

Kentucky Governor’s School for the Arts announces 2025 Class

KY Performing Arts

The Kentucky Governor’s School for the Arts (GSA) has announced its 2025 class, marking the 39th year the program has been welcoming student artists from across the Commonwealth.

Since 1987, more than 8,500 rising high school juniors and seniors have arrived on a college campus setting to immerse themselves in an arts intensive environment, with cross-discipline learning, special guest artist performances and the opportunity to access critical life-changing college scholarships.

The 2025 class included 512 students from 72 different counties that were hosted at The University of Kentucky over two consecutive sessions throughout the summer. Each of the two sessions were three weeks, with Session One taking place June 8 to June 28 and Session Two July 6 to July 26.

During the program, student-artists were immersed in a rigorous schedule of daily seminars, creative projects, master classes and lectures. Instruction was offered in nine disciplines:

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CITY

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KRS 80.030

— Directed Housing Authority staff to ignore laws and regulations, misused police resources and made inappropriate remarks during city business

— Created a personal police protection detail using city resources

— Falsely asserted city jurisdiction over FEMA contractors working outside city limits

— Failed to meet city residency requirements

— Used a personal media outlet to target a city employee

— Refused to hold regular council meetings without the consent of a majority of council members

— Altered and rejected city contracts without notifying the legislative body

— Improperly released a recorded call between a crime victim and a city police officer.

Council Member Stacy Bengé moved to table the resolution, but it failed to receive a second. Council Member Kelly Greene then moved to vote, seconded by Justin Young. The motion passed with all voting in favor except Bengé.

However, the legality of the vote immediately came into question. Mayor Weddle argued that approval of the full council was required, not just a majority. City Council Attorney Conrad Cessna disagreed, stating that the higher threshold applied only at the hearing stage. City Attorney Larry Bryson maintained that a majority of the full council was required to adopt the resolution.

As tensions escalated, TJ Roberts introduced himself as outside legal counsel retained by the council, but was met with loud boos from the crowd. The mayor, pointing out that no public motion had been made to hire Roberts, told him to sit down. Roberts obliged.

Mayor Weddle then accused the council of skipping due process.

“Let’s get this on the record — every accusation that you guys have made, you have a due diligence, according to KRS, to start an investigation exploratory subcommittee. How come that has not been done on any of this?” he asked. “You have not done it — and you know why you’ve not done it.”

Council Member Judd Weaver then moved to hire attorney Chris Wiest. That motion passed.

“Another attorney for the city folk to have to pay,



PHOTO BY MADISON NANTZ
TJ Roberts introduced himself as outside legal counsel retained by the council, but was met with loud boos from attendees.

but you [couldn’t] care less about the roads,” Weddle commented.

Later, Weaver made a motion for a point of clarification on whether the resolution had passed. Bryson recommended waiting for legal review before proceeding, and Roberts’ second attempt to speak was again drowned out by booing from the crowd.

Carmine G. Iaccarino, attorney for Mayor Weddle, then addressed the council, stating, “I think that Mr. Bryson’s recommendation is very well advised. In order to ensure due process, and that the Kentucky Revised Statutes are in fact followed, in such an important situation as the removal and nullification of the vote of the people of London.”

Weaver asked Iaccarino whether the resolution required six votes. Iaccarino deferred, replying, “My recommendation is to follow Mr. Bryson’s recommendation.”

Weaver then asked for the determination of the chair, Mayor Weddle, to which the mayor replied, “I think we’re taking the recommendation of the city attorney.”

Weaver moved to appeal the decision, which was seconded by Greene, but no vote or discussion followed.

Weddle would go on to adjourn the meeting himself, stating, “The chair has the ability to adjourn a meeting. We’re getting nowhere. The chair is adjourning the meeting. The meeting is adjourned.”

With that, the mayor and

council members dispersed, and the status of the resolution remained unresolved as of press time Tuesday.

