

SUMMER  
2022  
EDITION

# The Bridge

KENTUCKY'S CONNECTION TO RURAL HEALTH ISSUES

## EDUCATION IS KEY

Rural health care champion  
Dr. Charles Marshall

## NEED TO REALITY

Children's hospital brings  
care close to home

## MAKING MUSIC

Hindman Stringed Instrument  
Company Helps Recovering Addicts





A WORD FROM

*Ernie L. Scott*

DIRECTOR, KENTUCKY OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

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# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## *Thinking Outside of the Box*

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The warmth of my oven fogs my glasses as I open the door to take a peek inside. Delicious smells of bread cooking, tomato sauce bubbling away, and cheese melting make my mouth water. It's pizza night at the Scott household, one of our favorite times as a family.

It may sound cliché, but I can't help but see the similarities between our humble, homemade pizza dough and our rural health care system here in the Commonwealth. Just like my pizza, our health care system came from humble beginnings. With little to no resources most of the time, each generation of Kentuckians has been able to build on what the one before it has done, just as I have been able to perfect and build on a recipe that has been in my family for as long as I can remember.

What started as something brought to communities just to meet basic needs has flourished into a supportive and connected system through communities that most people wouldn't even recognize the names of. Now we're able to deliver almost any resource to these same communities through rural hospitals, clinics, and telehealth capabilities. It's truly amazing to sit back and look at where we've come from to where we are today — even just in the last 5 to 10 years.

Though we have come so far in our quest to better health care in our rural communities, that's not to say that work still doesn't need to be done. We're far from over with this endeavor.

Looking to the future, while I take a second slice of our homemade pizza, I have much hope for many collaboration opportunities. Innovation in these coming months and years will be crucial to our success. We can't keep doing things the same way they've always been done and expect a different outcome. If we want things to change, we have to be willing to embrace change ourselves. This is where I hope we're leading rural health care in Kentucky to as well.

Before I go to help my family clean the kitchen from the mess and memories we've made, I want to make sure to say how important not only our resources are but our state of mind is, too. We can't imbue hope, excitement, and innovation into these communities, clinics, hospitals — heck the whole region even — without having that in ourselves.

It's time to shake off the dust from our traditional cookbook and see how we can make better what has been made in our state for generations. Let's see where a little thinking out of the box can take us! ■

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### Rainy Spring Day Photographer | Richard Coldiron

This photo was made at the Cove Spring Park in Frankfort, Ky. This park has 250 acres of streams, springs, waterfalls, forested ravines, and other natural and historic features as well as walking, hiking, and biking trails.



For additional information, questions or comments, contact:  
Kentucky Office of Rural Health  
Attn: Amelia Holliday  
750 Morton Blvd.  
Hazard, Kentucky 41701  
[amelia.holliday@uky.edu](mailto:amelia.holliday@uky.edu)

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# ➤ TROUBLESOME CREEK Stringed Instrument Company







WORKING TOWARD  
MUSIC THERAPY





# Hindman stringed instrument company uses craftsmanship as therapy

By Amelia Holliday

Walking into Hindman, Kentucky's Troublesome Creek Stringed Instrument Company (TCSIC) is like stepping back in time to an old-world wood working shop. Shelves lined with wood, work benches covered in guitar and dulcimer bodies, the smell of sawdust in the air—sawdust and . . . bacon?

Director Doug Naselroad enters through the Company's side door, sporting a black jacket emblazoned with the TCSIC logo and snow-white curls on top of his head. He heads upstairs, the sounds and smells of popping bacon and sizzling hamburgers drawing nearer.

"I'm cooking lunch right now. It's amazing how I'm able to do two things at once," Naselroad jokes, laughing as he settles into his office, the kitchen just next door. "It's good that some things are able to be delegated like that."

Delegating—something Naselroad and his staff have become very familiar with in the last six months, delegating tasks, work, and rest time alike. That might be part of the success of the TCSIC.

