



# THE CHAMBER CONNECTION

Volume 30, Issue 2

[www.paducahchamber.org](http://www.paducahchamber.org)

February 2026

## Paducah Chamber's February breakfast will feature Paducah native SaMee Burrage Harden

The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce's February 5th Power in Partnership Breakfast will feature Paducah native SaMee Burrage Harden. The breakfast is sponsored by the McCracken County Chapter of the NAACP and the McCracken County Community Career Endowment and also honors Black History Month.

The breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Paducah-McCracken County Convention Center. Pre-registration is required by Monday, February 2nd at 2 p.m. at [paducahchamber.org](http://paducahchamber.org) or by calling 270-443-1746. Power Card holders do not have to pre-register. The cost is \$25.

SaMee Burrage Harden is a graduate of Paducah Tilghman High School. Her parents

are the late Sam and Barbara Burrage, who were both very active in the Paducah community for many years. Currently, Harden is Lead Counsel of Community Trust for Airbnb and advises internal clients on complex, high-impact trust and safety issues. She previously served as a White House Fellow and senior U.S. Department of Justice official. Before the White House Fellowship, she worked at Facebook/Meta as a Data Privacy and Public Policy Manager. Prior to that, Harden was a federal prosecutor, where she specialized

in charging child exploitation and human trafficking offenses and won several awards for her dedication and hard work. Harden is an alumna of the: 1) Harvard Kennedy School of Government where she was a fully funded Equity Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership; 2) Harvard Business School; 3) Northwestern Pritzker School of Law - where she is currently an adjunct professor; 4) Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan; 5) American University; and 6) University of Louisville.



SaMee Burrage Harden

Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce

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First Row (Left to Right) Sara-Elizabeth Bush, Michelle Campbell, Garrett Clark, Layten Croft, Kacie Daugherty, Michael Felts, Nikki Gregory, Samantha Hargrave, Sean Jones; (Second Row) Chloe King, Brock Kirk, Braden Locke, Hannah Mallett, Adam May, Kane McCord, Marra McMillan, Kristen Middlebrooks, Ryan Milauskas; (Third Row) Mattea Mitchell, Chuck Murphy, Bailey Myers, Ike Nichols, Jake Pepper, Adam Prehoda, Crystal Price, Elizabeth Riley, Travis Spiceland; (Fourth Row) Melissa Spurr, Zach Thomas, Katina Todd, Mandy Todd, Katie Walker, Shannon Waltmon, Eric White, Whitney Williams, Jeremy York

# LWK class #4 announced

**L**eadership West Kentucky, a regional leadership development program sponsored by the West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance (WKRCA), announces its fourth class which includes 36 participants representing all 15 counties in the WKRCA.

The program is designed to foster a network of informed, engaged citizens who have the knowledge and network to collaborate across county boundaries. The curriculum offers a deep dive into the region's unique and diverse cultural, business, and economic environments. By combining regional education, leadership development training, and intentional relationship-building, the program empowers individuals to drive meaningful change and create a lasting, positive impact for all West Kentucky counties. The counties represented by Leadership West Kentucky Class #4 include Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, and Trigg.

Class members will participate in six sessions, taking place from January through June 2026, which began with an orientation in Paducah on January 21 and 22 to kick off the program. Class members will travel from February through June for a one-day session in a featured area with a

focus on that community as well as regional topics such as transportation, education, economic development, quality of life, advocacy, agriculture, and tourism. These topics will be covered by knowledgeable speakers and panels, tours, interactive exercises, and class discussions. Participants will graduate at the final session to be held in Hopkinsville on June 25.

TVA is the presenting sponsor of the program. The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce serves as the administrator for WKRCA and for Leadership West Kentucky in coordination with The Leadership Center.

