

2023 LIBA Board Candidates

(alpha order by last name)

Rolandas T. Byrd

Republic Bank and Trust

1. *Why do you want to serve?*

I want to serve on this board because LIBA is a great organization that understands the need for diversity and inclusion within the community, this resonates with my passion and values. Also, by serving on the LIBA board, I can help make a direct impact to the community by lending my expertise to its members.

2. *How long have you been a member of LIBA and how have you worked to spread the Buy Local message?*

Republic Bank is a member of LIBA since 2009, and I personally have always been an advocate of buying local and keeping dollars within our community. As a banker and a thought leader for businesses and nonprofits, I see the importance of advocating to support local companies. Through my networking and conversations, I connect people, organizations, and businesses that can provide the service needed sourcing from locally owned businesses.

3. *Are you currently a Board Member or Officer of another organization? (If yes, how long & the position.)*

Current Boards:

Wellspring Mental Health- Board of Director since 2018

Current roles: Development Chair/ Finance Committee/Executive Committee

Kentucky Opera- Board of Director since 2016

Current roles: Co-Development Chair, Governance Committee, Finance Committee, Executive Committee

4. *Please describe any past or current board or group decision-making experience that you have?*

I have held and still hold many roles which include making decisions on budget, by-laws revamping, board member recommendations/vetting, and strategic planning of development fund raising (including capital campaigns).

5. *What qualities, leadership skills and contributions would you bring to the LIBA board?*

I have multiple qualities and leadership skills that would be advantageous to bring to the LIBA board. Integrity is the foundation of good leadership, no matter the situation I can inspire and deliver promises with an ethical and moral compass. As a self-motivator, I have the ability to boost morale when needed and motivate others to finish the task. Lastly, I am a proficient strategic thinker; I make well-researched and objective decisions to ensure that goals are achieved.

6. *What do you think are the most critical issues for LIBA in its next few years?*

With inflation and rates continuing to rise, the most critical issue is to ensure our local businesses are and stay sustainable through this time period. Focusing on money management, branding, and marketing will be key and I feel LIBA will need to focus on these aspects. Also, with local government changing hands, we need to ensure that strong relationships stay in tack, this is another critical point that LIBA will need to focus on.

7. *Are you able to commit the necessary time to serve on the board (6 to 8 hours/month)?*

I am able to devote the time needed to be a committed contributor to the LIBA Board.

8. *If you are approved for the slate, we will publish this application along with your bio in the LIBA newsletter. Please provide the text you would like to include for your bio and a picture if you like.*

Rolandas “Ro” Byrd is a Louisville native with nearly 20 years of banking experience; within those years he has held multiple positions throughout his career in Retail, Business Banking, and Commercial. Ro now serves as the Senior Vice President and Director of Community and Multicultural Banking at Republic Bank and Trust. Ro is actively involved in the community, serving on local boards such as Kentucky Opera and Wellspring Mental Health. He’s a graduate of the University of Kentucky where he obtained his bachelor’s degree in Economics.

Brittany Hill-Whitehead

AMPED, Aura Art, Black Lou Healers, Magnetic Blue, Brittany Hill, Energy Healer

1. *Why do you want to serve?*

As an entrepreneur myself and Program Director of a Louisville business incubator, I am already immersed in the small business scene so I know I have a deep love of entrepreneurship! I admire that small business owners are driven by their passion to create something meaningful and live their lives by loving what they do! These are the people in the community I wish to serve. Small business fuels more jobs, more opportunities and allows more people to contribute to their community. So for me I wouldn't have it any other way in supporting Founders' dreams everyday. Business owners inspire me to want to do better myself and also for my local community. I believe small businesses are the backbone of the local economy and the core of our communities. I was born and raised in Louisville seeing my dad as an Entrepreneur navigate the scene. I couldn't imagine what my neighborhood would have been without the local restaurants, mom and pop shops and boutiques! Small business owners have always given me a sense of local Louisville pride and sparked my desire to create things of my own. I know that building a business is hard work. It can be taxing mentally, emotionally, physically and socially. Organizations like LIBA are vital in supporting the small business ecosystem. Being a part of the LIBA team would serve as a meaningful opportunity for me to do even more for an organization that I already stand behind. Every day I get to be a part of an ecosystem that helps to build generational wealth for families and entrepreneurs creating self-sufficiency, economic mobility, and a more equitable society. I really have a passion for community work and I'm excited that a program like this has been formed to create more support and connection for local owners. I would be excited to do my part on a LIBA's team.