"The Troublesome Creek Stringed Instrument Company is Knott County's first factory ever. We opened our doors in April 2019," Naselroad says. "We're a nonprofit manufacturer, only one in the world that is manufacturing guitars, mandolins, and dulcimers as a nonprofit, and we work with people in recovery."

Working with those in recovery is an understatement for a Company that almost 100 percent of its employees are recovering from substance use disorders (SUD). Naselroad says the Company actually has its beginnings rooted farther back in 2012, when a man named Earl Moore came to speak with him.

Naselroad, a Mount Sterling native, had

just started a residency as the master luthier of the newly opened Appalachian School of Luthiery in the Appalachian Artisan Center in downtown Hindman that same year. Luthiery is the craftsmanship of constructing and repairing stringed instruments.

Jessica Jones, the Company's business manager and Naselroad's all around right-hand woman, explains that Earl was new to recovery at that time.

"I guess the idea was born of, Earl didn't have a job at that moment and he didn't have his degree and I think he was just so bored that he was afraid he was going to get back on drugs," Jones says, leaning forward at her desk. "Him and Doug kind of came up with the idea of, hey, if you want to come and hang out with me during the day when you're in town [and learn luthiery] then let's do it."

"If you give somebody something to do and look forward to, they'll succeed," she says.

Jones, who has worked with the Company since 2019, can attest to that adage herself since she now has 17 years in recovery from substance abuse under her belt.

"Now, guys just hear about it and want to do it," she adds.

The Company takes in referrals from the Knott County Drug Court, a specialty court program for drug offenders to have the chance to turn their life around instead of going to jail, and from the Hickory Hill Recovery Center just down the road, Naselroad says.

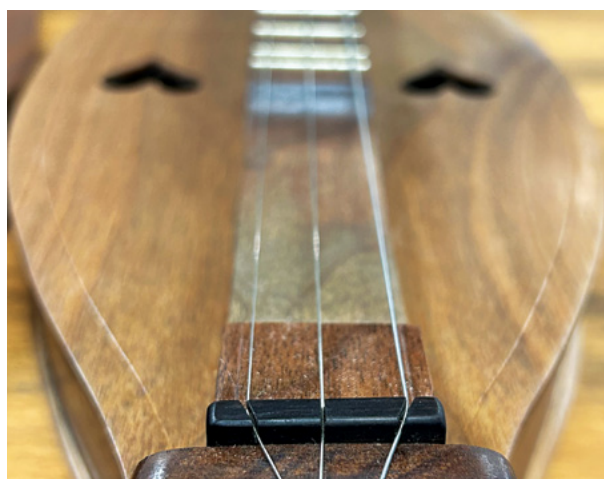
"The Appalachian Artisan Center trained people . . . in the School of Luthiery. The people we had trained and had become skilled just universally needed gainful employment, so, we set out to make instrument making jobs through the Appalachian Regional





The Troublesome Creek Stringed Instrument Company works as an aftercare program for those suffering with substance use disorder (SUD) that graduate out of the Knott County Drug Court or other rehabilitation facility.





**Each piece is quality tested before being shipped out to vendors or private buyers.**

Commission's (ARC) POWER Grant, which we were awarded in 2019," he explains, settling back into his chair.

Though the Company employed just nine people in 2022, Jones says they plan to expand in 2023 thanks to another ARC grant.

## **Inspired to INSPIRE**

The ARC Investments Supporting Partnerships In Recovery Ecosystems (INSPIRE) Initiative awarded \$12 million in September 2022 to 33 projects aiming to address the SUD crisis across Appalachia by creating a recovery ecosystem that would lead to workforce entry or re-entry.

Naselroad says when he first heard about the INSPIRE grant he was excited.

"I called the rest of our executive staff and I said, 'This is us! This is for us because we do everything that they're sending out a call for,'" he remembers. "It's a great way for us to extend and enhance the things that we do for the people that work for us, the people in recovery."

"We're going to be able to serve people in recovery more comprehensively than we did when we started out," he adds.

The idea for this more comprehensive approach came when a realization hit.

