



# Board Applicants 2018

*(total of 7 openings, have 9 candidates)*

## **Cynthia Brown**

Navigate Enterprise Center, 2821 Klempner Way, Louisville KY 40205

**1. *Why do you want to serve?***

I would like to serve on the LIBA Board because I am passionate about the local business environment & I believe I could bring a unique perspective. I currently am the director for a nonprofit agency that works with underserved entrepreneurs to assist them with starting and growing small businesses. Almost all are independently owned, and represent a diverse array of backgrounds and industries. On a daily basis I have firsthand access to a variety of the struggles and obstacles they face and work with them to identify solutions and resources. In addition, I have been a free-lance graphic artist & marketing consultant for many years. I think the experience of being in business for myself and being a resource provider gives a unique view of the local business environment.

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

My organization has been a member of LIBA for almost two years. I personally have been involved with LIBA for the last year. I have attended events and served on the LIBA West committee. As an organization I felt that it was important to continue our membership with LIBA as the goal where so closely aligned with our own. All of the entrepreneurs I work with are dependent on a thriving local business environment, supporting that is crucial if they are to be successful. Membership was important but I also knew that active participation was essential as well. A big part of that is insuring that awareness is communicated to consumers and other organizations that buying from local businesses has an impact for the greater community and not just the business owner. Collaborating and being involved increases the capacity of getting that message out to much greater numbers.

**3. *Are you currently serving on any other boards?***

I am currently serving as program coordinator for Bridge Kids International & VP of Communications for the Central High School PTSA.

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

I was a past member of Metro United Way's Cabinet for Community Impact. This cabinet was made up of various individuals who served two year terms. Decisions and discussion were focused around funding allotments and programming. As a part of this cabinet I learned to work with many others with different points of view. Careful considerations had to be made when it came to assessing program needs and effectiveness and working with budget constraints to determine funding. The impact of those decisions not only determined who got how much funding but where those dollars would ultimately carry the most weight in terms of helping the community. Last year I worked with a group of artist on an 18-month long grant that was intended to engage community and encourage creative place making. The activities were around workshopping with young people in local community centers, performances, and culminating in a stage production that related those experiences. Though primarily art based the group was responsible for everything from scheduling, promoting and budgeting. Currently I having been working with Bridge Kids International on development of a community based project. The scope of the project has allowed me to work with architects, contractors, community leaders, business owners and more. I have also served many other committees in volunteer positions and have found that while collective decision making definitely has its challenges, the results it yields are always greater than what would come from an individual.

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

When asked if I had considered being a board member I had to think if my membership as an organization really qualified and would I be the best suited to serving on the board? After much I thought, I really believe that my experience being in small business and as a service provider gives a different perspective. It was my background in design and marketing and passion for problem solving for small business owners that lead me to my current position. I am constantly considering what conditions, resources and policies can make a better environment for local business to thrive. I am actively involved in partnering with other organizations and service providers as well being aware of what is going on in the local environment as far as initiatives and development ideas. Serving on the board would allow me to apply what I've learned over the years and use it to further LIBA initiatives & advocate for its members.

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

I think that LIBA has done a great job in developing its strategic plan and identifying key areas to focus on. Membership Engagement and Capacity & Infrastructure are crucial to the growth & sustainability of the organization. However, I see the advocacy and consumer goals as the most critical and challenging. A lot is going on in terms of the city and other institutions focus on economic development. The city is finalizing its 20year comprehensive plan, large West Louisville initiatives are planned, as well as projects and other developments. I think this a crucial time for LIBA to be extremely visible and attaching its message and the importance of the buy local movement, and the role it plays in the future of economic development in this city.

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

I am able to commit the necessary time to fulfil the obligations of serving on this board.