2. *How long have you been a member of LIBA and how have you worked to spread the Buy Local message?*

I enthusiastically support and am a member of LIBA currently through the business incubator I manage, Amped Russell Technology Business Incubator. While I am not a member through my own business yet, I do plan to become a member this year as I embark on exciting developments with my own entrepreneurship ventures!

3. *Are you currently a Board Member or Officer of another organization? (If yes, how long & the position.)*

I am not a part of a board currently. I recently was appointed to be an ambassador for the 2023 Office for Women Ambassadors and also part of the Derby Diversity Ideathon Committee. They are both 6 month commitments.

4. *Please describe any past or current board or group decision-making experience that you have?*

My past experience as a Business Development and Digital Marketing Manager I was responsible for day to day department decisions, hiring, and payroll. I also was responsible for decisions to meet, set and surpass the monthly sales target and earn maximum profit margins for the organization. I was the admin for our CRM systems and also for our Manufacturer accounts as well. I've made decisions on

contracts for clients and business partners. I had to make decisions on record for final DMS sales. This is in addition to various Fundraising Social Media and Press Releases Decisions as well. As a business owner I make decisions daily, and also at my position at Amped RTBI I am the Director over the Business Incubator and make all decisions regarding budget, curriculum, founders processes.

5. *What qualities, leadership skills and contributions would you bring to the LIBA board?*

I am a very self-motivated individual and I love to network! I enjoy taking initiative, creating, brainstorming and helping to execute ideas and events. I am very self-aware of what my strengths and weaknesses are and able to delegate or assist whoever takes the lead. I consider myself nonjudgmental, empathetic and I practice patience which is needed in business. I have good listening skills and a passion for advocacy. I'm proud to be able to work with anyone from any background.

6. *What do you think are the most critical issues for LIBA in its next few years?*

To continue to raise support by way of donations as the local entrepreneurship scene in Louisville is booming. Continue to grow support and services that are necessary and will continue to grow. Developing new and innovative ways to drive consumers to buy local when they are making purchasing decisions. Continue to close the gap of disparity of businesses situated in underserved communities that lack buyers support and dollars. grow the equity across different Louisville communities as LIBA supports city wide business owners.

7. *Are you able to commit the necessary time to serve on the board (6 to 8 hours/month)?*

Yes I am able to commit the time, I also have the support of my job and family which helps.

8. *If you are approved for the slate, we will publish this application along with your bio in the LIBA newsletter. Please provide the text you would like to include for your bio and a picture if you like.*

Brittany Hill-Whitehead, Manager of Amped Russell Technology Business Incubator, was born and raised in Louisville KY. She pursued formal studies at the University of Louisville as a Governor's Scholar and AD Porter Scholarship recipient in the areas of Marketing and Management Administration and Music Composure. She also is a Certified Master in the Japanese traditional Usui Reiki System of Natural Healings, a Certified Crystal Reiki Practitioner, and practicing Shaman and Yogi. She offers table Thai Metta Bodywork sessions. She is a Certified Death Doula certification and currently pursuing her PHD in Philosophy and Holistic Coaching at the University of Sedona. She has extensive background in the areas of Business Management Development, Developmental Training, Fundraising, and Digital Marketing. She brings with her a great understanding and access to the entrepreneurship ecosystem, as an entrepreneur herself and aims to provide high-quality mentorship opportunities and advisory support to entrepreneurs in the Amped Russell Technology Business Incubator in areas such as business modeling, sales, and marketing, financing, fundraising, overall strategy, operations with program partners. With her role at Amped she has been able to work alongside diverse groups to further the program's growth including businesses, entrepreneurs, major corporations, universities, economic development organizations and the public sector. Her personal passion is to provide accessibility to complementary holistic and alternative health equity to all members of her community through immersive experiences, technology especially in underserved and underrepresented communities. She has been inspired by Amped's mission and through their diverse ecosystem and is dedicated to promoting her professional and personal passions and to be a supporter of equity for all.

Crysten Minzenberger

PrintWorx of Louisville

1. *Why do you want to serve?*

I have found LIBA to be a very worthy and organized group and I would like to help grow it.

2. *How long have you been a member of LIBA and how have you worked to spread the Buy Local message?*

I have been a member since 2019. I continually promote LIBA to other local businesses and have promoted buying local for years through my own network along with social media.