"Doug found out that after they get out of Drug Court, the tools that they had were gone," Jones says.

This meant that any psychiatric care, counseling, meetings, and accountability measures like drug testing stopped as soon as someone graduated Drug Court or came out of a rehabilitation center.

"In their minds, their accountability ends when they graduate," Naselroad says. "We want to have a program that you never graduate from in that way. Keep honest people honest. It's just what we feel responsible to do."

The Company's and the Appalachian Artisan Center's staff decided to take an "after-care" approach to their program, and wrote the grant proposal for Music Heals: From Recovery to Workforce. The program would be expanded to include more men and even women into their SUD recovery program, strengthen and enlarge the Appalachian School of Luthiery to train more people for employment, and would provide behavior health services and counseling, peer mentoring, transitional housing, and onsite meals, among other workforce reentry necessities.

"We're trying to pull people into a better life," Naselroad says.

And just when he felt like they were getting their ducks in a row, he says, disaster struck.

## **God willing and the creek don't rise**

On the morning of July 28, hundreds of Southeastern Kentuckians found themselves without belongings, cars, homes, and loved ones after devastating and record-breaking flooding ravaged the area. Thirty-eight bodies were found after flood waters receded, and the damage done to the communities was unimaginable.

"In the aftermath of the flood it seems a little bit prescient, I mean we wrote a grant for the time that we're in right now, more than we could have ever imagined, no one could have imagined we'd have a widely destructive catastrophe," Naselroad says, somberness creeping into his voice.

The TCSIC wasn't always housed in the Appalachian Artisan Center in downtown Hindman. Originally, the Company had been located in the old Hindman High School building, renovated around the turn of the century into the Kentucky School of Craft and operated by the Hazard Community and Technical College (HCTC). The Company





**Employees of the Troublesome Creek Stringed Instrument Company in Hindman, Ky., are working to get back in the shop after devastating losses from the July 28, 2022 floods many in Southeastern Kentucky suffered.**

leased a large space as their woodworking shop in the core of the building.

Unfortunately, everything changed on July 28.

“The front windows blew out, the backdoors blew open, and the creek just went right through and deep. Six feet on one side and 4 feet on the other,” Naselroad says. “If you can imagine, a building being struck with battering rams until the doors give way and then the flood waters just shoot through like bulldozers.”

The building was a near total loss, along with \$2.2 million in lost supplies and tools.

“Ten years this past July we celebrate the anniversary of us starting up and we get destroyed,” he adds. “Which is pretty funny when you think about it—not funny, ironic.”

Many of the men working for TCSIC suffered losses and damage from the flooding as well, something Jones says they were scared would push them out of recovery and back into

using.

“We knew we had to do something,” she says.

That something came from a spot of bad luck. Naselroad says because the Company didn’t have flood insurance, they were looking at not just equipment replacement but cleaning up as something they would need to do themselves.

“We had 10 employees at the time and they needed to work, they needed to do something, so, I made the commitment immediately that we weren’t going to lay off any employees but instead we were going to convert them into disaster recovery workers,” he explains. “And large and small we were going to recover everything we could.”

That was their secret to holding things together after the floods, he adds.

“I realized there was a real danger of some of these guys giving into despair because of the horrible situation and I said no, let’s keep them



on the payroll and get to work and I threw work at them every day and it was miserable work," he says.

## Digging their way out to a better life

Jones says that though the work was miserable, their employees were almost glad for it.

"They were used to making instruments and then they were scooping mud right out of the school that's this deep," she says, illustrating with her hands. "They accepted the challenge and now they're excited."

"It was a nightmare," Naselroad says. "But our approach was to get to work or otherwise you're going to sit and think about it too much."

Some of the men, though, did think too much about it and started to go down roads they wouldn't have been able to come back from.

"The amazing thing is, the ones that fell off, the other boys have lifted them up and they're thriving again," Jones says. "It's amazing the bond they have."

"The great thing about the staff here is that they're very committed to their recovery, very protective of it, therefore they're very protective of the recovery of everyone who comes through the doors," Naselroad says.

