

# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

## Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board \* Annual Report 2011 - 2012

### Communication, Hard Work and Training Needed to Meet Challenges

When Governor Bill Haslam announced in mid-June 2011 that Benton, Carroll, Henry and Weakley counties would be joining LWIA 12, Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development knew that a reorganization of staff would be necessary to meet the demands of what was now the largest geographical workforce area in the State. "Our population increased by 49% over night, and our geographic territory grew by 71%. I knew we could no longer try to do everything from the Administrative Office in Dyersburg; we needed feet on the ground in each county. We were very fortunate to have several staff who were able to step up and meet the challenge." Prater believes the reorganization coupled with training and staff development has been the key to the successful transition. The area was divided into two regions, with Pam Merritt and Ginger Powell named as Regional Directors. "Their leadership has been extraordinary" said Prater. When the

four counties joined LWIA 12, 225 active participants were transitioned. To date service levels for these counties has increased by 270% for a total of 833. "Our staff have worked really hard to get the word out that WIA is open for business" said Ginger Powell, Regional Director for the new counties. "Both our business and job seeker customers are seeing the value of the services offered through our Tennessee Career Centers."

While much of staff energies were focused on the newly transitioned counties and the Goodyear closure, Pam Merritt and her team also increased service levels. "LWIA 12 has always served large numbers, but with the recent influx of dislocated workers and an employer emphasis on the National Career Readiness Certificate program, the original 7 counties served nearly 3,500 adults, youth and dislocated workers," commented Prater. The total service level for the year was 5,467. "Margaret and her staff

have worked tirelessly to meet the challenges our workforce has faced this year" said Dr. Karen Bowyer, President of Dyersburg State Community College, the administrative entity and fiscal agent for the program. "They have done an amazing job working under stringent deadlines, strained budgets and constant change."

With such a large service area and the many changes, communication

the area, staff get a more regional prospective. Staff learned about the Memphis Regional Megasite while visiting Tipton County; toured the Carl Perkins Center for Child Abuse in Lauderdale County; and heard a presentation on the Port of Cates landing while in Lake County.

Prater has also emphasized staff development and training, with staff logging nearly 2,600 hours this year. "I truly believe for us to do our jobs, we must have a strong mind, body and spirit", said Prater. Staff read two motivational books and were encouraged to participate in their county or regional leadership programs and to continue their education. To build strong bodies, 29 staff participated in Walk Across Tennessee. "Keeping spirits high is sometimes a challenge when you see and hear heartache and disparity from those needing your help everyday," said Prater. "Even so, staff have opened their wallets and hearts by supporting Relay for Life, a local food

bank, Hope House, and playing 'Secret Santa' for two WIA participant families. We have an awesome staff!"

with the Board and staff has been crucial. The Executive Committee has taken a much more active role this year. "We generally meet once or twice between Board Meetings to take care of business," said Jimmy Williamson, Chairman of the Northwest TN Workforce Board. "Sometimes we need to make adjustments in policies that affect participants that really can't wait for the quarterly Board Meeting." Prater has continued her "Notes from the Vice President" between meetings to keep Board Members up to date. Several initiatives to keep lines of communication open with the staff have been implemented. "Our 3Cs (Career Center Coordinators) have really embraced their new leadership role. They meet every few weeks to discuss policy issues and determine training needs for Career Advisors," said Merritt. This year each Coordinator has planned and hosted a full staff meeting in their county. By moving meetings throughout

### Mass Layoffs Kick Rapid Response into High Gear

When Briggs & Stratton announced in February 2012 that the Newbern plant would close in May, the Workforce Board and Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) Rapid

Response unit mobilized immediately to advise the company officials and close to 700 workers of services available. "Unfortunately, this was not our first rodeo," said Pam Merritt, Regional Director for Workforce Development for Dyer, Crockett, Gibson, Lauderdale and Tipton Counties. "After holding meetings with almost 2,000 employees from Goodyear Tire and Rubber earlier in the year, we have become a 'well oiled machine' when it comes to responding quickly to large closures."

Merritt, along with TDLWD staff, coordinated the Briggs and Stratton mass meetings, providing vital information to dislocated employees about unemployment insurance, retirement, company benefits, training opportunities and community services. Career Fairs including community organizations and training providers were organized for both groups.

Close on the heels of this closure, American Ordnance in Milan announced mass layoffs, starting in May 2012. Production schedules were adjusted several times to meet government production needs, so only 155 of the proposed 600 have been dislocated to date. "Having a lot of notice that a company is closing can be a double edged sword," says Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development. "The company officials have been very proactive in providing services for their workers. They have a computer lab and resource website for employees and provided space for our staff. However, with many of the employees still working, it is difficult for them to access the services."

To end the fiscal year, Ferry Morse Seed, headquartered in southwestern Kentucky closed its Tennessee Warehouse leaving 200 employees without work.

Total employee dislocation notices filed with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development for July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 were 3,386 from 17 companies.



### Labor Force Statistics - June 2012

June 2012	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate (%)
United States	155,007,000	142,287,000	12,720,000	8.2
Tennessee	3,106,100	2,861,300	244,700	7.9
LWIA 12	152,080	134,340	17,740	11.7
Benton	7,180	6,420	760	10.6
Carroll	14,150	12,580	1,570	11.1
Crockett	6,680	5,960	720	10.8
Dyer	17,280	15,050	2,230	12.9
Gibson	21,780	19,190	2,590	11.9
Henry	13,770	12,340	1,430	10.4
Lake	2,750	2,440	310	11.2
Lauderdale	9,790	8,460	1,330	13.5
Obion	13,700	11,670	2,030	14.8
Tipton	29,260	26,570	2,690	9.2
Weakley	15,740	13,660	2,080	13.2



# BUSINESS SERVICES

## Unilever Awarded 2012 Employer of the Year



During the Annual Meeting for the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board, held on August 14, 2012, Unilever of Covington, TN was honored as the Employer of the Year in recognition of their commitment to the employment and training of employees in and around Tipton County.

In early 2010, Unilever began a \$100 million expansion project, adding 32,000 square feet of freezer space to the existing structure in order to add production of ice cream and frozen novelties to its product lines. The news that the expansion would add 275+ jobs to an area recently hit with large company closures was a positive lift for the community.