3. *Are you currently a Board Member or Officer of another organization? (If yes, how long & the position.)*
Yes, I am the Secretary on the Prospect Area Chamber board – but am rolling over this month.

4. *Please describe any past or current board or group decision-making experience that you have?*

I have been on multiple boards over the almost 18 years of owning my business – from resurrecting the Buechel business association to becoming President of the St Matthews Chamber. I have also served on the YMCA board for about 15 years...

5. *What qualities, leadership skills and contributions would you bring to the LIBA board?*

I would just like to help the existing board with current policies, programs, etc. I feel with many years of business ownership and belonging to other business network groups, I will bring a unique perspective. Or maybe new ideas or reinforcing what works and what doesn't.

6. *What do you think are the most critical issues for LIBA in its next few years?*

Keeping members and adding new ones – building the Buy Local community even more.

7. *Are you able to commit the necessary time to serve on the board (6 to 8 hours/month)?*

Yes, shouldn't be a problem.

8. *If you are approved for the slate, we will publish this application along with your bio in the LIBA newsletter. Please provide the text you would like to include for your bio and a picture if you like.*

Thank you for considering me as a board member for LIBA. With over 17 years of local business ownership and serving on many boards around the area, I feel I would be a resourceful member. Buying local is important to me and that is how I have been able to build my business – many customers have used our business because we are local and woman owned. Its very important for the community to understand how many amazing local businesses we have in this area.

Raegan Stremel (current board member, up for reelection)

Rainbow Blossom Natural Food Markets

1. *Why do you want to serve?*

Having been elected to the Board in January of 2020, it turned out to be an absolutely wild first term! LIBA's dedication to supporting the local business community was beyond impressive and I would love to continue to support their efforts. During the height of COVID, I helped LIBA execute virtual events that helped us all stay connected- it was a wonderful opportunity to get to know fellow members in a time when everything seemed so closed off. Now that we're back to "almost normal", I'd like to continue my work as the Events Committee chair and continue bringing my event planning and leadership skills to the LIBA calendar.

2. *How long have you been a member of LIBA and how have you worked to spread the Buy Local message?*

I have personally been involved with the organization since 2010, participating in events like the Buy Local Fair, Brewfest, and Small Business Saturday. My role at Rainbow Blossom has allowed me to immerse myself in the Buy Local community even more by meeting with local farmers and artisans to understand the impact and importance of buying local on a deeper platform. As a locally owned

retailer, Rainbow Blossom supports the Buy Local message in many ways. It's a principle that is woven into the products we carry, the organizations we support, the farmers we promote, the publications that we advertise in, the vendors we hire for services and maintenance, and so much more. Rainbow Blossom wouldn't be a mainstay in the city if it weren't for the LIBA community.

3. *Are you currently a Board Member or Officer of another organization? (If yes, how long & the position.)*
I am not currently serving on any other board.
4. *Please describe any past or current board or group decision-making experience that you have?*
I served on the Squallis Puppeteers board for five years (2013-2017) acting as the Vice-Chair in my last year. The board functioned as an advisory panel, but we also worked events, fundraisers, and helped staff on a regular basis with upkeep and management of raw materials used in their educational endeavors and physical space the non-profit occupied.
5. *What qualities, leadership skills and contributions would you bring to the LIBA board?*
Starting my professional career in the non-profit sector taught me the value of a vibrant and involved city. My passion for fostering a sense of community has been strengthened by years of organizing fundraising community-oriented events, communicating the values of organizations and small businesses, and learning the fine art of "the ask". I've worked as an independent contractor where I led teams of twenty plus individuals to produce a successful event. During such events I have learned that leadership and professionalism are key to a successful team. I feel my experience is well suited to the collaborative guidance and advancement of one of the most vital organizations in championing Louisville's distinctive local flavor.
6. *What do you think are the most critical issues for LIBA in its next few years?*
Marketing trends for the next few years suggest that big business may be making the move to appear smaller and have the feel of more community friendly businesses. Presenting themselves as being ingrained in the community will be a challenge to locally owned competitors. LIBA has done an excellent job of guiding the "hyper-local" movement but will need to figure out more engaging ways to communicate with the community about the real value small businesses provide.
7. *Are you able to commit the necessary time to serve on the board (6 to 8 hours/month)?*
Absolutely! I don't think I've missed a board meeting or events committee meeting yet!
8. *If you are approved for the slate, we will publish this application along with your bio in the LIBA newsletter. Please provide the text you would like to include for your bio and a picture if you like.*
Raegan is a Louisville native. She spent 8 years in Appalachia and Chicago before returning to Kentucky in 2010. Her background in marketing, design, and event organizing has led her to Rainbow Blossom where she has held a leadership role since 2018. She's the proud owner of a shotgun house in Schnitzelburg where she gardens and spends time with her partner and four pets.