Since the flooding, Naselroad says the Company has been able to raise over \$40,000 from a GoFundMe set up in their honor. The money has been set aside to replace any equipment lost. On top of that, the Company received a donation in December 2022 from the Kentucky Rise Concert for \$150,000.

"It's just so humbling to really see these people want to see these boys succeed," Jones says. "It's an amazing story."

Employees have been back to work, taking inventory, and getting ready for operations to fully open back up in their new location at the Appalachian School of Luthiery at the start of 2023.

"It's about a clean start, and we certainly have been able to help some people get that," Naselroad adds.

## Teach it forward

With that clean start comes hope for more success as a nonprofit business in rural Appalachia. Naselroad leans back in his chair and looks over to Jones.

"Troublesome Creek is in us real bad," Naselroad says. "I named the company after the creek that destroyed us, but we're rebuilding piece by piece."

Looking to the future of the TCSIC, he says there's so much more to do and reach for.

"By design, this company has to be very far reaching. We don't sell these instruments on the street in downtown Hindman right in the middle of Appalachia. There's not enough people around to make a go of it," he explains.

TCSIC ships instruments to dealerships wholesale across the country, from Pittsburg to Washington DC to Beverly Hills to Texas and even to Richmond, Ky. The flooding put a halt on production, and Naselroad says his dealerships are feeling the loss.

"We have about 10 or 12 dealerships nationwide and they, of course, right at the moment, are starved for instruments," he says.

Now, as his employees take inventory downstairs and prepare to get back to a more normal sense of a work week, Naselroad reiterates that it's not just sales that measure their success, it's about the success of his employees in their recovery and their community.

"It's all about mentoring people and teaching it forward. My entire staff is in a wonderful position to nurture people that come in at the entry level," he says. "All of my guys here now just recently finished up their Peer Mentor certifications, so they can help people like themselves who are struggling to get into recovery."

"We're working very hard to make this a part of the futures of the people who depend on us make a life for people here and have a little more life blood going through the community economically speaking," he adds. ■

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Amelia Holliday is the Rural Project Manager for the Kentucky Office of Rural Health.





Mandolins, dulcimers, and guitars are handmade at the Company and shipped all over the country and even internationally.







The image shows the exterior of a hospital building at dusk. The sky is a mix of purple, pink, and orange. The building has a dark, textured facade. A large, illuminated sign in white letters reads "R.V. and Jyothi Mettu Children's hospital". A bright yellow curved line runs across the lower part of the building's facade.

# R.V. and Jyothi Mettu Children's hospital

**BRINGING  
PEDIATRIC  
CARE CLOSE  
TO HOME**





# Mettu Children's Hospital bucks national trends, brings pediatric care close to home

By Debra Gibson Isaacs

When Donovan Blackburn was named president and CEO of Pikeville Medical Center (PMC) in February 2018, his goal was for the Center “to become a true regional leader in healthcare.” Not long thereafter, however, he received a blessing that simultaneously transformed and expanded his understanding of needs in the region—a granddaughter named Ava, who was diagnosed on the autism spectrum.

“It was through her health struggles that I saw an urgent need for advancement in pediatric services in rural Eastern Kentucky,” he said. “Even with the progress made, advanced pediatric healthcare services were very limited. By listening to others and with my experience, it was apparent that pediatric healthcare was an area that our region needed for our youngest and most vulnerable patients.”

Blackburn brought the concept of a new children's hospital to his board of directors and was greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm.

That concept evolved into the Drs. R.V. and Jyothi Mettu Children's Hospital (MCH), a 13,400-square foot facility, which opened in December 2021, providing inpatient and outpatient pediatric care to patients

in Kentucky, southern West Virginia, and Southwest Virginia. The hospital includes a 10-bed inpatient unit, 13 pediatric exam rooms, a children's waiting room, and a playroom.