### **About Cynthia:**



Cynthia Brown is the Director of Navigate Enterprise Center a local non-profit which focuses on individual and group business planning, training and technical assistance, and financing to support the startup of businesses. She has had a 20-year career in business development, marketing and communications, business support and customer service. Cynthia's skills include: program coordination and development, reports and data management; training, business coaching, & micro-lending; marketing and communication materials - graphics, brochures, newsletters, social media & website development; and event management & coordination. Cynthia holds a B.A. in Communication. Cynthia also currently works part time for Bridge Kids International as the Program Coordinator for Our Place at Ben Washer.

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### **Renee Gehring**

DMLO CPAs, 9300 Shelbyville Rd., Ste. 1100, Louisville KY 40222

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

I would like to serve on the LIBA Board for several reasons. The first being that I love the idea of being able to support the local businesses. I have been wanting to contribute more to my community for several years now and hope that participating on this board would be a great use of my skills.

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

I have been a member of LIBA for several years. I have worked to spread the Buy Local message by volunteering my time on the LIBA event planing committee. In addition, I have volunteered at the Buy Local fair for several years, as well as, several other events hosted by LIBA.

3. **Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

No, I am not currently serving on the Board of another organization, nor am I an Officer of any organizations.

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

I have not had the opportunity in the past to serve on any Boards due to family conflicts.

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

I have several qualities, skills and contributions that I think would be valuable to LIBA. I earned my Bachelors of Science in Business Administration with an option in accounting. I am a licensed to practice as a CPA. I am also a Certified Fraud Examiner. I am very detail and goal oriented. I strive to give my all to everything that I am involved in.

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

I think there are several issues facing LIBA in the next few years. Top of the list would be the continued political uncertainty. Government regulations are also a large challenge. This would include laws related to securing customer data, as well as, minimum wage increases. In addition to this would be helping small business to increase profitability, grow revenue and hire skilled employees.

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

Yes, I can commit the time necessary to fulfill the obligations of a board member.

### **About Renee:**



Renee is a Supervisor with Deming, Malone, Livesay & Ostroff (DMLO). She is a member of the Service Businesses Niche and the Forensic Accounting Niche. Renee has over five years of experience practicing public accounting in Louisville. She works with all types of clients and especially enjoys working with local independent businesses. She provides audit and tax services to small businesses and not-for-profit organizations. Renee earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an option in accounting. She is licensed to practice as a CPA. In addition, she is a Certified Fraud Examiner, a credential awarded by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) exclusively to those who have met the ACFE's character, experience and education requirements, demonstrating knowledge in four areas critical to the fight against fraud: Fraudulent Financial Transactions, Fraud Prevention and Deterrence, Legal Elements of Fraud and Fraud Investigation. Professional

memberships include the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Kentucky Society of Certified Public Accountants (KyCPA), the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), and the Kentucky Chapter of the ACFE. Renee was recently appointed to the KyCPA 2015-2016 Fraud & Forensics Committee. In addition, she serves on the Event Planning Committee for the Louisville Independent Business Alliance (LIBA).

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### **Tracy Karem**

Louisville Public Media, 619 S. 4th Street, Louisville, KY 40202

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

I've been a member of LIBA for about 8 years, it's one of my favorite organizations. Meetings are fun, I can see how the board keeps trying to engage members by having meetings in different locations, changing content, and I leave feeling like I've learned something. I also like how LIBA is expanding into other neighborhoods, and really wanting to be a member organization for all locally-owned businesses. These are meetings and events that I look forward to.

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

I've been a part of LIBA for about 8 years or so. I've worked for locally-owned businesses, so I have a good understanding of how hard owners work to make their businesses successful. Also I worked 3½ years at LEO, and 6 years at LPM, where the majority of my clients are locally-owned businesses. I'm constantly amazed at all the different businesses we have here, it's amazing! I spread the message because the local businesses are what make Louisville what it is, and let's be honest; my success depends on their success.

3. **Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

Commonwealth Theatre Center – six years, FABA – four years as a member, on the board for one year, marketing chair for the past four months.