As construction neared completion in 2011, Workforce Board staff started promoting On the Job Training (OJT) opportunities to Unilever officials and the benefits of using the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as a tool for hiring. Business Services representatives Ginger Powell and Amy Maxey began negotiations with Unilever, gathering information about their hiring practices and job descriptions. The time the business services unit spent explaining the process to Unilever personnel and discussing the benefits of OJT and the NCRC, was key to the company entering into a successful workforce development partnership.

In July 2011, after a total reorganization of the Workforce Board, Delores Hayes, Career Center Coordinator for Tipton County, stepped up and continued the conversations regarding OJT contracts and hiring with Lana Hammons, HR OPS for Unilever. Upon the completion of the impressive freezer addition, Unilever was ready to hire new employees. In September 2011, Hayes placed the first two participants on an OJT contract

at Unilever - one line technician and one warehouse technician. Hayes states, "I can remember Lana Hammons being so excited that workforce investment funds were available to reimburse the company for 50% of new employees' wages during their specified training period." Since hiring the first two employees, Unilever has saved over \$100,000 in OJT reimbursements from WIA, hiring over 50 dislocated workers or unemployed adults. They are looking to hire at least 25 more.

Additionally, Unilever is working towards utilizing the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as part of their hiring process. The company has had two entry level positions profiled: the line technician position and the warehouse technician, with the possibility of profiling two additional positions. Hammons commented on working with the TN Career Center at Covington and WIA staff, "Unilever seeks to hire the best fit for each of our positions. We strive to hire the most qualified candidates. We are looking to the NCRC as a viable assessment that can make the difference in the quality of our workforce."

Unilever in Covington strives to be the largest ice cream manufacturer in North America by 2015. Currently, the goal is to have 700 people working once they reach full production. To date, the plant employs 400 people - 57 of which were hired through the TN Career Center on an OJT contract, making \$15.33 an hour. Hayes concludes, "With product lines such as Breyer's and Ben & Jerry's, you can certainly say working with Unilever has been a 'sweet' experience. We look forward to partnering with them in improving their workforce for a long time to come."

## On the Job Training Grants Increase Greatly with More Employer Awareness

On the Job Training (OJT) continued to remain a top strategy for employer engagement for the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board in the 2011-2012 Program Year. With the addition of a middle management team of Career Center Coordinators, each Career Center in the eleven county workforce area now has a WIA staff member specifically charged with developing relationships with employers and other customers in their assigned counties. "In growing from 7 to 11 counties in July 2011, I realized that a centralized system of employer engagement based out of the Dyersburg Administrative Office was not feasible," stated Margaret Prater, Vice President of Workforce Development. "We now have eight Career Center Coordinators across the eleven counties, with three Coordinators having dual responsibilities for our three smallest counties.

Ginger Powell, Regional Director of Workforce Development for the counties of Benton, Carroll, Henry, Lake, Obion, and Weakley, stresses the importance of increased visibility in counties where employers are unfamiliar with how to engage with the Career Centers to take advantage of OJT funding. "We have had over 300 contacts with employers in these five counties - phone calls, letters, visits and emails - trying to educate employers on the benefits of using On the Job Training funds to hire inexperienced dislocated or unemployed adults for their open positions. We have had some success, but hope to continue to grow this program in the coming years."

This year 22 employers have been granted OJT funding, hiring 218 employees and receiving \$326,682 in training assistance. "We're beginning to see more companies hiring in larger numbers, and we are very pleased to offer this type of assistance to employers for new hire training," says Pam Merritt, Regional Director for Workforce Development for the counties of Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Lauderdale, and Tipton.



Delores Hayes, Career Center Coordinator for Tipton County accompanies Susan Herrington, WorkKeys Job Profiler, on a tour of Unilever in Covington.

The companies with on the job training contracts this year include the following:

Bethel University - Carroll County  
Huntingdon Police Department - Carroll County  
Wisper - Crockett County  
Dyer County Sheriff's Department - Dyer County  
Dyersburg Regional Medical Center - Dyer County  
NSK Steering Systems - Dyer County  
Okeena Water - Dyer County  
Bongards' Creameries - Gibson County  
Dana - Gibson County  
Eye Care Group - Gibson County  
Green Plains - Gibson County  
Eiffel Gardens Assisted Living - Henry County  
Allied Reprocessing - Lauderdale County  
Deb's Lunchbox - Lauderdale County  
Marvin Windows - Lauderdale County  
Danny Larcom, Inc. - Obion County  
Green Plains - Obion County  
Lowrance Sound Company - Obion County  
SkyKits - Henry County  
AirGo - Tipton County  
Personal Care Services - Tipton County  
Unilever - Tipton County

On the Job Training is a program designed to promote, educate and expand an employer's workforce. The OJT program focuses on training new hires on company work processes and procedures. When an employer has a vacancy and is willing to hire an individual who does not have adequate experience and training for the vacant position, an on the job training contract may be developed with the Workforce Board. Under this agreement, the Workforce Board can reimburse up to 50% of the trainee's wages during the specified training period.

Employers interested in finding out more about On the Job Training grants, can contact the Career Center Coordinator for their County.

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## emsi Online Tool Assists Job Seekers & Economic Developers

As part of the enrollment process for training services, new clients are assessed to determine their skill or competency level in educational and workplace skills and to determine career interests. Additionally, the customer must also be able to show that the job training they are interested in is an in-demand occupation.

Staff now have a new online tool to assist in determining if an occupation is in-demand in their local area. Analyst from Economic Modeling Specialists Int. (EMSI) is a web-based tool that puts in-depth, local employment data and analysis in the hands of each WIA front-line staff member. The Occupations report shows the number of positions open (with a link to online job postings), the growth potential of the occupation, the median wage and other information that shows the client the potential of employment in the job training program. The reports are customizable and the simple format has saved staff time in getting

new clients enrolled.

Additionally, the access to information from over 90 data sources in one, easily accessible website has enabled Workforce Board staff to respond more quickly to time sensitive requests for labor market and population data from chambers of commerce hosting industry prospects and educational institutions writing grants to fund new educational programs.