For patients and parents alike, the hospital means that the region's youngest residents no longer need to travel miles to Lexington or Louisville for care. The parents don't have to leave other children or spouses to get care for a sick child and the enormous expense for these out-of-area visits was slashed.

## The long road from need to idea to reality

In the beginning, though, it was just a need and an idea. Blackburn pondered ways to see it to fruition.

“With great ideas come doubt and fear,” he said. “And the biggest dilemma would be financing. Being a Christian organization, and with our commitment to provide services for all walks of life within our region and community, we made this project a mission.”

Blackburn met first with Congressman Hal Rogers in 2019 to seek federal and state funding support. “He agreed that the project was needed,” Blackburn said. “We discussed



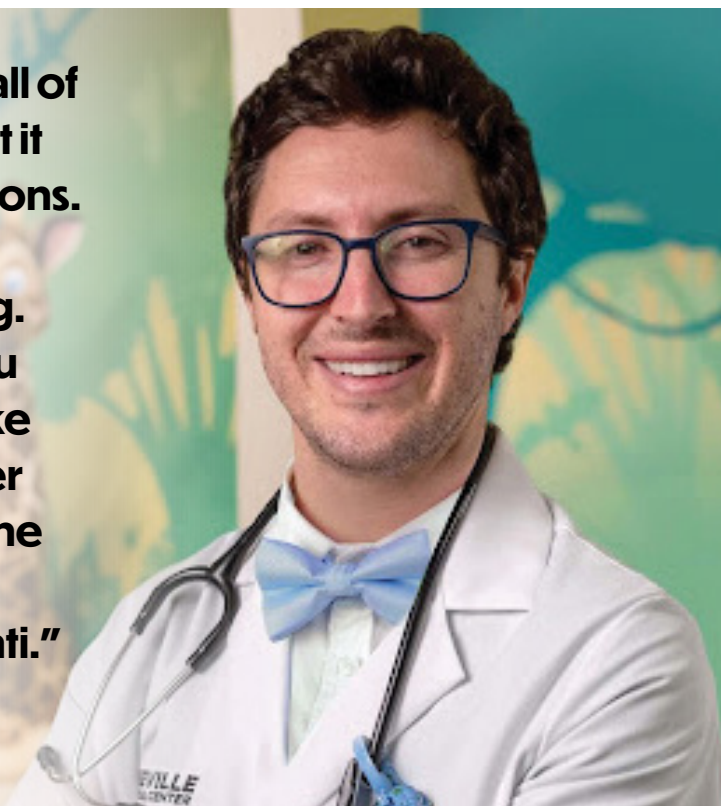


For patients and parents alike, the Mettu Children's Hospital means the region's youngest residents no longer need to travel miles to receive the care they need, helping take a burden off of already struggling families.



**“I think I can speak for all of the folks in this area that it exceeds our expectations. The facility itself is positively breathtaking. Stepping into our Mettu Children’s Hospital is like stepping into any larger tertiary care center in the country, be it a Seattle Children’s or a Cincinnati.”**

Dr. Frederick Stine  
MCH pediatric hospitalist



different federal funding sources.”

Blackburn’s next journey was to Washington DC to meet with other legislators and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) federal co-chair, Tim Thomas and his team.

“After hours of discussion, I recall the federal co-chair smiling and saying: ‘I understand there is a need, but additional funding would have to be acquired,’” he added. After all those meetings, Blackburn and his board decided the best approach would be to do the project in phases. They had executive and board support, state and federal support, and the community’s endorsement, but not enough funding for the entire vision.

So phase by phase, the children’s hospital emerged.

“We increased to a level II Advanced Care NICU,” Blackburn recalled. “That doubled our size and allowed PMC physicians and staff to care for babies born earlier in the mother’s pregnancy. Previously, babies born sooner than 32 weeks had to be transferred to a higher-level facility. We now can care for babies born as early as 28 weeks and babies with a lower birth weight. We received the designation as an emergency department to be a pediatric-

friendly hospital—only the fourth of the state.”