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

I was on Walden Theatre's board as they merged with Blue Apple Players to become Commonwealth Theatre Center, including navigating the name change. I'm also currently in Ignite Louisville, working with a team on a non-profit project.

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

I am a good team player, willing to take the reins when necessary, handing off when it's time, and working with the team to make sure goals are met, and that the work gets done. At LPM, I've researched CRMs and made recommendations to the team, I've worked with the sales team on client events, and I pitch in when necessary.

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

As LIBA continues to grow and expand, I think a big challenge is managing growth while expanding into other neighborhoods. This can be a tricky line to walk, and so far, LIBA has done this well. I want LIBA to maintain its "weirdness" as it grows.

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

Yes

## About Tracy:



Tracy has always had a love of art and music, as seen by the variety of jobs she held before landing at Louisville Public Media. She had her own graphic design firm, her artwork represented in a national catalog and was integral in the launching of a new product on a national level. Passionate about the arts and her community, Tracy is active in several organizations, including the Spring 2018 Ignite Louisville Class, Board member for Commonwealth Theatre Center, Marketing Chair for FABA, GLI, and LIBA. An advocate for local businesses, Tracy delights in helping businesses of all sizes continue their growth through the various platforms of Louisville Public Media.

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## Mike Lorenzen

Republic Bank, 9600 Brownsboro Rd, Louisville KY 40242

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

I've lived in Louisville for 27 years (grew up in California) and I have watched the metro area grow and thrive in many ways. I have been an active participant in various organizations both personally and professionally that have allowed me to contribute my time, ideas and resources to the service of others. The LIBA Board position is another opportunity for me to help. Louisville has many unique and valuable characteristics that must be preserved and enhanced. I want to help in those efforts!

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

I have been a member since I joined Republic Bank in May 2017. I have called on fellow LIBA members to thank them and encourage a relationship with locally owned Republic Bank because our culture encourages associates to do so. I participate in LIBA events regularly and my wife and I purchase from local business owners as often as possible.

3. **Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

West Louisville Dream Team member and Elder Chair at First Christian Church – both started in 2017.

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

Many years ago, I was a board member of Louisville's "Dream Factory." I have held multiple positions at First Christian Church (7700 US 42, Louisville KY 40241) including President and Elder Chair.

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

In my job as Business Development Officer at Republic Bank, I am constantly networking in the metro area with particular focus on business development. I am very active in Greater Louisville Inc. as an Ambassador under Terri Weber's leadership. I am a member of West Louisville Dream Team as a committee member focused on West Louisville small business development. I am constantly thinking about local economic development and rushing to meet new, like-minded people.

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

Achieving critical mass associated with LIBA initiatives is very important. This means recruiting new members quickly and on a large scale. It is also important to circulate in a variety of circles which are representative of all types of community sectors without bias or pre-conceived concepts about ones that are unfamiliar to many of us. Louisville and the surrounding region is experiencing significant growth in many areas and these "growing pains" need to be understood and adjusted to while maintaining focus on the core LIBA mission.

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

Yes

### **About Mike:**



Grew up in California where I met my wife at Fresno State University. Still married after 36 years to Kelli with 4 children and 7 grandchildren (so far.) After 20 years in various technology careers, I spent 3 years with Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor before moving to PNC in the same capacity until May of 2017. Active in various capacities at church. Hobbies include fishing, skiing, music and helping others.

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### **Lance Minnis (current board member, up for re-election)**

Commonwealth Financial Advisors, LLC, 9403 Mill Brook Rd Suite 100 Louisville KY 40223

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

I believe passionately in the mission and goals of LIBA, and my own professional goals are closely aligned with those of LIBA. I believe the only way to a just, fair, sustainable economic future for our city and region is for bolstering local independent business, having government and the public on board. I believe with my passion for this, my experience with LIBA, and my work with member engagement and B to B concerns, that I have a lot to offer to continued Board service with LIBA.

