

# Nominees for KFTC, Kentucky Coalition 2018-19 leadership positions

*For consideration at the Annual Business meeting, August 5, 2018*

KFTC's Leadership Development Committee recommended, and the Steering Committee approved, a slate of candidates for KFTC's Executive Committee and the Kentucky Coalition board. Members at the Annual Business Meeting on August 5 will vote to elect these or other members to the organizations' leadership positions.

The slate is diverse, highly qualified and exemplifies KFTC's commitment to shared leadership.

The proposed KFTC Executive Committee slate is Meta Mendel-Reyes as chairperson, Cassia Herron as vice-chairperson, Christian Torp as secretary-treasurer and Amy Copelin as the at-large representative. Assuming Mendel-Reyes is re-elected as chairperson, Mary Love is nominated to fill the five position on the executive committee normally filled by the immediate past chair. The previous chair is currently unable to fill that position.

The Leadership Development Committee recommendations were based on nominations offered by chapters and individuals. The committee is charged with recommending a diverse

slate of qualified candidates, taking into account desired traits as well as characteristics including gender, age, race, income, educational background, place of residence, level of involvement in the local chapter and statewide organization, and issue interests.

A KFTC leader may not serve more than two consecutive one-year terms in the same position. Mendel-Reyes and Torp currently serve on the Executive Committee as chair and secretary-treasurer, the positions for which they are nominated. Herron currently is the at-large representative on the committee. Love was appointed to the committee as the fifth member earlier this year when Dana Beasley Brown, the immediate past chair, became a candidate for elected office. Copelin would be new member, if elected.

The annual business meeting will take place on Sunday morning, August 5 as part of the KFTC Annual Membership Meeting at Berea College. All members in good standing (current in their membership dues) present at the business meeting may vote.

Here's a little information about the nominees.

**CHAIRPERSON: Meta Mendel-Reyes** became KFTC's chairperson last year after one year in the vice-chair position. Leading up to that, she served on KFTC's Steering Committee, the Economic Justice Committee, the Voter Empowerment Strategy Team, the Leadership Development Committee, and the Racial Justice Committee. Meta also is active in local chapter efforts, including a town hall and much more. She co-facilitated several racial justice workshops for KFTC members and staff. She's active in the chapter's local racial justice work, and an instrumental force in KFTC's Organizing Academy, helping to plan the agendas, facilitate trainings and communicate with the participants between trainings. She offers leadership and support throughout the organization.



**VICE-CHAIRPERSON: Cassia Herron** currently serves on KFTC's Executive Committee as the at-large member. Locally, she supported the Jefferson County chapter's We Are Kentuckians event to honor African American women and Black culture in Kentucky. She is experienced in community organizing and has worked with union organizers and trainers with the Highlander Center. She also has experience working with the Community Farm Alliance, and works extensively with issues of economic development and food access. She provided consistent and sustained leadership to the Empower Kentucky campaign, and she's provided leadership in KFTC's work for collective liberation and inclusivity in the Steering Committee and through her work with the Executive Committee.



**SECRETARY-TREASURER: Christian Torp**, KFTC's current secretary-treasurer, is an active member in the Central Kentucky Chapter. He served on the Steering Committee, the Litigation Committee, the Land Reform Committee and on the Voter Empowerment Strategy Team. Christian is involved in local work around housing justice and racial justice. He also works locally for food justice, distributing fresh food to neighbors and leading urban gardening skill workshops. He and Tanya Torp have made their home a community gathering spot called Justice House, open for meetings and breakfast gatherings. Christian offers leadership in organizational fundraising efforts, especially around the Sustaining Giver Program.



**AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE: Amy Copelin** is active in the Northern Kentucky chapter, contributing significantly to the chapter's outreach and strategy. She's lobbied in Frankfort, tabled at PRIDE, Earth Day events and rallies, registered voters, and stretched outside of her comfort zone to emcee a chapter cookout held with local allies. Amy supported fundraising efforts like the NKY Pie Auction, and proudly raised \$400 last year through her Powerbuilder page. She writes blog pieces on behalf of the chapter, including a recent one on immigrants' rights. Amy's favorite KFTC events have been A Seat at the Table and the annual meeting, where she connects with other people about our work. She does this through her work on KFTC's Steering Committee, too, where she is a thoughtful and courageous representative for the NKY chapter.



**FIFTH SEAT (if needed): Mary Love** lives in Oldham County is active in the Jefferson County chapter. She currently serves on the Executive Committee after stepping in for Dana Beasley Brown in the position for the immediate past chair. She has served as co-chair of the Land Reform Committee, as well as on KFTC's Leadership Development, New Energy and Transition and Litigation committees. Mary represents KFTC in a number of state and regional coalitions, including the Alliance for Appalachia, Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance and the Extreme Energy Summit. Mary lobbies and testifies frequently on KFTC issues, including clean energy, water quality and mining issues, payday lending, and telephone deregulation. Mary served on the Steering Committee for several years, and is a retired Presbyterian minister.



## Kentucky Coalition Board nominees

The **Kentucky Coalition** is the tax-exempt affiliate organization of KFTC. It supports leadership development programs and other charitable activities of KFTC. The Kentucky Coalition board includes the five members of the KFTC Executive Committee plus three additional members elected by KFTC's membership at the annual membership meeting.

To be eligible for one of the elected positions on the Kentucky Coalition board a person must be a current member of KFTC, may not be an employee or immediate family member of an employee of KFTC or the Kentucky Coalition, and may not serve more than four consecutive one-year terms.

The Leadership Development Committee considers all nominees and works to develop a diverse slate of three qualified candidates, taking into account a diversity of characteristics including gender, age, race, income, educational backgrounds, place of residence, level of involvement in the local chapter and statewide organization, and issue interests.

The nominees are:

**Serena Owen** is a leader in the Northern Kentucky chapter, and statewide through the Economic Justice Committee, the Leadership Development Committee, the New Energy and Transition work, and through helping with the Action for Democracy Launch in November 2017. She is a powerful and motivating leader, known for being able to elevate the mood and activity of a crowd. She also is a committed and devoted advocate for her kids, and for all children. Serena has had to take a step back from the Steering Committee and other statewide work since beginning a new career, even as she's continued to support the work of the NKY chapter and KFTC's Action for Democracy work.



**Alan Smith** is an active member of the Southern Kentucky chapter and has been dedicated to the chapter since he began to get involved right around the time the chapter was founded. Alan has served on the Economic Justice Committee and Voter Empowerment Strategy Team, and on the Steering Committee for three years. Locally, he's active on voter empowerment strategy and voter registration efforts, fundraising and at-home lobby meetings. He also participated in the A Seat At The Table event as a table host and the Hear Our Health event. He provides consistent, insightful and reliable leadership to KFTC.

**Leslie McBride** is a long-time member of KFTC and the Shelby County chapter. She has served multiple terms on the Steering Committee as a chapter representative. She is deeply engaged in local work to pass a Fairness Ordinance. Leslie is a passionate advocate for animal welfare and navigated the process of having an animal welfare plank added to KFTC's platform. She provides thoughtful leadership to KFTC and helps the local chapter build relationships with local officials. She is committed to grassroots fundraising and has organized chili cook-offs for the Shelby County chapter. She is an experienced attorney and brings her skills and thoughtfulness to her work with KFTC.