PMC then became the first emergency department in the state to be credited for pediatric autism. The Appalachian Valley Autism (AVA) Center opened and bridged the gap in healthcare for children with autism.

Telehealth became available November 2019 after receiving funding for the Healthy @ School platform from the USDA Rural Development Grant, placing telehealth in the largest county school system in Kentucky.

“These service lines are now up and running and will continue to grow. Our pediatric population is now being served in a way they never have,” Blackburn said.

Dr. Frederick Stine, an MCH pediatric hospitalist, agrees.

“The children’s hospital, as it stands currently, is delivering on a promise made to the families of Appalachia and to the region,” Stine said. “I think I can speak for all of the folks in this area that it exceeds our expectations. The facility itself is positively breathtaking. Stepping into our Mettu Children’s Hospital is like stepping into any larger tertiary care center in the country, be it a Seattle Children’s or a Cincinnati.”



## Collaboration is key

However, to make it all work required collaboration with other facilities, particularly the University of Kentucky (UK), according to Stine.

“Regarding our capabilities, we are working hard to bring together specialists from UK so that our children may have their specialty appointments close to home,” Stine said. “We do not yet have a Pediatric ICU, but each bed is ICU capable, and we certainly have our sights set on expanding into this area in the future.”

“We knew we had to establish a reliable partner for our telehealth platform to make this possible,” Blackburn added.

“Speaking to Dr. Mark Newman, UK Healthcare executive vice president of health affairs and Program Director Dr. Scottie B. Day, MD, FAAP, we determined the University of Kentucky Children’s Hospital was the partner we needed based upon the patients’ need, convenience, existing location and reputation. Dr. Aaron Crum, PMC’s chief medical officer took the lead and worked with UK’s administration.”

After months of negotiating, they launched two new services at the children’s hospital and have an outline and commitment for multiple service lines that have been released.

The first specialty area was pediatric cardiology. Patients can now see their specialists in person at Pikeville’s medical clinic or via telehealth, eliminating the long two to three hour drives.

“Our journey started as a crawl, with an inpatient bed system and two ICU capability beds. With our new relationship with the UK and the addition of the additional services that we will continue to roll out, we are starting to walk,” Stine said. “My hope and prayers are there within the next two to five years we will be running.”

“We want families to stay closer to home while we change and save lives. To find a regional healthcare hospital with a trauma center, cancer center, heart institute, orthopedic center, children’s hospital, and more than 400 providers practicing is hard to find in rural America. It does not exist often, but it is why we are here and why we are successful,” Blackburn said.



**Kansas Justice , Pikeville Medical Center (PMC) Chief Operating Officer**

During the last four years, Pikeville Medical Center has invested more than \$150 million in capital improvements alone within the hospital.

“As the growth continues, we will have the ability to further expand our footprint into other areas of the hospital. There is great value in this ability because the investment will be relatively small compared to the costs associated with the construction of a new building,” Blackburn said. “Having infrastructure already established in close proximity to the Mettu Children’s Hospital such as lab, radiology, pharmacy and many other support services eliminates many restrictions as we plan for additional growth.”

## Collaboration is crucial for funding, too

The Mettu Children’s Hospital at PMC has transitioned from an idea to a reality due to a collaborative effort from many funding partners who shared a common vision for a brighter future for Eastern Kentucky, Pikeville Medical Center (PMC) Chief Operating Officer Kansas Justice said.



“The Mettu Children’s Hospital has made a significant impact on our area and the surrounding counties within the proximity,” Justice said. “Access to healthcare is a nationally noted concern when it comes to patients and their overall health status and with the construction of the children’s hospital, many geographical barriers and economic challenges have been resolved to alleviate obstacles that are very common in a rural area.”

Blackburn explained that as the demand for additional pediatric services grows, so will the list of offerings. While there are services that PMC is currently not able to offer, they most often have a partner who can fill that gap.

“We have more than we have ever offered in the past, and PMC will continue to make investments as the demand grows to serve our pediatric patients,” Blackburn said. Funding: the essential element

Dr. Jyothi Mettu’s name is synonymous with pediatric care and she knew the need for close-to-home pediatric care well.

