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**The Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame to Induct Five**

**Accomplished Entrepreneurs**

**Lexington (10/12/2015)** – The sixth annual Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame induction ceremony will honor this year’s inductees on November 18, 2015, at 5:30pm. The induction ceremony will be held in Louisville at Mellwood Arts and Entertainment Center located at 1860 Mellwood Avenue. The Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame celebrates the stories of Kentucky's most successful entrepreneurs. The mission is to raise awareness of the impact that entrepreneurship has made in the Commonwealth and to encourage others to pursue similar ambitious endeavors.

2015 Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame inductees:

* **Brad Kelley, *Commonwealth Brands tobacco (sold the company in 2001 to Houchens Industries for US$1 billion), Center for Innovation and Technology business park, NC2 Media - owner of lonely planet, Calumet Farm***

Kelley is the fourth-largest landowner in the U.S., with an estimated worth of US$1.9 billion in 2014. He founded the Commonwealth Brands tobacco company in 1991 and sold the company in 2001 to Houchens Industries for US$1 billion. As of 2014, Kelley's business interests include Calumet Farm, NC2 Media (Lonely Planet) and the Center for Innovation and Technology business park.

* **George Garvin Brown I - *Brown-Forman***In 1870 George Garvin Brown founded what would become Brown-Forman. Brown-Forman is traded on the NYSE with a current market cap of $23.45B. Today Brown-Forman employs more than 4,000 people worldwide with about 1,000 located in Louisville. Brown-Forman is one of the largest American-owned spirits and wine companies among the top 10 largest global spirits companies to sell its brands in countries around the world and has offices in cities across the globe. In all, Brown-Forman has more than 25 brands in its portfolio of wines and spirits.
* **James Patterson - *Long John Silvers***

In 1969, Patterson became the first president of Long John Silver's, a carry out fish restaurant. Today, the popular chain has 1,200 stores nationwide. After stepping down from Long John Silver's and being awarded $20 million, he became a Wendy's franchisee and formed Western Restaurants, Inc., which operated 47 Wendy's. Throughout the 1980s, Patterson founded or was instrumental in starting several businesses, including Chi-Chi's Mexican restaurants; AmeriCall and First Phone, which merged into what is now WorldCom; Rally's, a hamburger drive-thru restaurant chain; and Gulfstream petroleum, an oil and gas exploration company.

* **James Thornton, *Thornton Oil, Inc. now Thorntons Inc.***

Mr. James H. Thornton is founder and chair of Thornton Oil Corp. now Thorntons Inc. As of 2013 Thorntons had over 177 gasoline/convenience stores including one travel plaza, eight car washes in six states: Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Tennessee, and Florida. Thorntons Inc., headquartered in Louisville, ranks #250 among Forbes magazine’s 500 largest privately held companies and ranks as one of Kentucky’s largest privately held companies with over $2.3 billion in annual revenue.

* **Phil Greer, *Greer Companies; Cheddars***

The Greer Companies has a long history of residential, industrial, office and   
 commercial real estate development. Some of these developments include   
 Republic Bank, Fifth Third, and a franchise of casual dining and hotel chains,   
 including Cheddar’s Casual Cafe, Marriott and Hilton Hotels.   
 As of 2014 the company has 37 Cheddar's in seven states and 7,400+ employees,   
 with $4 million in annual sales for each location They have not raised prices in   
 five years and Cheddar's generates significantly more revenue per store than   
 O'Charley's and Applebee's.

**Emerging Entrepreneurs:**

The following Emerging Entrepreneurs will also be recognized: Alex Frommeyer, Beam Dental; Peter Tower, Magnolia Photo Booth Co.

**Event details:**

The KY Entrepreneur Hall of Fame would like to thank the following sponsors - *Lead Sponsor*: Delta Dental; *Legacy of Leadership Sponsors*: Brown-Forman; S*pirit of Achievement Sponsors*: University of Louisville, York Management; *Goldfish Sponsors*: Mike and Dana Bowers, Karen Boone Design, John Y. Brown Jr., Jim Host.

Seating for the Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame ceremony is available for $75 per person. Reservations are required. Sponsorships are also available. To reserve a seat visit<http://kyehof.eventbrite.com/>. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Tonya York at 502-419-6370.

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