



KET CEO announces retirement

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After leading Kentucky's statewide public media network for almost 17 years, KET Executive Director and CEO Shae Hopkins announced her intention to retire at the end of this year.

A 40-year veteran of KET, Hopkins has led a consistent expansion of local productions and services, including numerous series, documentaries and biographies, in addition to launching The Kentucky Channel and a wide range of educational resources. She has also overseen multiple technical and facilities milestones, creating production studios in the Kentucky Capitol, establishing the Louisville Production Center, and guiding recent Network Center and studio improvements.

Under her leadership, the use of KET's programs and services has doubled, steadily growing to more than two million viewers and users each week. During this time, KET has been recognized with 40 regional Emmy awards and 144 nominations, 83 national and state awards, and other accolades.

Kentucky Authority for Educational Television Chair Dan Griffith praised Hopkins, saying, "We are deeply grateful for Shae's exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to KET's mission to serve Kentuckians across the commonwealth. Her dedication, knowledge and experience will be hard to replicate." He added, "Her profound impact on KET's programming and operations is a lasting legacy that is recognized and celebrated by us all."

Hopkins reflected, "It was my good fortune to have been mentored by KET's founder Len Press and to have had the opportunity to engage in such meaningful service with such an extraordinary organization all these years. It has been an honor to work with and learn from dedicated professionals, and to engage with viewers, generous supporters, committed board members and passionate volunteers, all the while making dear friendships along the way. It has been an immense privilege to serve everyone who values and relies on KET every day."

She continued, "I want to extend my deepest gratitude and appreciation to everyone who has contributed to making KET what it is today and to ask for your continued support as KET finds more ways to serve our commonwealth."

Griffith added, "We know the next leader will be inheriting an opportunity to build on KET's significant organizational momentum and guide the future of this trusted, service-oriented educational institution."

Griffith said the Authority greatly appreciates that Hopkins has agreed to stay through a transition as a search committee begins its work in the coming weeks to determine her successor. The committee is focused on finding the best person to lead the statewide network, beginning with a search for candidates who have extensive public broadcasting experience at KET. Search committee members are Authority Chair Dan Griffith (Owensboro), Authority Vice Chair Robert Beck (Lexington), Rusty Cheuvront (Louisville), and Hilma Prather (Somerset). All have served as Chairs of the Authority and have long affiliations with KET.

Hopkins began her career at KET as a temporary employee working on pledge production. Over the years, she served in progressive management positions, including leading private fundraising for 10 years, as founding president of the Commonwealth Fund for KET, and as Deputy Director of Programming, Production and Education.

She has been a prominent national advocate, serving on the PBS Board of Directors since 2022 and previously for two terms (2013-2019). She is a member of the Organization of State Broadcast Executives (Chair 2018/19), National Educational Telecommunications Association (Chair 2013/14), and the Public Television Major Market Group.

Hopkins was appointed in 2011 by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a founding director of the national Digital Promise Board, and has served on several other boards, including the Kentucky Broadcasters Association.

She has been recognized with various industry awards, including the National Advocacy Award from America's Public Television Stations, Kentucky Daughters of the American Revolution Media Award, four regional Emmy Awards and three Telly Awards. In 2025, she received the Daniel K. Miller Station Leadership Award, PBS's highest honor, recognizing public media leaders whose vision, courage and commitment have inspired colleagues and created a lasting impact, both locally and nationally.

KET is Kentucky's largest classroom, where learning comes to life for more than two million people each week via television, online and mobile. Learn more about Kentucky's preeminent public media organization at KET.org, on X [@KET](https://twitter.com/KET) and at facebook.com/KET.

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