members and the broader public health community. The collection of Workforce Wednesday features remains available on the KPHA website as an ongoing resource for workforce development and professional learning.

Throughout the year, the committee met regularly, welcomed new members, and engaged in discussions focused on advancing workforce development across Kentucky. Key areas of focus included strengthening partnerships, supporting recruitment and retention initiatives, and promoting professional growth and leadership development within the public health workforce. The committee looks forward to continuing these efforts and supporting a strong, skilled, and sustainable public health workforce across the Commonwealth.



KPHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

Melissa “Moose” Alperin, EdD, MPH, MCHES
President-Elect, APHA



Melissa Alperin, more commonly known by her nickname, Moose, is Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of Behavioral, Social, and Health Education Sciences at the Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH) at Emory University. Moose has a long history of leadership in workforce development and public health practice. Currently, she is PI/Director of the Region IV Public Health Training Center and the Kentucky Public Health Emerging Leadership Institute. At Rollins, Moose is also the Director of Online Education.

Moose has an extensive record of service to her Affiliate, the Georgia Public Health Association, and to the American Public Health Association (APHA). Within APHA, Moose's service extends to the Public Health Education and Health Promotion Section; the Council of Affiliates (CoA), where she served as CoA Chair; and the Executive Board, where she served as both Vice Chair and Chair. Moose is the current President-Elect of APHA.

KPHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

Public Health Six Ways: Voices from Kentucky

This session highlighted leadership perspectives from across Kentucky's public health system, showcasing the diverse roles that collectively shape public health practice across the Commonwealth.

Dr. Lori Caloia, MD, Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Affairs, Kentucky Department for Public Health



Dr. Lori Caloia is Deputy Commissioner for Clinical Affairs at the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Her passion for public health began when she served in the U.S. Air Force as a flight surgeon, where her duties included oversight of base-wide public health programs. She has broad experience in healthcare, including primary care, academic medicine, public health, and Medicaid and commercial health plans. She previously served as medical director at Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness. Dr. Caloia received her medical degree from Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, a Leadership Certificate in Public Health from Eastern Virginia Medical School, and Master of Public Health Degree from Kent State University. She is board certified in family medicine.

Connie Mendel, Chief Health Strategist, Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness



Connie received her Bachelor of Science from the University of South Carolina and Master of Public Health degree from The University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences. She has devoted her career to public health service beginning in 1997 when she joined the Jefferson County Health Department as an environmental health specialist in the Hazardous Materials Emergency Response, Food Safety, and Mosquito Control programs. She steadily ascended the ranks and serves as Director and Louisville's Chief Health Strategist where she leads the department, focusing on building a strategic and sustainable public health workforce and removing barriers which prevent people from attaining their highest level of health.

KPHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

Public Health Six Ways: Voices from Kentucky

Kaitlyn Krolikowski, MPH, Public Health Director, Purchase District Health Department



Kaitlyn Krolikowski is the Public Health Director for the Purchase District Health Department (PDHD) which serves McCracken, Ballard, Carlisle, Hickman, and Fulton Counties in far western KY. She received her Master of Public Health degree with a concentration in Informatics from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2017 and is pursuing her DrPH from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Kaitlyn started her career at PDHD as a Health Educator advancing through administration to eventually become the Director. She has managed over \$7 million in direct federal grants creating programs and projects in partnership to address social determinants of health.

Dr. Marcy Rein, RN, MPH, DNP, Public Health Director Whitley County Health Department



Marcy Rein started as Public Health Director at the Whitley County Health Department in Williamsburg, Kentucky, in 2019. She is a registered nurse with a Bachelor of Nursing Science (2003) and a Master of Public Health in Public Health Practice (2012) from the University of Alaska Anchorage and a Doctor of Nursing Practice (2025) from Northern Kentucky University. A graduate of the National Association of City and County Health Officials Adaptive Leadership Academy, and the Kentucky Excellence in Executive Public Health Leaders program, she is currently the southern regional representative of the Kentucky Health Departments Association and chairs the Data Committee and the Shared Resources IT Subcommittee. Marcy is a parent, farmer, writer, and true crime podcaster.

KPHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER HIGHLIGHT

Public Health Six Ways: Voices from Kentucky

**Tammy Riley, President and Public Health Director
Kentucky Health Departments Association (KHDA)**



As Public Health Director for Pike County, Tammy Riley promotes community health across private, public, and governmental sectors to expand access to care for residents. She currently serves as President of the Kentucky Health Departments Association and is committed to advancing prevention efforts and improving health outcomes statewide.

**Dr. Stephanie Lokits, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC,
President, Kentucky Public Health Association**



Dr Stephanie Lokits became a nurse in 2004, graduating with BSN from Bellarmine University. She then graduated from NKU in 2009 with a MSN and in 2019 with a DNP. She entered the medical field in 1999 when she began training as an EMT. After nursing school, Dr. Lokits worked in the Emergency Department at the busiest hospital in Louisville. Since then, she has worked in maternal and infant care, mental health, acute retail medicine, employee health and wellness, pediatric primary care and public health. She currently serves Director of Clinical Services for a Louisville Metro Department for Public Health and Wellness, overseeing their Immunizations, STI and Tuberculosis clinics as well as their Communicable Disease Surveillance and Education department. She is also the acting President of the Kentucky Public Health Association. Her passion lies in preventative medicine with a focus on harm reduction, but not simply through the lens of this relating to substance use, but across the lifespan with all patients and lifestyles.

2026 SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Scholarships

Ellen M. Buchart Scholarship: Carissa Adams, MPH

The Ellen M. Buchart Scholarship was named in memory and honor of Ellen Buchart who served Kentucky Public Health Association (KPHA) in many capacities, including as a past President.

Public Health Workforce Development Scholarship: Patricia Shepherd, LPN

The Public Health Workforce Development Scholarship requires an awardee to be employed by a local health department, public health organization, or health related agency. Preference will be given to students looking to enhance their education in the public health field in which they serve.

Awards

Administrative Support Staff Award: Jimmie Cecil, BS

To honor someone who has made outstanding contributions in the field of administrative support for public health.

Elbert “Al” Austin, Jr. Career Achievement Award: Dr. Phyllis A. Bryden, DrPH, MSPH, CPH, RN

This accolade is dedicated to someone who, despite their humility among peers, has achieved significant milestones in their career. Al Austin, who notably served as the health cabinet secretary in the 1980s, is the inspiration for this award

Helen B. Fraser Maternal and Child Health Award: Betty Hopkins

To honor an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to the health and well-being of mothers and children in Kentucky. Dr. Fraser was state MCH director from 1956 until her death in 1965.

KPHA Group Award: Kentucky Regional Epidemiologists

To honor a designated group or organization that has collectively contributed to public health program development, toward enhancement of public health in the Commonwealth.

Outstanding Epidemiologist of the Year: Lee Hundley, MPH

To honor someone who is considered to have ongoing excellence in epidemiologic practice demonstrated by consensus of peers, leadership, or other colleagues AND either or both of the following impacts:

1. Significant impact in an area of expertise or on epidemiology practice across the state (improvement to epi practices in Kentucky, increasing the epi capacity to respond to public health issues, events or crisis, coordination of a significant or large-scale epi response, contributions to overall epi operations or processes in KY)
2. Significant impact on the health of the population of Kentucky (imputed or quantifiable reductions in morbidity or mortality for a particular outcome based epi practice, imputed or quantifiable improvements in health or health practices due to epi practices, significant epi contributions to apply practices that will have a long-term impact on the health of Kentuckians).

Outstanding Public Health Nurse Award: Dr. Ruth Willard, DNP, MBA, RN, BC

To honor an outstanding nurse in our Commonwealth who has demonstrated exceptional performance.

2026 SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Russell E. Teague Meritorious Award: Deena Bell

To honor and recognize exceptional and meritorious achievement in the field of public health. Dr. Teague was Kentucky Health Commissioner from 1956-1970.

Sara C. Stice Health Education Award: Abbie Conley

To honor an individual who has made an outstanding contribution in the field of health education in Kentucky. Sara C. Stice was state Director of Health Education from 1950 until her retirement in 1973.