“Analyst provides our Board with easy access to the most up-to-date employment data available and has enabled us to provide another value-added service to regional planners, economic developers, and educational leaders,” states Lori Marberry, Director of Public Information and Planning. “Information that used to take hours to compile now takes virtually minutes. We are very pleased with the ease of use for our staff and having the ability to drill down the data to the county level or commuting area is a tremendous benefit for our Chambers.”

## Federal Reserve Bank Hosts Workforce Development Round Table

In April 2012, the Workforce Board co-sponsored a Workforce Development Round Table hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Economic developers, business owners, manufacturers, and others interested in workforce development in the eleven county workforce area were on hand to discuss issues employers face in hiring employees. Kathy Cowan, Senior Community Development Specialist facilitated the discussion, which centered around identifying gaps and opportunities in our area in order to develop a deeper understanding of chronic unemployment in northwest Tennessee. Several issues were determined to primarily affect the chronically unemployed in our area:

- (1) Existing vacancies require skills, experience or certifications that individuals do not have.
- (2) No jobs available in the area where the applicants live or where applicants can access with transportation options.
- (3) Individuals do not have the social skills, appearance and/or attitude required by employers.
- (4) Many individuals have to choose between taking a low-wage job and possibly losing social benefits or stay unemployed and continue to receive government benefits.

Although attendees agreed that these issues were significant in rural areas and that a lack of resources contributes to continued unemployment, they agreed that existing programs such as the Regional Educational Development Initiative (REDI) and continued workforce development training available through the Career Centers can help ease the unemployment crisis in many of the local communities.



TOP JOBS FORECAST	Description	2011 Jobs	2016 Jobs	% Change	Openings	Annual Openings	Avg Hourly Wage	Education Level
	Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	3,168	3,312	5%	571	114	\$15.10	Short-term on-the-job training
	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,516	1,721	14%	458	92	\$15.47	Postsecondary vocational award
	Home Health Aides	913	1,276	40%	411	82	\$8.63	Short-term on-the-job training
	Registered Nurses	1,601	1,857	16%	401	80	\$28.16	Associate's degree
	Managers, All Other	1,295	1,493	15%	369	74	\$14.75	Work experience in a related occupation
	Office Clerks, General	2,223	2,344	5%	300	60	\$11.66	Short-term on-the-job training
	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1,023	1,200	17%	243	49	\$9.35	Short-term on-the-job training
	Building Cleaning Workers, All Other	812	957	18%	229	46	\$11.38	Short-term on-the-job training
	Construction Laborers	1,614	1,766	9%	216	43	\$11.33	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2012.2								

## Five Businesses Receive Incumbent Worker Training Grants Totaling Over \$89,000

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board has committed to provide existing business and industry with Incumbent Worker Training Grants to upgrade the skills of current workers to allow companies in LWIA 12 to stay competitive and avert any possible layoff.

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development provided funding for Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) grants totaling \$68,933 with LWIA 12 committing \$20,800 in local funds to the programs. “Both job creation and retention are vital in maintaining a healthy economy in Tennessee, and the Incumbent Worker Training program has played a key role in accomplishing this,” said Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Karla Davis.

Statewide, 54 companies and 2,554 workers will be trained this year. In LWIA 12, the five companies awarded grants for program year 2011-12 include Komatsu America Corporation in Ripley, JD Distributors in Union City, Eye Care Group PPLC of Humboldt, PolyOne Corporation in Dyersburg and Mueller Fittings Company in Covington.

In their grant application, Komatsu America Corporation in Ripley proposed training 61 employees in continuous improvement, stating investment in training is critical to the effectiveness of their operation.

JD Distributors Inc. in Union City stated this grant will provide 2 employees with the skills they

need to maintain, update and process website sales. This will allow customers to shop the website directly at any time, which will increase sales and make the company more competitive.

Eye Care Group, PPLC in Humboldt will provide training, consulting, and a follow-through program for 47 employees that will better position the practice for dramatically improved performance (revenue, profit, productivity of staff), directly resulting in substantial growth and ability to maintain and add employees.

PolyOne Corporation in Dyersburg requested funding for training 8 employees in making their processes more efficient and to eliminate mistakes in setup and operations. The training will help them to deliver on time as promised to customers and will promote future return business by bringing in new business to their facility.

Mueller Fittings Company in Covington has gone through various technological advances, including replacing outdated equipment with new technology utilizing robots. The IWT funding will focus on training 7 employees on the specific robotic equipment and will make a significant difference in efficiency and quality, keeping Mueller Fitting competitive with other manufacturers.

Incumbent Worker grants from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development are administered locally by the Northwest TN Workforce Board.

## Jobs4TN Online Brings Self-service Functions to Job Seekers and Employers

Jobs4TN Online is a virtual recruiter, automatically notifying job seekers when jobs they may qualify for are posted and notifying employers when candidates who fit their needs register. The online database contains positions from job orders placed directly by Tennessee employers, from corporate Internet sites, and from major job search engines. Jobs4TN Online also identifies available green jobs.

Governor Bill Haslam committed to developing a new jobs database during his gubernatorial campaign. “With Jobs4TN Online, those without a job will have quicker and better access to job openings related to their skills, and as we work to make Tennessee an even better place to expand and start a business, we want to help employers find the employees they need.”

LWIA 12 Career Center Coordinators assist workshop participants in registering with Jobs4TN Online during sessions held semi-monthly at the Career Centers. Employment Services representatives are also on hand to answer any questions about the process.

Jennifer Bane, Director of Training and Staff Development says, “Having Jobs4TN Online available to our job seekers on all of our Career Center computers is a great benefit when clients come in to explore job opportunities. Having the capability to create and send resumes is a huge plus!”

Jobs4TN Online can be accessed anywhere with a computer and Internet access. Tennessee Career Centers across LWIA 12 have free computer resource rooms with guidance on job searching. For anyone not comfortable with using a computer, referrals can be provided in person at the center once they have registered for services.

Employers and job seekers are encouraged to log in to **Jobs4TN Online** at [www.jobs4tn.gov](http://www.jobs4tn.gov).



# YOUTH SERVICES

## Peer Tutor Work Experience Recognized as Best Practice by National Association of Workforce Development Professionals



NAWDP Youth Symposium Presenters: Lori Marberry, LaTonia Hunt, Margaret Prater, and Connie Wright.