Keith H. Talley Sr.

LHOME (Louisville Housing Opportunities and Micro-Enterprise Community Development Loan Fund, Inc.)

1. *Why do you want to serve?*
I am committed to the work of LHOME and I think LIBA is a perfect synergistic fit to that work. As a long time banker and community development advocate in this community I know the importance of the role locally owned businesses play in the overall health and vitality of our local economy. My desire

to serve supports both my personal convictions and my leadership at LHOME in advancing local economic growth and sustainability, leading to a stronger more vibrant community for all residents.

2. *How long have you been a member of LIBA and how have you worked to spread the Buy Local message?*

LHOME has been a member of LIBA since 2018, and my work throughout my career has supported the “LIBA” mission. Particularly, in Louisville, locally owned businesses are the backbone of economic stability, growth, and job creation. They create strong neighborhoods and families and are an integral part of the character of a city.

3. *Are you currently a Board Member or Officer of another organization? (If yes, how long & the position.)*

I am currently the co-chair of the newly formed Louisville CDFI Coalition and a consultant for the city’s Group Violence Intervention Program.

4. *Please describe any past or current board or group decision-making experience that you have?*

In the past I served on the Boards of The Ronald McDonald House, Louisville Red Cross (Blood Services), Louisville Central Community Centers (Vice-President), Coalition for the Homeless, METCO, and the Metropolitan Housing Coalition.

5. *What qualities, leadership skills and contributions would you bring to the LIBA board?*

I am a committed small business advocate. I understand the obstacles faced by small/local businesses and have a long commercial lending background. I think I can bring a strong, knowledgeable, and practical voice in support of local businesses in our community.

6. *What do you think are the most critical issues for LIBA in its next few years?*

I think stabilizing our local small business community after the pandemic and the social unrest we have experienced over the last few years will be critical. Secondly, helping to provide the resources and fertile economic environment to support current businesses and to incubate and grow new ones.

7. *Are you able to commit the necessary time to serve on the board (6 to 8 hours/month)?*

Yes, the work of LIBA is closely tied to what I already do and need to do in the future.

8. *If you are approved for the slate, we will publish this application along with your bio in the LIBA newsletter. Please provide the text you would like to include for your bio and a picture if you like.*

Keith Talley Sr. was appointed as President and CEO of LHOME in April of 2022. Previous to this appointment Keith had an eight-year career with Louisville Metro Government. First as director of the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District. The agency is responsible for implementing the EPA’s Clean Air Act and local clean air regulations. Then as Chief of Community Building in the Mayor’s cabinet where he oversaw the Office of Resilience and Community Services, the Office of Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods, the Air Pollution Control District, Parks and Recreation and the city’s Group Violence Intervention Program. Previously, he was deputy commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions.

Prior to his work in government, Keith had an 18-year career in banking that focused on commercial lending, small-business development, affordable housing, and economic development. He was a commercial lender and the Executive Director of the National City Community Development Association, focusing on low-income affordable housing and historic tax credit transactions. He has taught small business start-up classes and participated in numerous community development seminars and training events. Following his work at National City Bank he was part of the startup team for the Louisville Community Development Bank as a Senior Vice-President and head of lending.

Keith has served on the board of numerous local non-profits, including the American Red Cross, Ronald McDonald House, the Coalition for the Homeless, the Metropolitan Housing Coalition, and Louisville Central Community Centers. He was a 1990 Black Achiever and a 1999 Leadership Louisville graduate. In 2007, Keith received a Louisville Metro Council Black History Celebration Award for outstanding community service.

Keith is a Louisville native. He grew up in the Shawnee neighborhood and is a graduate of Central High School. He has Bachelor of Arts degree in economics with a minor in the interdisciplinary study of African history from Northwestern University.

Keith is an avid sports fan, with a particular devotion to the University of Louisville. He and his wife of 38 years, Vickie, have a son and a daughter.