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

I have been a member since December 2012, and have spread through message through personal action, sponsoring numerous LIBA events, sponsoring other events with local themes such as Watershed, volunteering for LIBA, giving Buy Local talks and seminars for such groups as Rotary, making Buy Local a theme of my business, writing articles on the Buy Local message for publications like Cherokee Living and Henry County Local, and serving as the B to B chairperson for the LIBA Board

3. **Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

Current LIBA Board since 7/2014

Luminary, Inc. since 5/2017

Northwest Territory Alliance since 10/2015

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

Past GLI Ambassador, Past President of the Eminence and then Shelbyville Rotary Clubs, Board member Eminence and Shelbyville Rotary Clubs, Board member Shelbyville Rotary Scholarship and Student Loan committees, Two-time Board member of Henry County Chamber of Commerce, Treasurer and national Board member for North West Territory Alliance, Member and chair of various committees and subcommittees.

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

I am a strategic thinker, able to look at the big picture as well as connect the dots between concept and outcome. I think I add a valuable business to business perspective to the Board, and have been a strong proponent of member value through "walking the walk". Additionally, the mission of LIBA is strongly aligned with the purpose and mission of my business and professional life, in creating sustainable, economically just, diverse, locally determined strong community and economy. I am able to bring this synergy to LIBA Board service as well.

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

Our original mission remains our most central challenge. While the public in general is more aware than ever of the term "buy local", the public is unaware of what it means to buy local, what independent means, and the existence of our own local movement and organization. Combine this with our need for increased advocacy to local government, the fact that Louisville is now on the national development map, several large local projects by outside developers in our traditional "core" area, and regional and national interest in our underdeveloped areas, it is now more important than ever to make LIBA THE voice and advocate for local independent business, for buying local, investing local, and allowing our communities to develop naturally along their existing local lines rather than through outside force.

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

Absolutely.

### **About Lance:**



Lance Minnis is an advisor, consultant, and entrepreneur. Partner and financial advisor in Commonwealth Financial Advisors, LLC, a locally owned fee only Registered Investment Advisor, Lance also is founder and director of Luminary Inc and the Watershed Festival KY, and Metro Sustainable Development, a development company devoted to community investment. Lance's passions are for sustainable development and entrepreneurship, developing the local economy for the benefit of local people, and economically just communities. In his spare time, Lance plays music and teaches vocal and repertoire classes for the Louisville Folk School.

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### **Barbara G. Nichols**

South Louisville Business Association, P.O. Box 9755, Louisville, KY 40209

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

I feel I have a more integrated knowledge of South Louisville and can contribute to the goals LIBA has while continuing to serve South Louisville.

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

Our organization has been a member for four years. And I have worked on the Keep South Louisville Weird Campaign since 2013. During the past four years I have worked with Jennifer and her staff members in promoting South Louisville events and worked to raise awareness of LIBA and how to pool resources for the good of the region and ultimately the Louisville business community as an entirety.

3. **Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

South Louisville Business Association – President – 3rd term, current one 4 years. Iroquois Neighborhood Association – President 19 years, alternating during the past 40 years. U of L Alumni Board – 17 years. Actors Theatre Associates – Volunteer Support Group – on the board 30 years – Past President, currently VP for Fundraising. Little Loomhouse - 19 years on the board – currently Finance Chair. Happy Birthday Park Board – 5 years.

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

Strategic Plan development at the board level– LIBA's South Louisville Work Group, South Louisville Business Association inaugural board; Little Loomhouse strategic plan; Happy Birthday Park Board, Iroquois Amphitheater Association reorganization; Music Theatre of Louisville board and Iroquois Park Master Plan. Actors Theater Associates – as incoming President worked with all stakeholders in an organizational evaluation and reorganization in 2000. CAVORT incorporation – Led the process to incorporate, organize and apply for 501(c ) (3) designation for this national organization for theater volunteers 1998 – 2002; Little Loomhouse – participated in 3 board retreats 2008, 2012 & 2016 and current strategic plan for board.