Representatives from Dyersburg High School (DHS) and the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board were selected to present a “best practices” program session highlighting the Peer Tutor Work Experience Program

during the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) Youth Symposium in Chicago, November 2011. Connie Wright, Student Services Director at DHS, along with Senior LaTonia Hunt were invited to present along

with Lori Marberry, Director of Public Information and Planning and Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development.

The session was so popular, the Workforce Board staff were asked to present a similar session in Las Vegas

in May 2012 for the Annual Conference of the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals. Ginger Powell, Regional Director of Workforce Development, assisted Prater and Marberry with the session in May. “We are very proud that the Peer Tutor program was recognized on the national level as a best practice in building connections and strengthening partnerships with Local Education Agencies. The program is unique in Tennessee, but is something that workforce areas around the country can implement in their hometowns,” Prater stated.

Connie Wright, DHS Master Tutor/Supervisor, agreed. “This is the third

year that DHS has been awarded grant funding for the Peer Tutor Program. Not only have we seen an overall increase in the grades of students being tutored, but the work experience has been invaluable to the young people hired as tutors, and their individual growth has been inspiring.”

A unique aspect of the Chicago session was the addition of a youth presenter. LaTonia Hunt has been a peer tutor since the start of her junior year. The DHS senior was nervous, but excited about the opportunity to speak in front of people from across the country. She took her turn during the session, saying, “If you would have told me in sev-

enth grade that I would be flying to Chicago to speak at a national conference, I would have told you that you were crazy! However, I can say that since becoming a peer tutor, I have become more patient and have learned how to better communicate with people. My life is very different because of this program, and I am proud of the fact that I have come so far.” LaTonia plans to attend a four year university in the Fall and major in Nursing.

The presentation in Las Vegas was also very successful. Comments from the session evaluation included, “Very informative!” “Very innovative program; we all need to implement.” Many

session attendees appreciated the fact that all of the materials mentioned during the presentation were loaded onto a USB drive and presented to the audience.

The Workforce Board has managed the Peer Tutor Program since 2006 for academically successful, economically disadvantaged high school juniors and seniors. Youth being tutored have the opportunity to improve grades or recover credits, while learning study skills and enhancing their academic record. In the last 6 years, the Workforce Board has granted over \$1.4 million to 17 high schools in 11 counties to manage peer tutor work experience programs.

FINAL REPORT					
2011-2012 PEER TUTORING WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM					
High School Awarded	Number of Peer Tutors	Number of Students Tutored	Number of Subjects Tutored	Number of Subjects Improved or Maintained (Includes Credit Recovery)	Percentage of Subjects Improved
Bradford High School	6	183	549	521	94.9%
Camden Central High School	7	79	88	81	92.0%
Carroll County Technical Center	6	33	42	40	95.2%
Covington High School	9	237	463	446	96.3%
Dresden High School	11	323	367	367	100.0%
Dyersburg High School	8	542	1,278	1278	100.0%
Gibson County High School	7	193	195	187	95.9%
Halls High School	10	247	316	310	98.1%
Henry County High School	9	121	67	65	97.0%
Lake County High School	6	126	115	106	92.2%
Ripley High School	7	156	160	145	90.6%
South Fulton High School	8	206	225	199	88.4%
TOTALS	94	2,446	3,865	3,745	96.9%
6 YEAR TOTAL	415	8,222	12,809	11,919	93.0%

## Out of School Youth Work Experience Offers Vital Job Skills

Paid work experience opportunities are offered to youth who have completed training but need to develop employability skills and to youth who are currently in some type of post-secondary training and have the time to build their resumes by working at a local Career Center. The Tennessee Career Centers at Dyersburg, Ripley and Paris have all employed youth as a receptionist with positive results. Ronnie Gunnels, Career Center Manager said, “We hired Crystal Watson to work our front desk with a recommendation from our WIA Career Advisors. We were happy to partner with WIA in mentoring a recent college graduate who needed to hone her professional office skills. We also benefited from having an extra person to work with our

customers, answer phones, and otherwise assist us in serving everyone that needed Career Center services. She did a fantastic job, and we are happy that she developed her skills enough to get a job with Dyersburg Regional Medical Center.”

Tania Steel, currently a student at Dyersburg State Community College, is working as a receptionist in the TN Career Center at Ripley. “I am so thankful for the opportunity to work at the Career Center while I am taking classes. The job market is very tough now in Lauderdale County, and having the ability to work close to home allows me the time to study and make a little money for my expenses.” Tania is working towards becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse.

## JTG Earns 2012 National Award

Jobs for Tennessee Graduates (JTG), a partnership between the Department of Education and the Northwest TN Workforce Board, earned national recognition for exceeding the Five of Five Awards for the 7th consecutive year. The Five of Five Award signifies local JTG students exceeded the goals of the program and earned top marks for graduation and success rates. High Schools recognized for contributing to LWIA 12's success include Milan, Trenton Peabody, Clarksburg, Martin Westview and Carroll County Technical Center.

In March 2012, the Northwest TN Workforce Board partnered with LWIA 11 to host a Regional JTG competition at the

Carl Perkins Civic Center in Jackson, TN. Competing schools from LWIA 11 were McNairy County and Chester County. High Schools Regional winners went on to compete against JTG students in the State competition in Nashville. The winners at the State Level were:

### Cover Design

Christina Clark, Clarksburg, 2nd place  
Kayla Reynolds, Carroll Co. Tech, Honorable Mention

### Employment Interview

Madison Boyd, Clarksburg, 1st place  
Seth Pierce, Westview, 2nd place

### Career Vocabulary

Tranequa Harrell, Westview, 2nd place

### Consumer Math

David Follett, Clarksburg, 2nd place

## Dual Enrollment: Youth Earn College Credit

Workforce Development Scholarships are made available to WIA eligible students in LWIA 12 who are taking coursework in high school that also earns college credit. Through grant funding from the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), economically disadvantaged Seniors can apply for additional funding to cover any unmet need for up to \$1,600/year.

In the 2011-2012 school year, WIA assisted with funding 114 students. They received \$116,000 in unmet need scholarships to attend eleven post-secondary institutions.

