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KENTUCKY COLONELS ORGANIZATION MOVES AGAIN TO PROTECT HISTORIC TRADEMARK

The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels (HOKC) filed suit in the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky on January 25, 2023 to continue to block efforts by certain individuals to brazenly and deceptively use its trademarks and trade name for personal enrichment.

Those individuals have established unaffiliated organizations, websites, and social media identities intended to create confusion amongst Kentucky Colonels and the general public. Specifically, those parties have created unauthorized groups, deceptively identifying themselves as “Kentucky Colonel,” “Kentucky Colonel Community,” “Kentucky Colonel Club,” and “Kentucky Colonel™ 1775,” linking to websites including “Kentucky Colonelcy: The Honorable & Official Title” and “Office of the Colonelcy.” Among other things, the groups are soliciting registry dues and licensing fees from commissioned Kentucky Colonels to be considered an “official” Kentucky Colonel and marketing “official” badges and “official” ID cards. The Complaint filed by HOKC can be viewed [here](#).

HOKC is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation which has made more than 3,500 grants—totaling more than \$29 million—to nonprofit organizations across Kentucky in the last 20 years. Since 1951, HOKC has made more than 8,000 grants, totaling over \$60 million and currently has more than 30,000 contributing members across the U.S. and in 59 countries. Kentucky Colonels are appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth and are Colonels for life. A Kentucky Colonel can selectively decide to join the long-standing HOKC and contribute to help make the lives of citizens in the Commonwealth better.

“This action is again important because Colonels and those who are not Colonels continue to be confused by the deliberate efforts of the same parties who agreed not to engage in such conduct through a Permanent Injunction entered by the Court in February 2021. We must defend the philanthropic reputation, goodwill, and intellectual property ([including registered trademarks](#)) built over many decades by individual Colonels and The Honorable Order,” said Executive Director Sherry Crose. “The ‘Kentucky Colonels’ mark is our federally registered trademark for our charitable fundraising services and grant gifting, social club services for members, and promoting the interests of members. It represents individuals who honor their commission and charitable efforts.” HOKC is seeking another injunction against Globcal International, Ecology Crossroads Cooperative Foundation, Inc., David J. Wright, and other unknown defendants.

About The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, Inc. HOKC is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to supporting charitable activities throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. For decades, HOKC has pursued its mission through annual grants to charities across the state. This grant-making function is funded by generous donations of its contributing members. Though the corporate name is The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, most know it by its long-term trademark, Kentucky Colonels®.

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