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

Experience with volunteers, knowledge of board fiduciary responsibilities, willingness to accept responsibility, commitment and institutional knowledge of South Louisville and the organizations that have shaped this area.

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

To promote and educate the public regarding the critical role independent businesses play in our economy, independence, community involvement, opportunity and how we can integrate and support the independent business segment in today's swiftly changing environment.

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

Yes

**About Barbara:**



Barbara has been married 48 years to Donald W. Nichols; with two sons, David and Douglas, five grandsons: Drake, Dyllan, Douglas, Jr., Daxon and Dacen and one great-grandson, Dalton. These are all of "Her Guys"! She has lived in the Iroquois Neighborhood since 1971. In addition to her extensive involvement in local business, arts and community organizations, Barbara has worked for Metro Council since 2012, and has a Bachelor's from Kentucky Southern College.

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**Ashley S. Parker (current board member, up for re-election)**

Parker & Klein Real Estate, 3610 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40207

1. **Why do you want to serve?**

It has been an honor and an adventure serving the board of LIBA as Vice President and currently President. I have been on the board since 2012 and was elected VP in 2013 and President in 2016. I would like to remain in this role to continue leading LIBA specifically focusing on: enhancing our monthly meetings with members,

developing a 501C3, raising funds through new members, sponsorships and events, and promoting locally-owned, independent businesses and to educate citizens on the value of purchasing locally.

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

Parker & Klein has been a member of LIBA since 2007. This was our first year in business and we were proud to qualify as members and help support other local businesses. We have helped spread the Buy Local message through sponsorships, advertisements in The Guide, promoting and volunteering at the Buy Local Fair, Brewfest and Nulu Fest. We also distribute guides to our clients and post LIBA events and information on our website and Facebook page and recruit new members

3. ***Are you currently serving on any other boards?***

No

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

Besides LIBA and the Clifton Center, I have been on the Greater Louisville Association of Realtors Board for 3 years and the Board of Farmington Historic Plantation for 4 years. I also served on the Parent Board at St. Matthews Preschool and have chaired numerous committees.

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

I am a graduate of Leadership Louisville & Bingham Fellows where I gained a wealth of knowledge about Leadership in general, but specifically on being a better leader in the Louisville community. I would describe my leadership style as gracious, decisive and authentic.

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

- 1) Enhancing and improving our members experience with LIBA.
- 2) Increasing public awareness about the benefits of buying local and supporting independent businesses.
- 3) Expanding our membership as well as our geographical footprint.

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

Yes

### ***About Ashley:***



It has been an honor and an adventure serving the board of LIBA. I have been a member since 2007 on the board since 2012 and was elected Vice President in 2013 and currently serving as President. I would like to remain in this role to continue leading LIBA specifically focusing on: enhancing our monthly meetings with members, developing a 501C3, raising funds through new members, sponsorships and events, and promoting locally-owned, independent businesses and to educate citizens on the value of purchasing locally. I have served on the finance, membership, co-chaired the 10 Year Birthday Party and currently serve on the events and logistics committee. I am a graduate of Leadership Louisville and Bingham Fellow Program. I have been an independent business owner since 2007 and am currently the broker/owner of Parker & Klein Real Estate. I am passionate about the city of Louisville, independent business, and especially keeping it all weird.

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### **Matt Stack**

Stack Insurance Agency, 6009 Brownsboro Park Blvd Suite A, Louisville, KY 40207

1. ***Why do you want to serve?***

Over the past year, I have volunteered on membership engagement initiative, but I feel like I could offer more given the flexibility of schedule and perspective as an independent business owner myself. I understand the

importance of buying locally and promoting that message to the community. I am very excited about LIBA's 5-year strategic plan, and I would like to play an integral role in seeing this through.

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

I have been a LIBA member for over a year and served on the Membership Engagement/Ambassador committee(s). We focused on mapping the engagement level of current members ensuring they maximize their current LIBA membership, and we also welcomed new members, gauging their interest level. In addition, we recently worked with one of our partner insurance carriers to introduce a new LIBA member benefit offering discounted business insurance for LIBA members. Our agency is contacting the entire membership spreading the word about this new benefit, which will not only offer significant savings for current LIBA members but also attract new members to the LIBA organization.