County	# of Students
Benton	1
Carroll	20
Crockett	5
Dyer	30
Gibson	14
Henry	2
Lake	17
Lauderdale	16
Obion	6
Tipton	10
Weakley	16



# EDUCATION & TRAINING

## Covington High School Awarded Training Program of the Year

Covington High School was first awarded grant funds in the 2006-2007 school year to administer a Peer Tutor Work Experience grant. Since 2006, CHS graduation rates for all students have increased from 87.1% to 96.8% in 2011. Furthermore, CHS has had 100% of their peer tutors graduate, with 96% continuing on to post-secondary training, employment or the military. The class of 2012 boasted three tutors in the top ten of their graduating class: Clyde Richardson (#3), Khealsea Elkins (#5) and Basha Coleman (#7). For these reasons, Covington High School's Peer Tutor Work Experience Program was awarded the "Training Program of the Year" by the Workforce Board in recognition of their commitment to the mentoring and leadership development of WIA Peer Tutors and excellence in education.

Much can be said for the academic gains made by Covington High School since the inception of the Peer Tutor Program. They have ranked #1 in the State for Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) growth for Algebra I in 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years. Many other academic achievements have combined to honor Covington High School as one of the U.S. News and World Report's top public high schools in the nation. The magazine's criteria is based on the principles that a great high school must serve all stu-

dents well, and that it must be able to produce measurable academic outcomes that show the school is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators.

Marlon Heaston, Master Tutor for the Peer Tutor program, has been a key factor in the development of the peer tutor program. Delores Hayes, Career Center Coordinator for Tipton County, speaks highly of the Master Tutor, "Marlon is energetic and thorough and does an excellent job in motivating his tutors. He has managed his grant funds very well and his invoicing is always timely." Principal Peggy Barber Murdock praises the students, "I'm proud that the kids have taken ownership of trying to do as much as they can to improve their lot in life."

Basha Coleman, a first generation college student, lives with her mom. "Being a peer tutor, she said, "I have to do my best every day. I do it for my parents, my brothers, my sister, and my nephew. They expect great things out of me. I do too!" She plans on attending University of Tennessee at Knoxville and majoring in architectural engineering.



Khealsea Elkins will attend the University of TN at Knoxville and major in nursing. While working as a peer tutor, Khealsea said, "I love my job! Not only does it stimulate my students' mind, but it stimulates mine as well."

Clyde Richardson worked as a peer tutor his junior and senior year. He spoke of growing up in a family of six with his stepdad being the sole provider until he was laid off from his job. Clyde said, "We never went hungry but the budget was seriously strained. [Earning money as a peer tutor] helped alleviate some of the stress." His future plans are to attend the University of Memphis with a major in political science and then go on to law school.



## Goodyear: One Year Later

On July 10, 2011, the lives of nearly 2,000 Goodyear Tire and Rubber workers and families changed forever. While most employees believed the closure would come year-end, as indicated by a company announcement, some still believed it would never happen. That denial left many unprepared financially and emotionally for the immediate lockout from their job. To handle the large numbers expected to access service, LWIA 12 opened a Career Center in the former Obion County Industrial Training Center in Union City.

"Since the closure, we have served husbands and wives who both worked in the plant who now have no income," said Connie Stewart, Director of the Goodyear Project. "Many of the employees had been there for 20+ years, so they have been out of the job market and are totally overwhelmed by the job search process." To address some of the initial concerns, workshops were offered in financial management, resume writing and interviewing skills.

With an early startup grant from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the eventu-

al approval of a \$3.5 million National Emergency Grant, Goodyear Career Center staff have partnered with Trade Adjustment Assistant Act staff to provide laid-off workers and eligible family members the opportunity to attend job skill training. "When we first opened the Career Center for Goodyear, we started with some leftover furniture and older computers. We have now installed state-of-the-art equipment, including lab computers and an interactive distance learning system, which enables staff in Union City to broadcast job skills workshops for former Goodyear Workers in Career Centers in Weakley County and in Kentucky" said LeAnn Lundburg, Director of Facilities and Computer Services.

To date, 982 have enrolled in the NEG program, with 557 participating in training programs. "We have tire builders training to be LPNs and RNs," said Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development. "TAA provides the funds for training, while Goodyear Career Center staff provide wrap around services, including assessments and travel stipends."

Thirty percent (30%) of Career Center clients have chosen to train in health care occupations, with other laid off workers choosing to train in welding, industrial maintenance, truck driving, business and various other demand occupations. Laid-off workers are also eligible for on the job training opportunities with local employers.

As the largest employer in northwest Tennessee, the Goodyear closure has been very high profile. Several media outlets have visited the Goodyear Career Center, including WBBJ out of Jackson, TN, WPSD-TV of Paducah, KY, and BBC World Radio. Ronnie Dunn, country music sensation, released a music video about the Goodyear closure entitled "Cost of Living."

To date, 127 of the enrolled Goodyear customers have found employment. "Connie and her staff have done a great job at the Goodyear Career Center. Furthermore, each one of the Workforce Board staff in the other career centers, the administrative office and all of our partners have greatly supported this effort to help the Goodyear workers and their families rebuild their lives" said Prater.

## LWIA 12 National Career Readiness Certificate Numbers Surpass State Goals

For Program Year 2011-12, the TDLWD allotted 1,000 "free" tests for the National Career Readiness Certificate to each LWIA. By the end of October 2011, LWIA 12 had exceeded this goal, with 1,080 NCRCs earned, with a total of 2,835 earned in this Program Year. Since the inception of the NCRC program, over 7,300 certificates have been earned, with economic development agencies and chambers of commerce using this number to show that our eleven counties have a quality, trainable workforce.

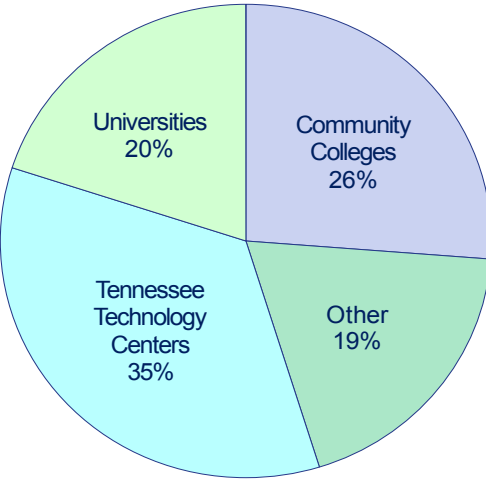


## Health Care Sector is #1 Customer Choice

When a customer visits a Career Center, they receive core services from various partners, including referrals to job openings. If additional assistance is needed in finding a job or exploring a training program, Career Advisors provide customers with information on jobs that are in demand and training programs for these occupations. Job seekers take career interest inventories, educational attainment tests, and also complete the National Career Readiness Certificate assessment. At this point, if an applicant is a good fit for their chosen occupation, they are eligible for training grants and travel stipends that can assist with funding in their chosen occupation.

