

# BRIGHTER TENNESSEE

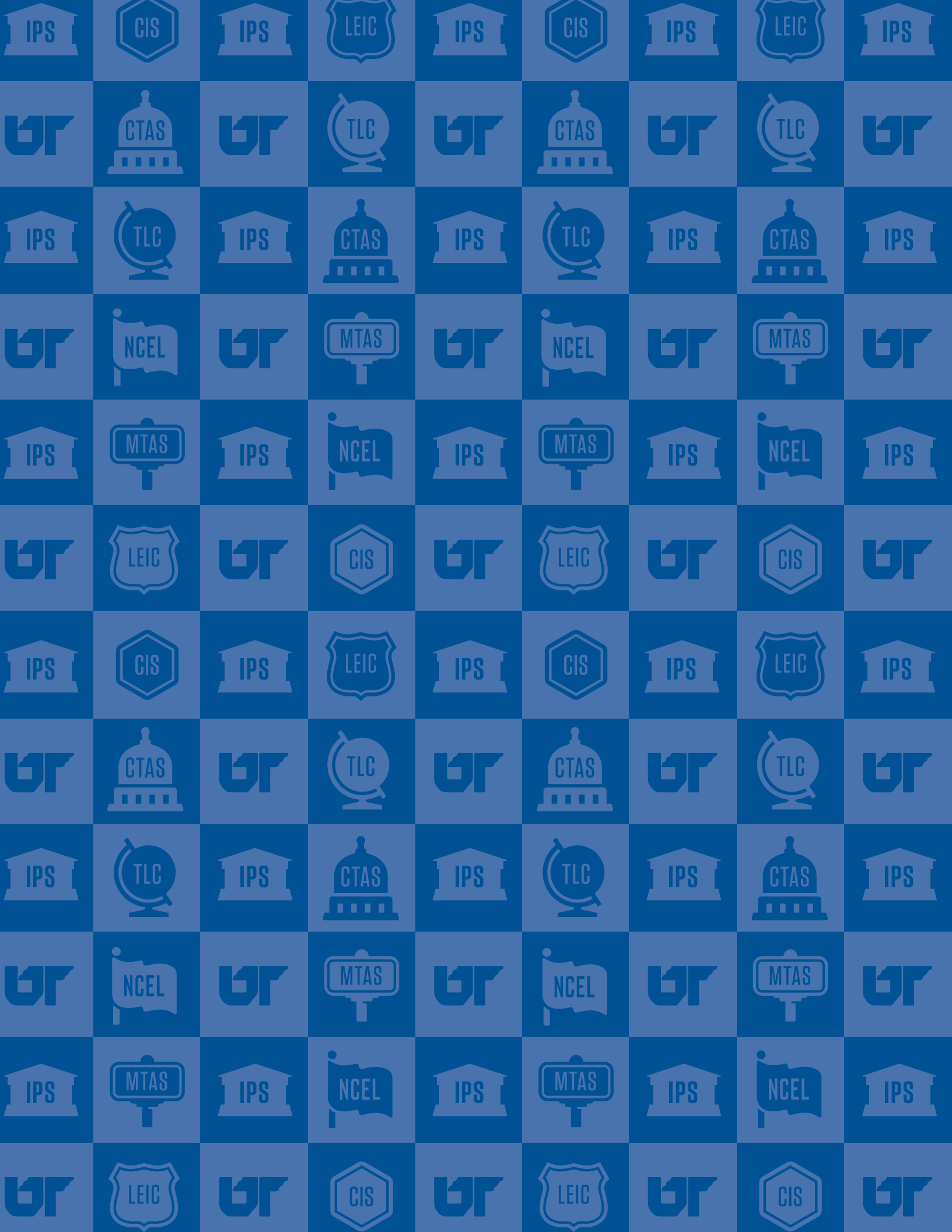


A Publication of the UT Institute for Public Service



# EXPERTISE

Employees Share Practical Experience to Help Customers





Brighter Tennessee is a publication of  
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# CONTENTS

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## ON THE COVER

- 10 Employees Share Practical Experience to Help Customers

## AGENCY NEWS

- 5 Hayes Retires After 33-Year Career with CTAS
- 6 UTPD Participates in Training to Increase Cultural Competency
- 8 TLC Multilingual Employees Creating a Dialogue with the World
- 14 CIS Surveys Economic Development Leaders About Pandemic Impact

