

# RESEARCH NOTES

## COLLABORATIVE EFFORT: QUALITY OF LIFE

### Background Buzz

This series highlights 23 projects aimed at solving the “Kentucky Uglies” by improving Kentucky’s schools, business climate, environment, health care and lifestyles. These projects are the “Commonwealth Collaboratives,” a term that portrays the partnership binding UK’s researchers, K-12 educators, independent health care providers, entrepreneurs, industries, local government officials and private citizens who will participate in — and benefit from — these projects.

The five main categories of collaboratives are:

- environment
- health care
- economic development
- education
- quality of life

Many of the things we cherish most at first appear unrelated to health, education, or economic development — clean air and water; fertile soil; views of secluded valleys and furrowed, timber-covered mountains; sights of rolling hills, board fences, and galloping Thoroughbreds; strong families and communities; our Kentucky heritage; and access to culture. Ultimately, all connect, and UK researchers are committed to raising Kentucky’s quality of life in all areas.

UK historians are creating an extended, documented history of Kentucky, teaching materials and a book to raise the level of historical literacy from middle school social studies classes to the educated public. The documentary and related materials will demonstrate that Kentucky’s past is central to, and sheds light upon, the American experience.

Access to the fine arts for Kentucky is important. It begins in elementary school by exposing young children to the arts and encouraging them to make the arts part of their lives.

### *Kentucky History*

“*Kentucky – An American Story*,” was written by Daniel Blake Smith in the UK College of Arts and Sciences Department of History. He also is the executive-producer and director of the project, as it unfolds into three one-hour programs aimed at increasing Kentuckians’ historical literacy. The series will be broadcast on Kentucky Educational Television and be supported by teacher-training workshops designed to help stimulate student interest in history in general and Kentucky’s past in particular. The programs will be accompanied by a book published by the University Press of Kentucky, lavishly-illustrated with photos and stills from the film series as well as many other surprising images from Kentucky’s rich past.

The series, hosted and narrated by film star and Kentucky native Ashley Judd, will dramatize how Kentucky’s past, far from being an odd ‘stepchild’ of the American experience, in fact symbolizes much of the nation’s journey.

From its frontier origins to its global present, Kentucky offers a revealing window into a wide range of distinctly American issues. Offering a treasure-trove of unforgettable people and transforming events, each episode will tell vivid Kentucky stories that are indelibly linked with the nation at large.

The series is expected to be finished in time to air in the spring or fall of 2008.

### *Cultural Enhancement*

The UK Opera Theatre/Lexington Opera Society Opera Outreach Program takes opera to K - 6 schools and communities across Kentucky, particularly Eastern Kentucky, that may not otherwise have opportunities to experience it. Led by Everett McCorvey of the UK College of Fine Arts, the program’s ultimate goal is to increase the impact of the fine arts and art in general within the Commonwealth, providing improvements to the quality of life across the state.

This opera education outreach program introduces children to operatic story-telling by using beloved and popular children’s stories as a backdrop, making the audience comfortable and at ease with this new learning experience. After weeks of rehearsal at UK, the one-act opera performances with full costumes and sets tour school auditoriums and gyms throughout the state.



For details, visit [www.uky.edu/UE/CC/life.htm](http://www.uky.edu/UE/CC/life.htm)