**3. Are you currently serving on any other boards?**

I am not currently serving as a Board member on any other organization, so I will be able to dedicate ample time to the LIBA board position.

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

I served as Board Chair for Cornerstone Child Development Center from 2010-2016. During that time, we not only balanced the budget but we also met our fundraising goals every year, which allowed us to make numerous capital improvements. As Chair, I worked closely with our Executive Director and other Board Members on a wide range of issues, including planning several fundraising events per year, mapping out and prioritizing improvements needed at the center and working to improve teacher satisfaction and retention.

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

As a business owner and father of three children, I would say that time management has become one of my strongest qualities. There are only so many hours in the day and I feel as though being 100% present and productive whether I'm coaching one of my kid's teams or in the office managing my staff and our workload it is of utmost importance. I work with a very diverse group of clients including local restaurants, retail stores, consultants, and professional organizations, and therefore, I feel like I can bring a unique perspective to the Board from my client's point of view.

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

LIBA always has done a fantastic job of growing membership and spreading the buy local message. I think the next step is engaging those members that want to be engaged and making sure the next generation of business owners is involved. One of the toughest challenges will be building capacity and infrastructure as laid out in the 5-Year Strategic plan, but this is vital to sustaining LIBA's mission.

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

Absolutely. As a business owner, I can coordinate my schedule around the LIBA Board obligations and can be very flexible. I have carefully considered the next board that I want to commit to and feel that LIBA is where I can provide the most value.

**About Matt:**



Matt Stack is President and Agency Principal of Stack Insurance Agency. He founded Stack Insurance in 2010, and continues to grow his agency with clients in Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Florida and Colorado. Matt is a Louisville native as well as a Saint Xavier and University of Kentucky alum. With a background in finance and economics, he worked for the Federal Reserve Board and Deloitte and Touche before beginning his insurance career. He has over 13 years of experience in the insurance industry, having been on both the carrier and independent agency side of the business. Matt is married to his wife Susan of 10 years, and has three children that he enjoys coaching their basketball and soccer teams. Matt loves UK sports and to play golf, tennis and work in the yard on his spare time.

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## **Tori Thompson (current board member, up for re-election)**

Kertis Creative, 786 S. Shelby Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40203

### **1. *Why do you want to serve?***

First and foremost, I have been employed by and intricately involved with small, local businesses since moving back to Louisville in 2007. I have seen the joys and the struggles of a small business and understand the inner workings. At times the struggle can be real, but the community support is the greatest reward. I have, and still do, work on a small team of dedicated and creative people. Working for a small business, especially in the creative industry, allows for freedom and relationships you can't always get in the corporate world. In 2010 my husband opened his own catering company, and I came to understand even more intimately the workings of a small business. Before, the success of my employer could affect my paycheck and office morale. Now being a partner, with my partner, the success of the business, the highs and lows, affected our family and our household. I say all this to show that I know what goes into owning and operating a small business. I recognize and respect the skills, the responsibility, and the gusto it takes to set out on that venture/adventure. Serving on the board would allow me opportunities to encourage and support my community, on a deeper level. I want to give of my time and talents to further grow and support this local economy. Another reason I want to serve is to bring greater attention to areas of town that do not have a regular (positive) spotlight on them. I am passionate about bringing people to these parts of town. It's important to see the communities already in place, and to appreciate the history and potential for growth. I want to continue to serve as a board member in order to help grow the diversity of LIBA members, because Louisville has a lot to offer all over town!