- 16 Small Businesses Benefit from Knowledge of CIS PTAC Team
- 18 CIS Receives Additional CARES Act Funding

## TRAINING NEWS

- 15 LEIC's NFA Offers Training and Networking Opportunities
- 18 Government Employees Earn Certified Public Manager Designation
- 19 Inaugural Administrative Professionals Academy Class Graduates



INSTITUTE for PUBLIC SERVICE



# A Word *from* Dr. Byrd



**“We want our customers to be able to draw from the real-life experience and expertise of our staff.”**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herb Byrd, III".

Dr. Herb Byrd, III, Vice President

**E**very year the Institute for Public Service hosts a number of public service student interns. I am always shamelessly explicit in our main motive for providing the internship: in addition to what they have learned in school, we want them to gain all of the practical experience possible and come back to work for IPS in about five years.

That's because we want our customers to be able to draw from the real-life experience and expertise of our staff. The majority of our 170 employees, who work directly with customers, all have many years of experience in their respective fields before they join the staff of any of our agencies. For example, most of our trainers at the Law Enforcement Innovation Center (LEIC) are former police officers. Our solutions consultants with the Center for Industrial Services (CIS) are engineers by trade and have experience in manufacturing plants. Full-time staff at the institute aren't the only ones with years of experience in their subject matter. Part-time contract instructors are selected because they possess significant expertise in their field.

In this issue of Brighter Tennessee, we take a look at the expertise of staff across the institute. We look at how we support county property assessors and how our municipal legal consultants serve Tennessee cities. We'll see how forensic expertise at LEIC helped the Oak Ridge Police Department solve two separate bank robberies in the Secret City; and how the Procurement Technical Assistance Center team at CIS helps businesses across the state secure close to \$1 billion each year in government contracts. You can also read about employees of the Tennessee Language Center who speak more than one language, making them experts for those who seek their assistance learning to speak another language, translate a document, or interpret during a medical consultation.

These topics are still only a sampling of IPS staff expertise. Agency staff include former city managers, public works directors, paramedics, human resource managers, budget directors and more. The IPS website includes a staff expertise page that lists other proficiencies.

We work even harder to maintain an expert workforce as highly experienced employees retire. For example, Gary Hayes of CTAS, recently retired after 33 years of working with Tennessee counties in Southeast Tennessee (thank you and best wishes Gary!). Stepping in for Hayes in that region is Heather Duncan, who brings over 25 years of county government service as the former circuit court clerk in Coffee County.

The greatest investment of any organization is its people. That is certainly true at IPS. Whether it's a 33-year-veteran retiring after dedicated service to Tennessee's counties or our public service interns gaining first-time hands-on experience at the local government level, each employee brings great value to IPS and in turn to everyone we are grateful to serve.





*Retiring after*

**33** Years

**S**outheast Tennessee will be seeing a new face as Heather Hines Duncan begins her tenure with the County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS). She takes over from 33-year veteran field staff consultant Gary D. Hayes, who retired at the end of December 2020.

### Hayes Retires After 33-Year Career with CTAS

"CTAS would certainly not be what it is today without people such as Gary Hayes, who has dedicated 33 years to the people of Southeast Tennessee," said Jon Walden, interim executive director for CTAS. "Gary and others helped share the mission of our agency to become the premiere resource for county officials from across the state. We appreciate his dedication, guidance and service."

Duncan, whose career began in 1994 as Coffee County circuit court clerk, left that post Jan. 31, 2021 after serving 26 years. During that time she served as president of the County Officials Association of Tennessee and earned the Certified Public Administrator designation. Her first day at CTAS was February 1. Walden added that Duncan's hiring should be somewhat seamless because of her lengthy career as a circuit court clerk.

"Heather already has a wealth of knowledge and is ready to assist officials in Gary's 12-county region, which includes her home, Coffee County," he said.

For Hayes, CTAS manager of field services and a county government consultant, his retirement marks the end of a

robust 40-year career in public service that began in 1980 when he worked at the Tennessee State Planning Office and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. A planner, Hayes began at CTAS in August 1987 having earned a bachelor's degree in urban affairs and regional development at Austin Peay State University.