The charts below show the top occupations and the distribution of customers at each type of training provider.

Sectors (Jan - Dec 2011)	Participants
Health Care	359
Business	95
Transportation	89
Manufacturing	58
Education	48
Information Technology	38
Construction	25



# FISCAL & PERFORMANCE

## NWTN Workforce Board Program Year 2011-2012 Expenditures

Each year, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board prides itself on its sound fiscal practices and solid management of multiple grant programs. As administrative entity and fiscal agent for federal Workforce Investment Act funds, Dyersburg State Community College provides financial policies and procedures to assure fiscal compliance. “WIA Fiscal and DSCC Business Office staff processed over 7,000 WIA transactions, totaling over \$6 million in expenditures this year without any audit issues,” commented Dr. Karen Bowyer, President of Dyersburg State Community College. “I commend the staff for their hard work and attention to detail.”

Although available funds throughout the year reached over \$10.5 million, allocations in July presented budget concerns according to Director of Finance and Administrative Services, Cynthia Webb. “We only receive about 20% of our annual allocation the first quarter of our fiscal year (July - September); from this we must pay 25% of salaries and overhead and 33% to 100% of training costs for individuals depending on where they attend school. First quarter is always tough, but with federal budget cuts this year, we were facing a reduction in staff.” Fortunately, the Northwest TN Workforce Board met all performance standards

FISCAL CATEGORY	AVAILABLE FUNDS	CURRENT YEAR EXPENDITURES	PERCENT EXPENDED	AVAILABLE BALANCE
ADMINISTRATION	\$855,671.65	\$501,334.24	59%	\$354,337.41
ADULT FORMULA	\$1,147,690.35	\$781,649.45	68%	\$366,040.90
DISLOCATED WORKER FORMULA	\$1,008,875.78	\$720,507.97	71%	\$288,367.81
DISLOCATED WORKER SUPPLEMENTAL	\$641,682.52	\$641,682.52	100%	\$0.00
DISLOCATED WORKER RAPID RESPONSE	\$39,530.56	\$39,530.56	100%	\$0.00
DISLOCATED WRKR -AMERICAN ORDNANCE/BRIGGS & STRATTON	\$835,000.00	\$254,716.20	31%	\$580,283.80
NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT (NEG) FOR GOODYEAR	\$3,076,302.00	\$1,265,733.23	41%	\$1,810,568.77
YOUTH FORMULA	\$1,855,390.05	\$972,584.44	52%	\$882,805.61
INCENTIVE	\$29,250.00	\$29,250.00	100%	\$0.00
LPN-RN (DSCC)	\$151,714.63	\$151,714.63	100%	\$0.00
INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING	\$68,993.00	8,093.00	0%	\$60,900.00
NEG-DISASTER 2011	\$555,616.52	\$555,616.52	100%	\$0.00
GREEN ELECTRONICS (TTC MCKENZIE)	\$47,323.65	\$31,083.37	66%	\$16,240.28
NEG-ON THE JOB TRAINING	\$152,408.40	\$113,619.58	75%	\$38,788.82
TOTAL WIA GRANTS	\$10,465,449.11	\$6,067,115.71	58%	\$4,398,333.40
JOBS FOR TN GRADUATES	\$40,000.00	\$39,999.84	100%	\$0.16
TOTAL ALL GRANTS	\$10,515,449.11	\$6,107,115.55	58%	\$4,4398,333.56

and earned \$32,000 in incentive funds. According to Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development agreed in May to issue the funds in July instead of October. “Knowing the funds were coming in July bought us three (3) months for the five (5) employees that were targeted for lay-off.” Then we found out on June 16th that we would receive over a million dollars with the transition of four counties to our work-

force area.” The program would eventually receive a \$3.5 million National Emergency Grant for Goodyear and \$685,000 in special grants to assist other dislocated workers. Mayor Richard Hill of Dyer County, Chief Elected Official representing all eleven (11) counties applauds the success of the local staff. “Ms. Prater and her staff have worked diligently to secure funds to help the unemployed residents of our counties. Thanks to these efforts, we are seeing laid off workers retrained for new jobs as our economy be-

gins to make a comeback.”

In addition to assuring that all payments are in compliance with WIA regulations, the fiscal staff pride themselves on timeliness. Staff processed over 700 payments to training providers and employers and almost 3,300 transportation stipends to students. “With gas prices so high, getting money to the students as soon as possible could make the difference in them being able to stay in school,” says Webb.

Another essential responsibility of the fiscal staff is timely report-

ing to State and Federal offices to maintain compliance. In the past year, staff produced 312 monthly reports and 116 quarterly reports for the 25 grant programs. “Our LWIA is well regarded at the State level for our fiscal management and has been asked to provide technical assistance to other areas in the State,” said Prater. “In fact, due to our proficient management of several grants, we often receive additional funds unspent from other areas that would otherwise be returned to a Federal funding source.”

## Preliminary Performance Report

Unlike many federal programs, the Workforce Investment Act has established performance standards to measure success of the program. For the LWIAs in Tennessee, performance goals are negotiated with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Locally, the Performance and Compliance unit monitors and tracks data for all participants through an electronic case management system. Monitors review files for data validation and provide technical

assistance to prepare for State and Federal reviews. “I am very pleased with our performance this year,” said Laura Speer, Director of Performance and Compliance. “We have served over 5,000 participants and have experienced a lot of challenges - expanding our area, \_major layoffs and a slow economic recovery; yet we still managed to meet the performance standards set by TDLWD. Performance on an individual measure is interpreted based on the following:

- **Exceeds:** When the actual performance achieved against an individual performance measure is in excess of 100 percent of the negotiated level of performance for the measure;
- **Meets:** When the actual performance achieved against an individual performance measure falls in the range of 80 to 100 percent of the negotiated level of performance for the measure; and
- **Fails:** When the actual performance achieved against an individual performance measure is less than 80 percent of the negotiated level of performance.

