

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NOVEMBER 2024

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY



RECORD ENROLLMENT, GRADUATION RATES REFLECT COMMITMENT TO

Advancing Kentucky

The University of Kentucky had record enrollment and graduation rates, reflecting a commitment to fostering growth in Kentucky. According to preliminary figures, UK now has more than 36,000 students, a 7% increase from last year, with record-breaking first-year and transfer student numbers. A record 18.8% of UK's first-year students are from underrepresented backgrounds, as defined by state policymakers. Additionally, UK's six-year graduation rate now exceeds 71%, ranking it among the top 100 U.S. public universities, according to the most recent available data. The UK Invests program, which encourages financial health among students, has contributed to higher retention and GPAs, underscoring UK's mission to advance the state.

UK ANNOUNCES PLAN TO ESTABLISH NEXT EVOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP MODEL TO IMPROVE HEALTH, EDUCATION, WORKFORCE IN COMMONWEALTH

The University of Kentucky announced the launch of its Advancing Kentucky Together Network, a strategic initiative to enhance health care, education and workforce development across the state. Approved by the UK Board of Trustees, this network will strengthen UK HealthCare's commitment to keeping patients close to home, supporting Kentucky's workforce and extending resources and expertise to improve health outcomes across the Commonwealth. The initiative aims to improve patient outcomes, expand educational opportunities and strengthen community outreach, starting with clinical partnerships and listening to the needs of Kentuckians. Pikeville Medical Center has expressed its intent to support and participate as the first member of the network.



UK'S LOKA ASHWOOD AWARDED MACARTHUR 'GENIUS GRANT' FOR GROUNDBREAKING WORK IN RURAL COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Loka Ashwood, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Kentucky, has been awarded a 2024 MacArthur Fellowship, commonly known as the "Genius Grant." This prestigious award recognizes her innovative research on rural identity and environmental justice, particularly focusing on how corporate and state policies impact rural communities. Ashwood's work emphasizes the importance of community involvement in addressing environmental health issues, as demonstrated by her collaborative research on cancer clusters in Fruithurst, Alabama. The fellowship provides \$800,000 over five years to support her continued contributions to sociology and rural studies.