After retiring from private practice, Jyothi Mettu joined the PMC board of directors in 2018, and has been instrumental in leading the march in pediatric advancements and the development of the region’s first children’s hospital. Drs. R.V. and Jyothi Mettu made a \$1.5 million contribution to the PMC children’s hospital project, earning them the prestigious honor of having the hospital named after them.

“As a well-known and respected pediatrician in Eastern Kentucky for more than 30 years, I am proud to say she was the pediatrician for my own children, who are now adults raising their own families,” Blackburn said. “Mettu’s involvement in the hospital, our community, and in the lives of her thousands of pediatric patients is a testimony to her deep sense of compassion. Over and over, we have been blessed to witness the selfless, community-minded, can-do spirit that prevails in rural healthcare, bringing to light the unique medical challenges rural adults and children face.”

Justice said the need for growth in the region has been ever-present over the years, and PMC is dedicated to meeting those needs.

“Our goal is to raise the bar for healthcare excellence in creating a healthier future for generations to come,” she said.

“Although massive investments have been made in both technology and service lines over the years, we are far from finished,” Justice added. “Through the new children’s hospital, pediatric patients have gained access to medical professionals and physicians not currently available due to geographical barriers, economic challenges and physician shortages.”

## Economic and familial impact

Back to the beginning of the vision for the hospital and in particular the Appalachian Valley Autism Center. The newborn Ava, now in preschool, is thriving. The same is true for 79 other children who have been treated at AVA.

“I say where you live should not determine if you live,” Blackburn said. “In Eastern Kentucky, we are isolated by God’s beautiful mountains and picturesque scenery yet with this comes travel obstacles and other challenges. We experience severe health professional workforce shortages, high poverty rates, health disparities, and non-emergency medical transportation for health care access.” “I must add how important our growth is to the region,” Blackburn added. “In Central Appalachia, the healthcare industry leads in job growth and by creating new service lines, we are creating more jobs. The hospital will fulfill identified needs in health care, provide employment opportunities and improve the region’s demographics/quality of life. This is the real win.”

The opening of this hospital in a part of the country that is considered rural is “a major bucking” of the current trend, Stine noted.

“At a time where rural hospitals are closing at record rates and most care is being consolidated centrally in the larger hospital systems within the state, Pikeville Medical Center stands tall as a leader, opening the first children’s hospital of Southeastern Kentucky because it is the right thing to do for the people of this great region.” ■

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Debra Gibson Isaacs is a Lexington-based, freelance writer, editor, and photographer.





Meet

*Sydney Cox*

DSW, LCSW, LCADC

Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation



■ **When did your service begin?**

I've participated in the NHSC on two occasions. Once in 2017, which ended in 2020, and a second tenure that began in 2022. I was awarded the NHSC Loan Repayment Program in 2017 and then the NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program in 2022.

■ **What are your job responsibilities at you NHSC practice site?**

I currently serve as the Substance Use Treatment Coordinator at my NHSC site. My responsibilities include patient care for those battling addiction, monitoring for regulation and best practice compliance, supervising students and new clinicians, and administrative duties dictated to me by the Director of Behavioral Health services.

■ **How did you first learn about NHSC programs?**

I learned about NHSC through my employer.

■ **What does it mean to you to be a NHSC participant?**

Being a NHSC participant has opened countless opportunities for professional and personal growth. Through NHSC, I have been able to obtain my doctorate, which has placed me on a platform to provide intervention and to generate awareness for my treatment community that otherwise

would have been unachievable. The ability to better myself as well as my community through participation in NHSC has been invaluable.

■ **What is the most important thing/lesson that you've learned during your NHSC service?**

The value of service retribution has been the greatest learning experience of participating in the NHSC. Investment in professional and personal growth is the best way to introduce meaningful change to underserved areas.