## MEMBERS OF LEADERSHIP WEST KENTUCKY CLASS #4

**Ballard:** Samantha Hargrove, First Community Bank of the Heartland; Brock Kirk, Ballard Telephone Cooperative

**Caldwell:** Chloe King, Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce; Jake Pepper, Planters Bank

**Calloway:** Shannon Waltmon, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Jeremy York, Syngenta Digital

**Carlisle:** Katina Todd, Kentucky Farm Bureau

**Christian:** Michael Felts, Hopkinsville Police Department; Kristen Middlebrooks, Elevance Health; Melissa Spurr, Hopkinsville Water Environment Authority; Eric White, Atmos Energy

**Crittenden:** Layten Croft, City of Marion, KY; Whitney Williams, Siemens

**Fulton:** Adam Prehoda, Hickman Electric System

**Graves:** Kacie Daugherty, West Kentucky Community & Technical College; Kane McCord, CFSB; Elizabeth Riley, Riley Architect Services, PLLC

**Hickman:** Chuck Murphy, The Citizens Bank

**Hopkins:** Hannah Mallett, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development; Mandy Todd, City of Madisonville

**Livingston:** Garrett Clark, Lake Barkley Partnership; Braden Locke, Cumberland River Homes

**Lyon:** Zach Thomas, Lyon County High School

**Marshall:** Sean Jones, Atmos Energy; Crystal Price, CFSB; Bailey Myers, Baptist Health Paducah; Travis Spiceland, Jackson Purchase Energy Corporation

**McCracken:** Michelle Campbell, Paducah-McCracken Co. Convention & Expo Center; Nikki Gregory, Bacon Farmer Workman Engineering and Testing; Marra McMillan, Paducah Bank; Ike Nichols, FNB Bank, Inc.

**Trigg:** Ryan Milauskas, United Community Bank

**Multiple Counties:** Sara-Elizabeth Bush, UK HealthCare; Adam May, TVA; Mattea Mitchell, Purchase Area Development District; Katie Walker, Kentucky Chamber Foundation.

# Welcome New Chamber Members: December 2025

## Consolidated Electrical Distributors, Inc.

### Distributors-Electrical

Drew Richardson  
605 Park Ave  
Paducah, KY 42001  
(270) 442-2735

customerservice@cedpaducah.com  
<https://www.cedpaducah.com>

## ClearPath Health Collaborative

### Health & Wellness

Eddie Hamilton  
4507A Granny White Pike  
Nashville, TN 37204  
(615) 497-4372  
dreddiehamilton@gmail.com

## Enterprise Truck Rental

### Commercial Truck Rental & Leasing

Amanda Schraven  
ww3210 Coleman Rd  
Paducah, KY 42001  
(270) 391-1249

amanda.j.schraven@em.com  
<https://www.enterprisetrucks.com>

## ITAC Engineers & Constructors, Inc.

### Consultants-Design & Construction

Terry Riley  
319 North Seventh Street  
Mayfield, KY 42066  
(919) 816-7457  
terry.riley@itac.us.com  
<https://itac.us.com>

## Lee Upton Kentucky Farm Bureau

### Insurance

Lee Upton  
1600 Broadway  
Paducah, KY 42001-2704  
(270) 442-7179  
lee.upton@kyfb.com  
<https://www.kyfb.com/mccracken/east/>

## LifeWise Academy

### Education

Shaylon Freeman  
2780 New Holt Rd, Suite D  
P. O. Box 320  
Paducah, KY 42001  
(731) 514-7093  
[shaylonfreeman@lifewise.org](mailto:shaylonfreeman@lifewise.org)  
<https://www.lifewise.org/mccrackenky>

## OakDev

### Construction-Remodel/Repair

Julie Dos Remedios  
3929 Old US Highway 45 S  
Paducah, KY 42003  
(270) 933-7980  
[gigidrmd@hotmail.com](mailto:gigidrmd@hotmail.com)

## Subs of WKY inc

### Restaurants

Ishan Sheth  
5349 Shelldrake Lane  
Paducah, KY 42001

## Vonthera

### Spas

David Wilkins  
404 Broadway  
Paducah, KY 42001  
270-201-2997

[vonthera404@gmail.com](mailto:vonthera404@gmail.com)  
<https://www.vontherabody.com/>

