

Kentucky Lantern

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Kentucky Lantern launching as statewide news outlet

The Kentucky Lantern, an independent, nonprofit news service, will launch Nov. 30, bringing Kentuckians a new source of nonpartisan information about policy and politics.

The Lantern is part of the nonprofit States Newsroom, a network of free digital news operations in more than 30 states working to fill gaps in state government coverage caused by newspaper layoffs.

Financial support for States Newsroom and the Lantern comes from foundations, individual donors and readers.

The Lantern's reporting and commentary will be free to read at kentuckylantern.com without paywalls, subscription fees or advertising.

The Lantern will publish a morning newsletter; to sign up for it go to kentuckylantern.com.

Veteran Kentucky journalist Jamie Lucke, the Lantern's editor in chief, will lead a staff of three full-time reporters working from an office within walking distance of the Capitol. The Lantern will also publish news stories, commentary and photographs by Kentucky-based freelancers and by States Newsroom journalists in other states, as well as reporting by States Newsroom's Washington bureau.

"All of us who are putting out the Lantern really care about Kentucky," said Lucke. "We are committed to doing the kind of journalism that can help make Kentucky a fairer, better place for everyone. We want to give readers incisive journalism that holds those in power accountable to the people. There's no shortage of stories to be told and questions to be asked and investigated. This is an exciting opportunity."

Lucke has more than 40 years of experience as a newspaper journalist in Kentucky, Alabama, Florida and Georgia, with most of those years spent at the Lexington Herald-Leader where she reported on education, government and politics before joining the editorial board. Her editorials about Kentucky's economic, health and political challenges were honored with Walker Stone, Sigma Delta Chi and Green Eyeshade awards. The East Kentucky Leadership Foundation honored her with its media award in 2019. She grew up in Morehead and is a graduate of the University of Kentucky.

The Lantern's reporters are:

- McKenna Horsley, most recently a reporter at The Herald-Dispatch in Huntington, W.Va., where she covered local government. Before that she reported on education and government for The State Journal in Frankfort. Press associations in both states have honored her work. McKenna also has experience as a copy editor and designer. She grew up in Greenup County in northeastern Kentucky and graduated from the University of Kentucky where she was the Kentucky Kernel's managing editor. She is pursuing a master of fine arts degree in writing from Spalding University.
- Sarah Ladd, previously a reporter at the Courier Journal in Louisville where she reported on racial justice protests, the COVID-19 pandemic and the abortion debate. Her journalism has won many awards, and she was part of a CJ team that was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize. A first-generation college graduate, Sarah grew up on a farm in western Kentucky and is a graduate of West Kentucky Community and Technical College and the University of Kentucky. She has studied Mandarin and is completing a master of fine arts in writing at Spalding University.
- Liam Niemeyer, who got to know Western Kentucky during his almost four years reporting for WKMS Public Radio in Murray. His storytelling earned two regional Edward R. Murrow Awards and two first place awards from the Kentucky Broadcasters Association. Before serving as the Murray station's assistant news director and an Ohio Valley Resource reporter, Niemeyer worked as a journalist at radio stations in Alaska, Wyoming and his home state of Ohio, where he also covered the statehouse in Columbus as a college fellow. He is a graduate of Ohio University.