



# CHI EPSILON SIGMA

## GAMMA CHAPTER • FALL 2023



### *A Message From Our President*

Greetings!

As the new program year has started and 4-H Camp and the State Fair Events are behind us, we are looking forward to Round Up and our 2024 CHIES Conference. Your CHIES Board met on August 22, 2023, to start planning the 24th Annual CHIES Conference that will be held in Paintsville, KY. Save the dates: April 17th, 18th, 19th, 2024. We have read your survey responses and are looking closely at how we can better serve you. Keep in mind that there are several issues that are not within our control as we are bound by hotel contracts in food and hospitality

issues and have Extension Administration guidance on our meeting agenda. Every year we try to make it better by adding things that are suggested by your surveys. Thank you for your help in that area.

I'd like to take time to personally invite each of you to our CHIES Reception the morning of Roundup during Staff Appreciation Day on Friday, September 29, 2023. We will have some refreshments and we are hoping to have Extension Administration visit with our group that morning. Take time to stop by, get some good refreshments, and network with other CHIES members who will be attending. Also, stop by our table and get your CHIES membership pre-registration forms and put your name in the drawing for a gift card. If you have any co-workers who are not members, it would be a great time to introduce them to our group in a casual setting and let us answer questions about our organization.

I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve as your 2023-24 CHIES President. If you have any questions about CHIES or would like to know how to become a board member to represent your area, reach out to me and we will talk.

Just for fun and so members can get to know me better, I have included the most recent picture of my family. We recently had a "Sprinkle" baby shower for a new baby girl that will be blessing our family in October. It was a hard picture to capture as my grandson, Henry, was wanting to play with his Pappy instead of looking at the camera.

Enjoy; this is us!

Hope to see you at our CHIES events,

*Kimberly Campbell*

CHIES President



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UK – PRINCETON

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UK – ROBINSON

*Josh Mullins*

## CHIES MEMBERSHIP

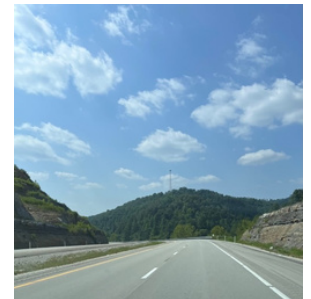
Chi Epsilon Sigma membership officially opens in December and must be submitted by **January 31, 2024**. The \$20 fee can be paid with professional improvement funds (with AED approval).

We will have pre-registration forms at UK Staff Appreciation Roundup. Dues do not have to be paid at that time.

Keep in mind that membership enrollment and dues are separate from the conference registration. We will send out conference registration information in February or March.

## 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Be sure to mark your calendars for **April 17-19, 2024**, for our Annual Conference! The board met in August at the location – the Ramada Inn in Paintsville – to begin planning. Some of us visited Loretta Lynn's homeplace and did some sightseeing. Those of us who stayed overnight enjoyed dinner together the evening before our meeting. Eastern KY is beautiful, and the hotel has a timeless beauty to it. We are looking forward to a fantastic conference there!



# celebrating 50 years of service!



Marilyn Hooks retired in August after working at the UK Research and Education Center in Princeton for **FIFTY YEARS!**

Marilyn was a founding member of Chi Epsilon Sigma and served on the board for many years. Some of the board members attended her reception on behalf of CHIES. We gave her a beautiful windchime with a quote that said, "Never underestimate the difference you made or the lives you touched" along with a visa gift card.

## THIS GAL'S RETIRED



The Paducah Sun featured Marilyn in an article. It is a great read. You can read it online by visiting [bit.ly/3ZavSoP](https://bit.ly/3ZavSoP)

Thursday, August 10, 2023 THE PADUCAH SUN A9

### Marilyn Hooks reflects on years of UKREC service

BY ABIGAIL WRIGHT  
AWRIGHT@TIMESLEADER.NET

**PRINCETON** — In her 50 years at the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center, Marilyn Hooks has seen it all. From the first computers to a devastating tornado, her time there has been nothing if not memorable.

Hooks graduated high school in May 1973, and she started working at the UKREC in July of that same year. Hooks was involved in the DECA program at school, and her teacher recommended her for the position to her father, who worked at the UKREC.

"Back then, I did posters by hand," said Hooks, who explained that "by hand" means literally. She used a mimeograph machine, a type of hand-fed printer that forced ink through a stencil onto paper. Hooks typed out the stencils as well.

"We went from electric typewriters to a computer around the '80s," said Hooks, "and that was a big change. We went from a phone of, I think, three lines to a switchboard."

Hooks, a staff support employee, also said that the UKREC grew when it finished new construction in the 1980s, and this included hiring more staff members.

"We only had a few faculty staff in the old building on top of the hill, and then they built in 1980 and we started

hiring more faculty and staff, and from there it grew into more, and then we had the renovation," Hooks said.

But then, the 2021 tornado hit. "It was very devastating when I first heard of it," said Hooks. "My son and his family came and stayed with me in the basement until it passed. Luckily, we didn't have any damage."

Her son and his family left to check on their home out near the country club, but were unable to reach it because of downed power lines. So, they returned to Hooks' home, this time with news.