## Wyatt Bell & Co.

### Wholesale Distributor

### Amy Wiley

839 Martin Luther King Jr Dr  
P.O. Box 206  
Paducah, KY 42001  
(270) 442-5484  
[amy@wyattbell.com](mailto:amy@wyattbell.com)  
<https://www.wyattbell.com>

# Thank You for Renewing Your Chamber Membership in December!

## Allen Auto Sales

## Amanda Newman Design, LLC

## Ascendant Facility Partners, LLC

## Atlas Door of Paducah

## Atmos Energy Corporation

## Baird

## Banterra Bank

## Broadway Custom Framing

## Bryant Law Center

## Cassidy's Cause Therapeutic Riding Academy

## The Catering Company

## Chip Wynn Motors

## City National Bank

## City of Paducah

## Comcast Cable of Paducah, Inc.

## Construction Safety Consultants

## Cunningham Dental

## Cynthia's Ristorante

## Dippin' Dots, LLC

## The Dirt Road Boutique

## Dr. Butler & Associates, PLLC

## EHI Consultants/PGDP Citizens Advisory Board

## Falconite Development, Inc.

## Farmer & Company Real Estate

## Four Rivers Nuclear Partnership, LLC (FRNP)

## G & O Grill

## GEO Consultants Corporation

## Gill Family Properties, LLC

## Grumley, Riley & Stewart, PSC

## HR Consulting Solutions

## INTEC Group, LLC

## IS Group, Inc.

## Jennings & Associates Financial Advisors

## Kentucky Storage Company

## KFVS12

## Kiwanis Club of Paducah

## KK's Attic

## Lane's Mobile John

## Larry Stovesand Buick GMC Inc.

## Lone Oak Family Eye Care

## Maiden Alley Cinema

## McCracken County Public Schools

## McMurry & Livingston, PLLC

## Mercy Regional Emergency Medical Service

## Mid-America Conversion Services, LLC

## Miller Hahn, PLLC

## The National Quilt Museum

## Neil's Catering

## Paducah Area Transit System

## Paducah Bank

## Pathology Associates of Paducah, PSC

## People Plus, Inc.

## Reliable Glass

## Resistant Roofing, LLC

## River City Mission, Inc.

## Rotary Club of Paducah

## Starfish Orphan Ministry

## Steve Mills Construction

## Strawberry Hills Pharmacy

## Troutman Sign Graphics, Inc.

## Wagner Moving & Storage Inc.

## Warren Heating & Air

## West Kentucky Allied Services, Inc.

## Western Kentucky Kidney Specialists

## Whitehall Industries

## Whitlow, Roberts, Houston & Straub, PLLC

## Wright Photography and Video, LLC

## XBS Digital

## Ralph S. Young

# Letter from 2026 Paducah Chamber Board Chair Kenny Boyd

My journey to the role of Chairman of the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce is relatively “normal” I would say. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to be involved in Chambers and have seen the benefit they can bring to their members and communities, especially when they have strong leadership. And our Chamber has a history of strong, dedicated leadership as is evidenced by its many successes, not the least of which is winning the Chamber of the year 3 times.

When Brent Housman and Sandra Wilson reached out to me in December of 2022 about joining the Executive Committee of the Chamber, I really gave it little thought. Not to slight the time and commitment it would entail, but instead, having the opportunity to impact our region through our combined efforts was a no brainer.

When you look at our Mission, Vision and Value statements they all



**Kenny Boyd, 2026 Chair of the Paducah Chamber and President of Baptist Health Paducah**

support what a Chamber is supposed to embody and what I value as a leader. They include things such as

“promotion, advocacy and education”, “value”, “partnerships”, “economic well-being”, “innovation”, and being “a catalyst for a thriving, nationally competitive and economically diverse business community”. Who wouldn’t be excited about being a small part of an organization with those things as their driving force.

