

Kentucky Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus Hosts Winter Meeting in Northern Kentucky

Kentucky Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus Hosts Winter Meeting in Northern Kentucky, Celebrates Tourism Leadership and Economic Impact

COVINGTON, KY, UNITED STATES, January 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Kentucky



KACVB meetings are about connection, collaboration, and moving Kentucky tourism forward together. Northern KY was an outstanding host region..."

Lori Saunders

Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (KACVB) welcomed tourism professionals from across the Commonwealth to Northern Kentucky for its Winter Meeting, held in Covington. The multi-day conference brought together destination leaders to collaborate, share best practices, and celebrate excellence in Kentucky tourism.

Hosted at Braxton Brewing in Covington and supported by meetNKY and regional partners, the meeting featured a

robust agenda focused on education, advocacy, and destination development. Educational sessions included the KACVB Tourism Toolbox, led by Amy Landrum, Account Executive with CoStar (formerly STR), who provided industry data and insights to support informed decision-making for destination organizations.

Attendees were welcomed by Julie Kirkpatrick, Executive Director of meetNKY, who highlighted Northern Kentucky's collaborative approach to tourism and the positive impact of visitor spending throughout the region. Participants also heard from Kentucky Department of Tourism Commissioner Mike Mangeot, who shared updates on statewide tourism and strategic priorities. Additional programming highlighted Kentucky's upcoming 250th celebrations, presented by the Kentucky Historical Society, with Stuart Sanders, Director of Research and Publications, and Dana Zinge, Director of Marketing Communications.

A timely session on Natural Disaster Crisis Communication and the Role of the DMO was led by Cassidy Santander, PR Manager at Explore Asheville, who offered valuable insights on preparedness, messaging, and destination stewardship.

“KACVB meetings are about connection, collaboration, and moving Kentucky tourism forward together,” said Lori Saunders, President of KACVB and Executive Director of Georgetown/Scott County Tourism. “Northern Kentucky was an outstanding host region, providing both a welcoming setting and a strong example of regional partnership and destination storytelling.”

In addition to educational programming, attendees participated in hosted experiences, including tours showcasing Northern Kentucky’s sports venues, attractions, shopping districts, and entertainment assets. The conference generated an estimated economic impact of more than \$10,000 over the two-day event, supporting local hotels, restaurants, attractions, and small businesses.



Kentucky Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus

A highlight of the Winter Meeting was the presentation of KACVB’s annual awards during the Membership Meeting. While the award names may sound playful, they are a long-standing and meaningful way for KACVB to recognize outstanding service, leadership, and dedication within Kentucky’s tourism industry.

2025 KACVB Award Recipients included:

□ Tourism Director of the Year — Janette Marson, recognized for her exceptional leadership, strategic vision, and continued dedication to advancing tourism through collaboration, innovation, and community impact.

“Janette’s leadership and commitment to collaboration embody everything this award represents, and her impact continues to strengthen tourism not just in her community, but across the Commonwealth,” said Saunders.

“I am deeply honored and truly humbled to receive the 2025 Kentucky Tourism Director of the Year Award. To be recognized by my peers across the Commonwealth makes this honor especially meaningful, and it leaves me feeling incredibly appreciated, supported, and affirmed that the work I do is making a real difference for tourism in Shelby County and across the state,” says Janette Marson

□ “Da Bomb” Award — Kendall Clinton, recognizing exceptional energy, impact, and behind-the-scenes excellence.

“It is certainly an honor to be recognized by your peers, especially here in Kentucky, where the tourism industry has so many hardworking professionals who do an outstanding job promoting their communities and the state as a whole to visitors,” Clinton said.

□ “Hotdog” Award — Heather Cundiff, honoring outstanding teamwork, dependability, and consistently going above and beyond for the industry.

“I’m genuinely grateful for this recognition and the kind words. While the name may be lighthearted, it’s always meaningful to be recognized by colleagues within Kentucky’s tourism community,” Cundiff shared.

“These awards reflect the heart of KACVB,” Saunders added. “They celebrate professionals who show up, support one another, and consistently elevate tourism across Kentucky. It’s a fun tradition, but one rooted in genuine appreciation and respect.”

During the Membership Meeting, KACVB announced its 2025–2026 Executive Committee, with Michelle Allen advancing to President, Abby Dixon serving as Vice President, Amy Ellis as Secretary, and Brandon Pennington joining the leadership team as Treasurer.

“Michelle Allen is an exceptional leader whose experience, steady guidance, and collaborative spirit make her the perfect choice to lead KACVB into the next year,” said Lori Saunders, President of KACVB. “With Abby Dixon, Amy Ellis, and Brandon Pennington alongside her, this executive team represents the very best of our association and the future of Kentucky tourism.”

For more information about the Kentucky Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, visit www.kycvb.com.

Lori Saunders

+1 502-863-5424

[email us here](#)

Kentucky Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/882899862>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.