Vivian A. Lasley-Bibbs “Changemaker” Award: Maria Church, ADAC

This award is to honor the legacy of Vivian A. Lasley-Bibbs and her dedication to building a more equitable Commonwealth. The impact of her work will be felt for decades to come and we are better because of her efforts. Not only has she left an indelible mark on many of our hearts and minds, but she is the legacy of health equity in public health in the Commonwealth. This year, KPHA is honored to award the Vivian A. Lasley-Bibbs Changemaker Award in her memory.

William “Bill” Patton Environmental Service Award: Chad Lynch, REHS, MPH

To honor a person who has demonstrated exceptional performance, outstanding achievements, and meritorious service in Environmental Services. Bill Patton worked tirelessly as an environmentalist in southeastern Kentucky from the early 1980's until his death in 2001. Bill truly believed that he could improve the environmental health of all Kentuckians.

Awards Selected by the KPHA Board of Directors

Industry Award: Kentucky Health Departments Association

To honor and recognize an exceptional and meritorious achievement in Kentucky's public health by a business or organization.

President's Award: Emily Childers, EVP, CMP

Honors a person who has demonstrated exemplary leadership, support, and dedication to KPHA

Student Engagement Award for Excellence: University of Kentucky Student Public Health Association

The Public Health Workforce Development Scholarship will be administered by KPHA in the amount of \$2,000 and is payable at the rate of \$1,000 per semester paid directly to the student's school to provide general academic assistance for one year.

We encourage you to nominate your peers for one of our awards in 2027.

**To learn more about the scholarship and awards criteria, please visit
www.kpha-ky.org**



78TH ANNUAL



KENTUCKY PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

GAME ON!

TOGETHER FOR HEALTH

MARCH 17-19, 2026



NORTHERN KY CONVENTION CENTER

KPHA



We want to thank all of our attendees, speakers, and sponsors for a great 2026 Annual Conference. Because of your support, Kentucky Public Health Association is reaching new heights with record attendance, networking, and education to create a healthier Commonwealth!

**Total
Attendees
572**

78TH ANNUAL



KENTUCKY PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

GAME ON!

TOGETHER FOR HEALTH

MARCH 17-19, 2026



NORTHERN KY CONVENTION CENTER

KPHA



THOMAS MORE
UNIVERSITY

78TH ANNUAL



KENTUCKY PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

GAME ON!

TOGETHER FOR HEALTH

MARCH 17-19, 2026



NORTHERN KY CONVENTION CENTER

KPHA



Humana
Healthy Horizons.
in Kentucky



**LINCOLN TRAIL
DISTRICT
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**
Good Health & A Safe Environment

**TEAM
KENTUCKY.**

CABINET FOR HEALTH
AND FAMILY SERVICES

LCDHD

Lake Cumberland District Health Department
A Healthy Today for a Brighter Tomorrow.



LCHD

LAUREL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Serving Our Community Since 1931



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Franklin County Health Department



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Family Planning



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Lung Cancer Screening



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Immunizations



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Maternal and Child Health Division



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Franklin County Health Department



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Viral Hepatitis



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Colon Cancer Screening & Prevention Program



Kentucky Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Harm Reduction

Mark Your Calendar!



**79TH ANNUAL
KENTUCKY PUBLIC
HEALTH ASSOCIATION
CONFERENCE**

March 9-11, 2027

Conference Center

**Northern Kentucky
Convention Center
1 W Rivercenter Blvd
Covington, KY 41011**



Hotels

**Cincinnati Marriott at
RiverCenter
10 W RiverCenter Blvd,
Covington, KY 41011**

**Embassy Suites Cincinnati
RiverCenter
10 E RiverCenter Blvd,
Covington, KY 41011**





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Kentucky Public Health Association is an affiliated association of the American Public Health Association (APHA). We have collaborated with APHA to grow stronger as organizations, to share expertise, influence, and resources, and to advocate for common priorities at the local, state and federal levels.

APHA is the national voice of public health and champions the health of all people and all communities. It is the only organization that combines a nearly 150-year perspective, a broad-based member community and the ability to influence federal policy to improve the public's health. Learn more at www.apha.org

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**Report Prepared by the KPHA
Communications Committee**