Well, it’s three years later and I can truly say I’m glad I said “yes” when Brent and Sandra called. Seeing the things we’ve accomplished as a Chamber since my arrival is beyond impressive. From our relentless advocacy for our businesses, communities and region that continues to pay off, to the national recognition we’ve received as a Chamber, all evidence that we continue to hold true to our Mission, Vision and Values.

Rather, it’s the advocacy for the continued clean-up support and future re-industrialization successes at the Gaseous Diffusion Plant totaling

more than \$1B in 2026 alone, to the development of The Leadership Center (now entering its third year), the success of our multiple small business initiatives, the terminal at Barkley Regional Airport and the list goes on and on.

So, as we enter 2026, I’m excited to work with each of you in conjunction with Sandra, the Chamber team and Board to capitalize on our past successes and parlay those into future wins that will impact our region for years to come.

I hope your membership in our Chamber regularly proves itself as a worthwhile investment and that you see us as a valuable part of your business. We are ready and willing to help you, your employees and our communities, be the best place to live, work and play and encourage you to stay OR become involved in your Chamber.

Thank you and best wishes for a great 2026!

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*Thank You*  
**ELLIE SHORT**

2025 STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

*Welcome*  
**BEN CLAYTON**

2026 STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR



BEN CLAYTON  
PADUCAH BANK



# ANNUAL PADUCAH CHAMBER DAY IN FRANKFORT

Meeting legislators to **VOICE** our priorities

FEBRUARY 12, 2026

PRESENTING SPONSOR



**BFW MARCUS**

Join us for the Paducah Chamber's  
Advocacy Day in Frankfort on February 12<sup>th</sup>



Jim Gray  
Kentucky Secretary  
of Transportation

The day kicks off with a Legislative Luncheon with featured speaker, Jim Gray, Kentucky Secretary of Transportation. The Paducah delegation will also meet with our local legislators and Cabinet officials. The day concludes with the 2026 West Kentucky Thank you Night Reception at the Frankfort Country Club.

*Additional afternoon meetings will be held.*

Sponsorship and trip registration available at [paducahchamber.org](http://paducahchamber.org) or by emailing [mthompson@paducahchamber.org](mailto:mthompson@paducahchamber.org)

Join us for West Kentucky Thank You Night Reception  
5-7 P.M. EST at the Frankfort Country Club

WKY Thank You Night  
Featured Speaker



Governor Andy Beshear

Coordinated by:



**West Kentucky**  
Regional Chamber Alliance

## January PIP Breakfast



The Paducah-McCracken County Joint Sewer Agency (JSA) was the sponsor for the Paducah Chamber's January Power in Partnership Breakfast. The program featured the annual "State of the City and County" with Paducah Mayor George Bray and McCracken County Judge-Executive Craig Clymer. Pictured from left to right: Judge Clymer; John Hodges, JSA Executive Director; Kenny Boyd, 2026 Chair of the Chamber Board and Baptist Health Paducah President; Will Cox, JSA Board Chairman; and Mayor Bray.

## Joshua Amos Recognized



At the January Chamber Breakfast, Joshua Amos with Servpro of Paducah & Mayfield (center), was recognized for being selected as the 2025 Chamber Connector of the Year. Presenting the award are (left) Lisa Lauck, Paducah Chamber Vice Chair of Membership and Marketing, Lauck Marketing Agency; and (right) Kenny Boyd, 2026 Chamber Board Chair and Baptist Health Paducah President.

## Congratulations on your Ribbon Cutting



Congratulations to Treasures Jewelry, 3790 Hinkleville Rd, Suite E, on their ribbon cutting and new location. They are open Mon. through Fri. from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sat. from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Visit [carrollstreasuresjewelry.jeweler-showcase.com](http://carrollstreasuresjewelry.jeweler-showcase.com).



Congratulations to VonThera Healing Arts, 404 Broadway St., on their ribbon cutting and new location. VonThera offers a wide variety of spa services including massages, facials, red light therapy, waxing, and so much more. Visit [www.vontherabody.com](http://www.vontherabody.com).