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

I have been a LIBA member in some capacity since 2009. I've been an attendee and volunteer of the Buy Local Fair and Brewfest for years, along with the monthly member events. When I worked at Videobred, I hosted a morning Meet and Greet for LIBA as well. I have also recruited memberships amongst friends and the companies I have worked for over the past few years. In 2013 I was approached by LIBA to produce a video for their Independent Week Promotion. The video project allowed us the opportunity to showcase LIBA businesses and encourage viewers to shop locally. I was able to interview several business owners and help tell LIBA's mission through their voices. In 2015 I joined the LIBA Board of Directors and have served on the Ambassador and Branding Committees. My term as a board member has only deepened my knowledge of LIBA and our community's needs. Serving on the board has allowed me to be a part of many important initiatives not only in communications but also in the areas of outreach.

### **3. *Are you currently serving on any other boards?***

Yes, the LIBA Board of Directors. I am the co-chair of the Branding Committee. My partner on the Branding Committee and I serve as a conduit for communications external and internal, and serve as a resource to all the other sub-committees. We are working to launch a new LIBA app for membership sometime late 2018 or early 2019.

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

I am winding down my third year on the LIBA board. While on the board I've worked with a group to select a new LIBA logo and brand standards, as well as the implementation of these standards in LIBA's internal and external communications. I helped organize the LIBA Thank-a-thon in 2015, an event where the LIBA board called every LIBA member to thank him or her for their participation in the organization. As far as general group decision-making goes, I am a producer for a production/creative agency and have been in this field for a decade. I am constantly working on a team, and making group decisions, to produce video work. Bringing a video to life requires communication between our team and the client, and has given me the ability to translate and communicate with many different types of people. In addition to coordinating logistics of productions, I am always working with my team to take the client's vision and make it a reality. I am a Producer but that is really just another word for problem solver.

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

I believe I have several qualities that will serve the LIBA board well. I know how to work on a team. I am organized and detail oriented. I have experience planning events and productions. I grew up in Louisville and have a love for the town and its people. I am creative, enthusiastic, and curious. I have a boisterous laugh and a friendly smile. I work hard! I pursue the right thing even if it means more work. I am a good listener. I have years of experience in the field of production, and visual storytelling. Finally, the past three years serving on the LIBA board has given me a deeper understanding of the organization and the needs of its membership.

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

While on the board I've worked on the Branding Committee to streamline the LIBA message and aesthetic. We had/have a bit of a branding problem, simply in that we are the "keep Louisville weird" people but also the "Buy Local" people, and what else do we do for members? Often times these messages are confusing to the community, or worse we are only known for these slogans. I want to see the message of what LIBA is more recognizable. With consistent branding and messaging we can accomplish this task and help spread the buy local message. Furthermore, I'd like members and the public to see LIBA as a resource to help their business and community grow, connect, learn, and advocate. Taking all the work we've done, and the work we would still like to do for branding and communications for LIBA, I'd like to see our membership better educated on the importance of the Buy Local movement. I want to see LIBA put together a communications tool kit for local businesses. This "kit" would allow businesses to better speak on the movement and empower them to be more involved with supporting the local economy. The second issue I would like to see addressed is more inclusion and participation in LIBA from businesses in more diverse neighborhoods (ex: Old Louisville, West End, South End). We have made some great strides in this area the past couple years, and I would love to see this continue to grow. LIBA has a unique opportunity to encourage the support of businesses in different neighborhoods, and breakdown perceptions of certain parts of town.

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

Although my schedule with work can be hectic, I can confidently say I am able to put in the time to serve on the board.

***About Tori:***



Tori Thompson is a talented and experienced Senior Producer at Kertis Creative. After graduating from Milligan College, Tori returned from her stint in Tennessee to Louisville, the hometown of her heart. Tori immediately began working in the world of production and fell in love with storytelling. Tori is passionate about the city and people of Louisville. She sees great potential in both, and wants to see that potential realized. She is a fan of history and tradition, but sees the importance and need for change. She wants good things for our city, endeavors that are progressive and sustainable instead of trendy. She believes that a key to successful change is supporting the local network of businesses and the local economy. Louisville is a fantastic city and she wants everyone to know it!