

**President**

Gavin Washington

[Gavin.Washington@kysu.edu](mailto:Gavin.Washington@kysu.edu)**Past President**

Robin Richardson

[robinwalkerhpe@gmail.com](mailto:robinwalkerhpe@gmail.com)**President-elect**

Ladonda Porter

[ladondaporter@fayette.kyschools.us](mailto:ladondaporter@fayette.kyschools.us)**Executive Director**

Jamie Sparks

[kentuckyshape@gmail.com](mailto:kentuckyshape@gmail.com)**NEWS RELEASE**

For more information, contact: KYSHAPE Executive Director Jamie Sparks, 606-315-3737 or [kentuckyshape@gmail.com](mailto:kentuckyshape@gmail.com)

**Kentucky SHAPE 2nd Annual Mary Ann Miller Thrive Award**

Mary Ann Miller worked tirelessly for over 30 years at the Kentucky Department of Education, where she was a passionate advocate for Kentucky students. Mrs. Miller was the recipient of the 2017 KYSHAPE Merit Award for her contributions to student health and wellness policy in Kentucky. Mrs. Miller passed away in May 2021, Kentucky SHAPE continues to honor her legacy and contributions with the association's 2nd Annual Thrive Award in her honor. The Thrive Award will be given annually to a Kentuckian(s) for the recognition in advancement of student wellness and whole child focused policy at the federal, state or local level.

The inaugural 2021 Mary Ann Miller Thrive Awards were given to Governor Andy Beshear, Allison Slone and Solyana Mesfin. Governor Beshear was recognized for his role in naming the first ever teacher and student representatives to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). KBE's first teacher representative Allison Slone and KBE's first student representative Solyana Mesfin not only were the first Kentuckians to serve in their respective roles on the Kentucky Board of Education, but also were critical voices serving teacher and student voice during the COVID19 global pandemic.

Kentucky SHAPE is proud to announce that Governor Beshear will join us again this year to celebrate the 2022 Mary Ann Miller Thrive Awardee: the Thompson Scholars Program. The Thompson Scholars Program mission is to build upon a supportive and inspiring environment for the youth of our Appalachian region through a process of instilling a culture of resilience, self-worth, educational attainment, and self-actualization. Thompson Scholars was founded in Manchester, KY to prioritize serving youth from groups that have been historically underserved, such as youth of color or youth in poverty, or youth who would be first generation college students. The Thompson Scholars Program namesake is Dr. Aaron Thompson, President of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. Dr. Thompson grew up in Manchester in extreme poverty and has risen to his current success through his own resilience, along with the credit he gives to his mentors. He also credits much of his journey and his drive toward education to his father (who was illiterate) for placing such an emphasis on the importance of education. Dr. Thompson's lifetime work has been in the area of educational equity, and the Thompson Scholars Program centers its work around valuing and promoting equity.

**President****Gavin Washington**[Gavin.Washington@kysu.edu](mailto:Gavin.Washington@kysu.edu)**Past President****Robin Richardson**[robinwalkerhpe@gmail.com](mailto:robinwalkerhpe@gmail.com)**President-elect****Ladonda Porter**[ladondaporter@fayette.kyschools.us](mailto:ladondaporter@fayette.kyschools.us)**Executive Director****Jamie Sparks**[kentuckyshape@gmail.com](mailto:kentuckyshape@gmail.com)

The 2nd annual **Mary Ann Miller Thrive Award** will be presented at the KYSHAPE Summer Conference in downtown Lexington on Monday, June 27th. The award presentation will be at 10:15 AM at the Central Bank Center during the keynote presentation by SHAPE America President Dr. Kymm Ballard.

**About Kentucky SHAPE**

Kentucky SHAPE formerly KAHPERD, is a state affiliate of SHAPE America (Society of Health and Physical Educators). KYSHAPE is committed to ensuring students become healthy adults, and healthy adults make for a better world. We give students the tools they need to shape, construct and adapt to the world around them with conviction and pride. Students know how to stay well when schools prioritize health and can use that knowledge to thrive for life.

For more information, visit [www.kyshape.org](http://www.kyshape.org).

**About Mary Ann Miller**

In her roles at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and for the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE), Mary Ann Miller was a tireless champion for kids and an advocate for students. KDE has one of the longest running federally funded Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) healthy school's teams due to Mary Ann's passion. She was critical in the development and sustainability of the inaugural KBE school health subcommittee, now named the KBE Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) subcommittee. That collaborative work helped sustain CDC funding at the Department of Education from 2013-2018 when all other states funded only state public health. Countless numbers of Kentucky teachers and students benefited through this infrastructure which was the original Kentucky SHAPE Network. State level school health committees are now part of the required infrastructure for all CDC Department of Education funding agreements. We are proud that Mary Ann's leadership and guidance via the National Association of State Boards of Education in 2010 began and sustained that infrastructure to this day.