Program Group	Standards	PY11 Targets	PY11 Actual	Percent of Goal
Adult	Entered Employment	76%	87%	115%
	Retention in Employment	86%	82%	96%
	Average Earnings	\$13,000	\$11,402.96	88%
Average				100%
Dislocated Worker	Entered Employment	84%	82%	98%
	Retention in Employment	87%	89%	102%
	Average Earnings	\$13,200	\$12,820.88	97%
Average				99%
Youth	Placement in Education/ Employment /Military	61%	78%	128%
	Credential Attainment	63%	71%	113%
	Literacy/ Numeracy Gains	40%	40%	100%
Average				114%



Meeting Performance Standards and Measuring Customer Satisfaction

Margaret Prater, Vice President for Workforce Development credits the meeting of performance standards to the dedication and hard work of all staff and to the focus on excellent customer service. Customer service is the responsibility of all staff, not just the front line workers. although we do a great job of recording and tracking data, I believe it's how we treat people that makes the difference.

Up until this year, that belief had been unsubstantiated by real time data; however, with the implementation of a survey of career center services, LWIA 12 and other Career Center Partners can see customer feedback at the touch of a button. Though the commonly used "Survey Monkey" software, an online survey was developed in February of 2012. Lori Marberry, Director of Planning and Public Information presented the idea to Career Center Partners during a Consortium Meeting. "This tool is user friendly and can provide the flexibility to capture both general and specific information about the services we provide." said

Marberry. After developing the Survey questions, Marberry also provided signage and cards with the "Take our Survey" tagline and instructions for the 11 career centers. Results of the survey are reviewed by the management team and shared with all staff. "The survey has been a great tool for continuous improvement of customer service. It not only lets the staff know if there are issues, but also validates that they are making a difference in people's lives," says Jimmy Williamson, Chairman of the Northwest TN Workforce Board.

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development also contracts with The University of Memphis to conduct periodic telephone and mail surveys of Career Center customers. The results have been very positive with the last report rating LWIA 12 as having a 88.2% response rate - the highest in the state.

The following table shows the questions with the highest positive answer - "Most of the time".

93.3%	Career Center staff understood problems and needs
93.3%	Services received met customer needs
100%	Customers were treated with dignity and respect
100%	Customers felt better about employment future
100%	Would use Career Center services again
100%	Would recommend Career Center services to others

WIA Participants Served by Special Program

Special Programs	Adults	Dislocated Workers	Youth	Totals
National Career Readiness Certificate	2,378	0	0	2,378
LPN to RN Training	18	0	0	18
National Emergency Grant Disaster	34	55	0	89
Incumbent Worker Training	119	0	0	119
Goodyear	0	982	0	982
On the Job Training	99	122	0	221
Adult Education	0	0	31	31
Jobs for Tennessee Graduates	0	0	61	61
In-School Youth (Peer Tutoring & Dual Enrollment)	0	0	237	237
Briggs & Stratton	0	45	0	45
American Ordnance	0	115	0	115

2011-2012 Workforce Board

Jimmy Williamson - Dyer  
*Chair*

John Snead - Obion  
*Vice Chair*

Dr. Karen Bowyer - Dyer  
*Secretary*

Rita Alexander - Gibson  
Thomas Ary - Obion  
Jerry Bailey - Obion  
Ronda Baker - Dyer\*  
Alonzo Beard - Lauderdale  
John Bucy - Obion  
Dale Carroll - Obion  
Brian Collins - Dyer  
Keith Cursey - Weakley  
Peggy Davis - Gibson\*  
Yana Dicus - Benton  
Sherry Fowler - Crockett\*  
Melinda Goode - Weakley  
Vickie Granade - Gibson  
Ronnie Gunnels - Dyer\*  
Jessie Hamlin - Tipton  
Allen Hester - Dyer  
Dianne Homra - Lake\*  
Brad Hurley - Carroll  
John Killen - Benton  
Barry Ladd - Dyer  
Ed Ledden - Henry  
Christopher McPhearson - Obion  
Charlie Moore - Crockett

James Neely - Carroll  
Ted Piazza - Gibson  
Tony Poole - Carroll  
Ronnie Price - Weakley  
Sue Quinn - Henry  
John Penn Ridgeway - Henry  
Alvin Smothers - Benton  
Sandy Spurgeon - Tipton  
Jennifer Starks - Henry  
Roger Stewart - Weakley  
David Taylor - Dyer  
Charlotte Tucker - Carroll  
Paul Williams - Lauderdale  
Steve Williams - Dyer  
Sandra Woods - Gibson  
*\*Indicates Youth Council Member*

Youth Council

Jay Bufford - Regional  
Octavia Crawford - Tipton  
Ruthene Ezell - Dyer  
Lisa Hankins - Regional  
Mary Jones - Tipton  
Terry McCreight - Dyer  
Rocky Miller - Regional  
Paul Stewart - Regional  
Sherrie Sweat - Lauderdale  
Patricia Taylor  
Crystal Watson - Dyer  
Keith Wilcox - Dyer

County Mayors

Barry Barnett  
Benton County  
  
Kenny McBride  
Carroll County  
  
Gary Reasons  
Crockett County  
  
Richard Hill  
Dyer County  
  
Tom Witherspoon  
Gibson County  
  
Brent Greer  
Henry County  
  
Macie Roberson  
Lake County  
  
Rod Schuh  
Lauderdale County  
  
Benny McGuire  
Obion County  
  
Jeff Huffman  
Tipton County  
  
Houston Patrick  
Weakley County



Crockett County Mayor Gary Reasons speaks to NWTN Workforce Board staff about developments in Crockett County during the March staff meeting held at Gibson Electric Membership Corporation in Alamo.




Youth Council members meet quarterly prior to the NWTN Workforce Board meeting. Pictured from left: Crystal Watson, Peggy Davis, Sherry Fowler, Margaret Prater, Ronnie Gunnels, Dr. Karen Bowyer, Ruthene Ezell, Donna Smith, and Rocky Miller.