■ **What advice would you offer to someone who is considering participating in NHSC programs?**

I would encourage everyone to participate in NHSC programs. Not only are you bettering yourself, but you will be bettering your community. ■

**If you have participated in a National Health Service Corps program or know of someone who has, please let us know. We're looking for participants to feature in future issues of *The Bridge*.**





# Alice Lloyd College dean says education is gateway to brighter future for rural Kentucky

By Amelia Holliday

For Dr. Charles Marshall, education has always been the key to success for anyone in rural Kentucky.

“Education is the gateway to career paths that not only change students’ lives but change health care in rural Kentucky,” the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean for Alice Lloyd College said.

Marshall started his journey to becoming a champion of rural health in the Commonwealth more than 25 years ago when the Lee County native enrolled and attended Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, Ky. Upon completion of his studies at Alice Lloyd College in 1999, Marshall went on to earn a Master of Science and a Doctor of Philosophy in Anatomical Sciences and Neurobiology from the University of Louisville.

“After about 10 years, we both decided to come back,” he explains. “Eastern Kentucky was where we wanted to call home, where we wanted to raise our kids, and where we wanted to serve.”

Since 2009, Marshall has served as a faculty member for the University of Kentucky, with appointments in the College of Health Sciences and College of Medicine in Hazard, Ky. Marshall began serving his rural community the best way he knew how—by teaching.

“Every student that I taught, I tried to think about their patients that they’re going to be reaching one day,” Marshall says. “From my perspective, if I can train one physical therapist then every patient that physical therapist has treated, I have a hand in treating that patient.”

Marshall was awarded the Kingston Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2013 and became a tenured Associate Professor in 2015. During his career, he has over 30 peer-reviewed publications and has presented at multiple national scientific meetings.

One of Alice Lloyd College’s mottos that Marshall says stuck with him for life, is, “The leaders are here.”

“We believe that we have leaders in Appalachia to help move Appalachia forward and the Appalachian people forward,” he says. “I really believe in that mission.”

While working at the Center, Marshall says he saw lots of people upholding that same motto without even realizing it.

“I saw many people like myself. People from the area committed to serving people from the area,” he says.

After 14 years working at the Center, Marshall says he easily taught more than 700 students in his program, meaning that his expertise in the field stretched throughout the





**Dr. Charles Marshall, Ph. D.**  
**Alice Lloyd College Vice President for**  
**Academic Affairs and Academic Dean**

rural community and didn't just stop at the students.

"By being an educator, I'm interacting with patients two degrees of separation away sometimes," he says. "I'm having a role in health care in Kentucky."

A new opportunity arose at the end of Marshall's tenure that would allow him to not only reach hundreds of students, but to be able to do that each year.

"I received a call to come back to Alice Lloyd as Vice President for Academic Affairs," he explains. "It gave me the ability to help more kids in Appalachia and that's what my goal is, to help kids."

Marshall says that in his current role at Alice Lloyd, he works closely with faculty across the entire college, including faculty in the biology department—where he originally started.

"By me working closely with the faculty in the biology department, I'm able to help those

students reach their goals of being admitted to a professional school," he says.

"A lot of the students know my background, they know I'm experienced in the health care field so it's not uncommon at least once a week for a student to come in and say I'm interested in medical school or something, what do I need to do to be in the best position for that," he adds.

Marshall says the region has made great strides in that last 25 years in health care in order to help students from the area pursue a career in the field, and he hopes to help continue that growth however he can.

"We have new medical schools in the area, a new pharmacy school, and new physical therapy programs popping up," he says. "The more people and practitioners that we have trained and equipped to go out and handle and meet the needs of the people, the better off our rural communities will be." ■

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Amelia Holliday is the Rural Project Manager for the Kentucky Office of Rural Health.





**Marshall says working with students is one way for him to continue to have an indirect impact on the future patients his students will have.**



# Finding Funding in Kentucky

with Matt Coleman



Join us on the third Thursday of each month for a new edition of the Finding Funding in Kentucky webinar series, which highlights a new private foundation, charitable organization, government agency, grant maker, or other organization supporting rural health projects in the Commonwealth!

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