"So, he came back home and he said, 'Mom, the station's gone,'" Hooks said of her son. "I didn't know what that meant. I mean, I could not comprehend it. What do you mean the station's gone? You just can't think that there's nothing there."

Hooks went to see the center for herself the next morning, and the devastation shocked her.

"It's traumatic to know that everything is gone," she said. "And so, I parked there on the other side of the road, and got out and looked, and when I got back in the car, it wouldn't start. And I was panicking. I called my girlfriend and she said 'Have you got it in park?' I didn't put it in park," Hooks laughed, the story showing how

shocked she had been.

"It's been quite an ordeal of emotions with your lifetime at a place that you've seen so many changes," Hooks said. "It's just a sad thing."

But amid the tragedy, Hooks is grateful for the community she found at her job. "The people that I work with, and for, we work together united," she said.

"We worked as a group. We worked in unity. It was like a family. We raised our children together. We've been through a lot," Hooks continued, adding that many of her former coworkers are still close friends.

She also found the work fulfilling. "I like the work," said Hooks. "I like what I did. It was very fulfilling to do field days and meeting everyone and being of service." She felt that she and her coworkers were united toward a common goal.

"That unity brought us together," Hooks said. "If anybody asked us to do anything, we were glad to do it. We wanted to make them the very best that they could be."



Marilyn Hooks is retiring after 50 years with the University of Kentucky Research and Education Center. Her duties have been wide-ranging, including serving as the wheat staff associate since the program's conception in 1996.

best worker that I could be," Hooks said. "When asked what she would miss the most, her answer came quick. "I'll miss the people," Hooks said. "I'll miss my friends. I miss the work I like to see things done and I like to know that we maybe added to what need-

ed to be done instead of just the mundane things." Hooks will have plenty to keep her busy after retirement. She plans to devote more time to personal projects and trainings she offers, and is also planning on spending plenty of quality time with her

grandchildren. There will be a retirement ceremony for Hooks held at 2 p.m. Thursday at UKREC.

**SPOT AN ERROR?**  
Call 270-575-8650





You're Invited!

Please join the members of

Chi Epsilon Sigma

for refreshments and good conversation on

Staff Appreciation Day

September 29 | 9:00 a.m.

E. S. Good Barn, Weldon Suite



# STAFF APPRECIATION

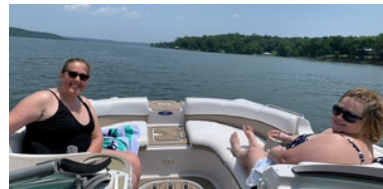
We hope you can join us at Staff Appreciation Roundup! It is a great day to spend time out of the office networking with other support staff.

As support staff, we work hard. And sometimes our job can get overwhelming. It can be refreshing to enjoy a much-earned break and visit with other support staff. Networking is a great way to learn more about Extension and bounce ideas around. And after all, it is a day of *appreciating staff!*



## CHI EPSILON SIGMA BOARD

Being on the Chi Epsilon Sigma Board is more than just collaborating with other support staff. It is an opportunity to develop amazing friendships! Over the summer, Tami invited the board to visit her home in Marshall County to enjoy some work-free time together on the lake. Not all of us were able to make it, but those that did had a great time.



Tami and Nancy came to my (Robyn) rescue this summer. My family and I stayed overnight in Marshall County one weekend after my son participated in the 4-H Shoot. After we got home, my daughter realized she left her baby doll in the hotel room. "Baby" is her security blanket. She has had this doll since her 1st birthday! I called the hotel and luckily they had found it. It was the day before school started and I was panicked trying to figure out when/how I could drive two hours away to get this doll. I reached out to Tami since she lives there. Without batting an eye she agreed to help me and retrieved the doll! She even talked to Nancy who then drove from Graves County to Marshall County to get the doll because we were going to see each other at Marilyn Hooks' retirement. These two were lifesavers that week! I wanted to share this story with everyone because I am so thankful to have such good friends who were willing to help me without hesitation. When I first joined the board, I didn't expect to gain so many friends. But I'm sure glad I joined!



# Member News

Tessa Brown, McCracken County Support Staff, became "TT" to her first grandchild. Arzie James! Arzie arrived on August 27 weighing 7lbs 6ozs and was 21 inches long.



Haley Martin moved to a new house! This is her with her children, Anna and Franklin, standing on their new front porch.



Back row L-R is Katie Travis and Christy James, Livingston County Support Staff. Front row L-R is Kristy Harris, Crittenden County Support Staff and Vickie Belt, Crittenden/Livingston NEP Assistant. They had a fun car karaoke after their day of training in West 1&2 on September 6.



Amber Nagy from Carlisle County and her family Stephen, Aloni, and Bailey took a day trip to Mammoth Cave before school started. Her sweet baby girl, Raven got a brand new pair of glasses. Isn't she cute?!



Georganne Collins, Nelson County Staff Assistant, and her husband, Danny, enjoyed their son's wedding on their farm in Bloomfield this summer. David and Haley Collins were married on May 20, 2023.



Tami Widelski of Marshall County and her husband got a new wrap on their boat this summer.