Should the public hearing move forward, discussion indicated that it would be a special meeting set for August 20 at 9 a.m.

That meeting was confirmed Tuesday by Roberts and Cessna, though Cessna acknowledged there had been no further discussion of a legal review.

Attempts to contact Bryson for confirmation were unsuccessful as of press time.

In preliminary research, The Sentinel-Echo found no specific reference to scheduling a hearing but did find the following clause as part of KRS 83A.040 in regard to removal of city officials:

“Except in cities of the first class, any elected officer, in case of misconduct, incapacity, or willful neglect in the performance of the duties of his or her office, may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the members of the legislative body exclusive of any member to be removed, who shall not vote in the deliberation of his or her removal. No elected officer shall be removed without having been given the right to a full public hearing. The officer, if removed, shall have the right to appeal to the Circuit Court of the county and the appeal shall be on the record. No officer so removed shall be eligible to fill the office vacated before the expiration of the term to which originally elected.”

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PHOTO BY NITA JOHNSON
Whitney Bailey and Erica Fields with AppalReD outlined some preparations for estate planning and small business planning during an information session at Kentucky Highlands June 12.

Preparing for the future

By Nita Johnson
Correspondent

Disaster can strike at any time, whether it be personally or professionally.

But being prepared can definitely take the edge off the stressful procedures required after such events and AppalReD (Appalachian Research and Defense Fund) was on hand at Kentucky Highlands recently to assist with those preparations.

Whitney Bailey and Erica Fields are attorneys with AppalReD and presented some legal options for estate planning. AppalReD supplies free legal assistance to qualifying residents in a 37-county region of eastern Kentucky.

The two outlined the legalities of estate settlements, including the probate process.

Bailey said once a person is deceased, a relative or friend is often appointed to settle the deceased’s estate. Testate occurs when the deceased has a will that outlines what is to be done with the personal and business interests, if any. Intestate probate occurs when a person dies without a will. A will is usually an inexpensive legal document that is handled through an attorney.

Bailey and Fields also outlined the benefits of funeral planning and having a living will on hand to specify your end-of-life desires such as cremation or burial, organ donation, or other legal issues.

For those with business interests, Bailey and Fields stressed the importance of setting up plans for the future of the business and the various types of businesses such as partnerships, sole proprietorship or limited liability corporations.

Bailey explained that partnership and sole proprietorships fall back on the business owners to pay the debts of the business, while the limited liability corporations (LLC) do not.

“That means once the business’s money is gone, you are not responsible personally for their debt,” Fields said.

On another topic, Jessica Epperson with The Mountain Association works in Disaster Recovery and gave four key insights into that area.

“In Disaster Preparedness, there are four main areas: Identify, Plan, Implement and Recover,” she said.

She said many businesses in eastern Kentucky had undergone losses due to the flooding. Maps are available to see whether the site of the business falls into a floodplain.

“If your business is in one of those areas, you should probably consider moving a little further from that area,” she said.

“Disaster does not have to directly impact you to be affected,” she added. “For example, a farm is hit by a tornado and you have a produce store. You need a backup supplier.”

Epperson said to establish an emergency response plan and have a communication plan that will allow your business to continue. Another tip is to have someone you trust who can fill your spot in your absence and have information on your business immediately available.

She said grants for businesses are available and The Mountain Association, which serves a 54-county area, is there to help.

“We are always looking for opportunities to find grants to help businesses,” she said.

ROBINSON

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left an indelible mark on Kentucky.”

Dr. Mosley noted that the recognition came despite her father’s humble approach to public life.

“Daddy specifically requested that we not do things like get his name plas-

tered. He did not want us to chase after this, because his whole purpose of what he did was service,” Mosley said. “It was a service... and it was the true joy of his life. It wasn’t for the power that he got out of it — it’s what he was able to do for other people.”

A sign honoring the memorial highway can be seen near Ulrich Lane in East Bernstadt.

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