Lake County Mayor Macie Roberson talks about the construction of the Port at Cates Landing during the February staff meeting held at The Pier Restaurant in Samburg.

# Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board Staff July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012

Margaret Prater Vice President for Workforce Development	LeAnn Lundberg Director of Facilities & Computer Services	Koriann Riley Career Advisor Dyer County	Don Dugger Career Center Coordinator Lake & Obion Counties	Connie Roberts Career Advisor Goodyear
Sandra Allen Executive Secretary	Pam Merritt Regional Director for Workforce Development	Ann Pennell Career Center Coordinator Lauderdale County	Patti Osborne Career Advisor Lake County	Sherry Seavers Career Advisor Goodyear
Cynthia Webb Director of Finance & Administrative Services	Libby Wickersham Career Center Coordinator Crockett & Gibson Counties	Tonya McKellar Career Advisor Lauderdale County	Marcia Fields Career Advisor Obion County	Mashelle Walls Career Advisor Goodyear
Theresa Ethridge Account Clerk III	Maria Waiters Career Advisor Crockett County	Delores Hayes Career Center Coordinator Tipton County	Sheila Little Career Center Coordinator Weakley County	Doris Willett Career Advisor Goodyear
Terry Williams Account Clerk II	Lindsay Heglar Career Advisor Gibson County	Gina Eaton Career Advisor Tipton County	Billie Mackin Career Advisor Weakley County	National Career Readiness Certificate Proctors
Jennifer Bane Director of Training & Staff Development	Bett Jewell Career Advisor Gibson County	Charity Gray Secretary III	Connie Stewart Director of Goodyear Grant	LaMar Bartlett Lauderdale County
Laura Speer Director of Performance & Compliance	Mike Whitson Career Center Coordinator Dyer County	Ginger Powell Regional Director for Workforce Development	Lesia Cazenave Secretary III Goodyear	Pam Bigham Henry County
Amy Maxey Monitor	Melissa Bane Career Advisor Dyer County	Lisa Bradford Career Center Coordinator Benton & Carroll Counties	Cace Rice Career Center Coordinator Goodyear	Brandi Cantrell Obion & Weakley Counties
Derrick Quinn Monitor	Wilma Capps Career Advisor Dyer County	Connie Wright Career Advisor Benton County	Jennie Hollingsworth Career Advisor Goodyear	Carol Galloway Dyer County
Lynn Hall Account Clerk II	Becky McCaslin Career Advisor Dyer County	Judy Vestal Career Advisor Carroll County	Jeannie Mathis Career Advisor Goodyear	Jaime Grammer Gibson County
Lori Marberry Director of Public Information & Planning		Rex Smith Career Advisor Henry County		Martha Sue Peters Carroll County
Deborah Wolf Secretary III				Lois Thompson Tipton County

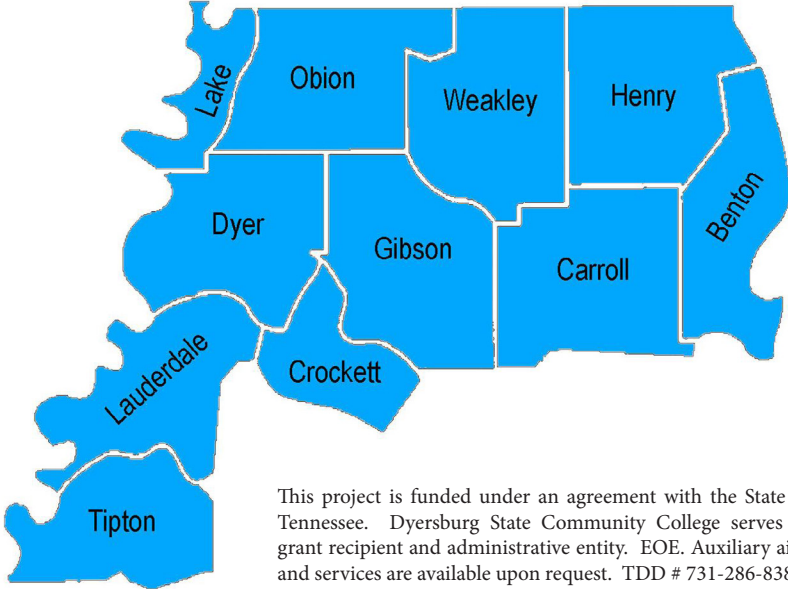


## LWIA 12 Career Center Locations

<b>Alamo</b> 332 South Bells Street Alamo, TN 38001 (731) 696-2530	<b>Dyersburg</b> Gwen Leonard, Point of Contact 439 McGaughey Street Dyersburg, TN 38024 (731) 286-8300	<b>Ripley</b> Mary Yarbrough, Supervisor 301-C Lake Drive Ripley, TN 38063 (731) 635-3479
<b>Camden</b> 60 North Church Avenue Camden, TN 38320 (731) 584-1711	<b>Humboldt</b> Ed Joyner, Manager 1481 Mullins Street Humboldt, TN 38343 (731) 784-3552	<b>Tiptonville</b> 217 Church Street Tiptonville, TN 38079 (731) 253-8171
<b>Covington</b> Sandy Spurgeon, Manager 973 Hwy 51 North, Ste 16 Covington, TN 38019 (901) 475-2529	<b>Huntingdon</b> Bobby Blalock, Manager 470 Mustang Drive Huntingdon, TN 38344 (731) 986-8217	<b>Union City</b> Denise Reynolds, Manager 126 East Main Street Union City, TN 38261 (731) 884-2621
<b>Dresden</b> Denise Reynolds, Manager 135 South Poplar Street, Ste B Dresden, TN 38225 (731) 364-2554	<b>Paris</b> Alane Paschall, Manager 1023 Mineral Wells Avenue, Ste F Paris, TN 38242 (731) 644-7355	<b>Goodyear</b> 204 South 2nd Street Union City, TN 38261 (731) 884-3868

## Local Workforce Investment Area 12

11 counties  
5,512 Square miles  
336,348 Population  
328 Years of staff service



This project is funded under an agreement with the State of Tennessee. Dyersburg State Community College serves as grant recipient and administrative entity. EOE. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request. TDD # 731-286-8383 WD-21-12 08/2012