# When good teams make bad decisions

## How team interactions influence decision making

Many organizational mistakes can be traced back to decision making. Team dynamics and norms play a larger role in shaping those decisions than we often realize. Over time, the accumulation of decisions informs an organization's direction.

Strong decision making is not about being faster or smarter. It is about building better habits in how teams make decisions together. Five practices consistently separate healthy decision environments from dysfunctional ones.

**1. Make thinking safe before asking for decisions** Many teams move too quickly to judgment, which rewards confidence over insight. When people feel pressure to sound

**Strong decision making is not about being faster or smarter. It is about building better habits in how teams make decisions together. Five practices consistently separate healthy decision environments from dysfunctional ones.**

they do not overthink small issues or rush high-stakes calls. This clarity reduces friction and preserves trust inside the team.

**3. Design for dissent before alignment.** Consensus often looks

certain, they stop exploring uncertainty. Strong teams slow the moment just enough to invite questions, surface assumptions, and reduce defensiveness. More often than not, critical insights are hiding among team members less likely to speak up. Additionally, empower idea fragments. The best ideas rarely start fully formed.

**2. Match the process to the decision.** Not every decision deserves the same level of analysis. Some choices are reversible. Others are not. Some affect a small group. Others ripple across the organization. High performing teams name the type of decision upfront so

like agreement, but it frequently masks unspoken concerns. Strong teams invite respectful dissent early, when it can still improve the outcome. Hierarchy, status, and the desire to maintain harmony often silence useful perspectives.

Once a decision is made, alignment matters more than agreement. People support decisions more fully when they are allowed to question them honestly. One of my favorite questions is, 'Tell me what I'm missing?'

**4. Anchor decisions in principles, not personalities.** When decisions depend on who is in the room, frustration and politics follow. When decisions connect to shared principles, values, or strategy, disagreements stay productive. Principles act as shared reference points that help teams navigate tension without personalizing conflict.

**5. Treat decisions as learning opportunities.** Healthy teams treat decisions as experiments and review them afterward without blame. The goal is not to eliminate mistakes, but to improve how the team learns, adapts, and decides over time.

At its core, good decision making is not about heroic leadership moments. It is about cultivating team dynamics that help people see clearly, speak honestly, and act decisively together.

Organizations that get this right do more than make better choices. They build teams capable of adapting, learning, and moving forward when it matters most.

Frank Bennett is the Executive Director of The Leadership Center, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that provides leadership and professional development training services to organizations in the West Kentucky Area. For more information, go to [PaducahChamber.org](http://PaducahChamber.org).



FRANK BENNETT

## WKCTC Workforce Solutions and The Leadership Center Announce 2026 Leadership Mastery Series

WKCTC Workforce Solutions and The Leadership Center have announced the 2026 Leadership Mastery Series, a four-part, quarterly, in-person professional development series designed to help organizations strengthen culture, navigate change, and drive sustainable growth.

The series focuses on leadership and organizational choices that shape how work actually gets done. Sessions explore leadership strategy, culture, and communication, then connect those ideas to real-world case studies drawn from operating organizations. Participants may attend individual sessions or participate in the

full series to build momentum and leadership capability across the year.

Sessions are led by experienced practitioners who blend academic research with real-world leadership and organizational experience. All sessions are delivered in person to encourage interaction, discussion, and practical application. Seating is intentionally limited to support meaningful engagement and conversation, with built-in opportunities for participants to connect and network with other professionals. Participants will receive a certificate of attendance, and programs may fulfill CEU requirements depending on industry.

### DATES AND THEMES

- February 19: Defining a Culture of Success
- April 16: Leading Through Change
- July 16: Strengthening Teams and Communication
- October 15: Strategic Growth and Innovation

All sessions run from 8:30 a.m. to noon and will be held in Paducah at either the Commerce Center or the WKCTC Emerging Technology Center. The cost is \$50 per individual session or \$160 for all four sessions. For more information on individual sessions and to register, go to [www.PaducahChamber.org](http://PaducahChamber.org)



# Thank you to our 2026 Sponsors for the Annual Dinner & Celebration Gala



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