Duncan, a Coffee County Central High graduate, earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Tennessee Tech and a master's degree in business administration from Middle Tennessee State. She and her husband John have four children. The Coffee County commission will appoint Duncan's replacement as circuit court clerk to serve her unexpired term through August 2022. Duncan becomes one of eight CTAS county government consultants. Her region includes Bledsoe, Bradley, Coffee, Franklin, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea and Sequatchie counties.

Jim Hart, CTAS jail management consultant, has stepped in as interim manager of field services.

## UTPD Participates in Training Program to Increase Cultural Competency

**UT** Police Department officers have spent the week examining their perceptions, stereotypes and cultural assumptions as a way to better communicate with and serve all members of the Volunteer community.

The new three-day certification training program, offered by the UT Law Enforcement Innovation Center, is designed to increase their cultural competency and reduce biased-based policing in the law enforcement community. Biased-based policing occurs when a police officer initiates an enforcement action based on a person's race, ethnicity national origin, gender or religion.

The UT Police Department is the first recipient of the program. All UT System law enforcement agencies will receive the training before it is eventually launched nationwide.

"We continually strive to get better as a law enforcement profession," said UTPD Chief Troy Lane. "This training accomplishes that and also allows us as a department to address any inequities in the way we serve our constituents."

LEIC is offering the training in partnership with the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Curriculum topics include diversity, self-reflection and self-awareness, de-escalation, critical decision-making, ethics, and bias-based policing. It also examines the process of building trust and respect within the communities officers serve.

"This is a collaborative effort to put together a program that encompasses important areas that helps law enforcement officers be more effective as they police," said Greg Coker, one of the LEIC instructors.

The cultural competency program was created through the initiative of UT President Randy Boyd, said Rick Scarbrough, LEIC director. In response to the death of George Floyd, Boyd reached out to the UT Institute for Public Service—which houses LEIC—and requested the development of a social justice program for law enforcement across the state. He secured the funding to establish the program.

"He wanted to ensure every law enforcement officer has the opportunity to have this training in person and virtually," Scarbrough said.

LEIC provides training to local, regional and national law enforcement agencies in areas such as homeland security, forensic science, command and leadership, and cybercrime.

**“We continually strive to get better as a law enforcement profession. This training accomplishes that and also allows us as a department to address any inequities in the way we serve our constituents.”**

**UTPD Chief Troy Lane**









## TLC Multilingual Employees Creating a Dialogue with the World

By Sarah Ryan, TLC

**P**eople. Relationships. If we take a ride on the glass elevator and parse out daily life from a bird's eye view, we find that human connection is at the core of our day-to-day activities. We interact with the college-age barista as she hands us our morning coffee to-go, with the older gentleman at the gas station pump next to us, and then, come 5 p.m., we take a minute to quickly catch up with a friendly co-worker before we leave the office for the day. These moments are snapshots in time, adding color to the 7.8 billion stories that are interwoven together to form the beautifully diverse tapestry of human experience.

Nelson Mandela once said, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." Such a timeless quote underlines a key component of forging genuine human connection—language. A recent report from Ethnologue, an established authoritative resource on world languages,

estimates that there are over 7,000 languages spoken across the globe, with most of the Earth's population speaking 23 of them. While these figures can seem daunting, especially since our own languages can even prove difficult sometimes, I believe they illuminate the reality that language acquisition can be a key to unlocking exciting relationships and connections with people from all walks of life.

At the Tennessee Language Center (TLC), we see language as a portal through which we may best "create a dialogue with the world". We believe that the most effective approach to pursuing this mission is by creating a team of staff members and vendors whose linguistic capabilities mirror the intricate diversity that is present in the communities we serve, both here and abroad. As such, we consistently strive to increase our collective linguistic capital and are very proud of each of our colleagues for the services they currently provide in over 200 languages.



To further illustrate our passion for language, and our commitment to forging true connections with our friends and neighbors, I would like to lead us back to our glass elevator and examine a ...

## ... day in the *life* of TLC.

**I**t is Monday morning and people are starting to trickle into the office. We first pass over the front desk where Angie, our front desk coordinator, is assisting clients in both English and Spanish.

To the right, we see administrative assistants, Brenda and Apryl working diligently at their desks, where they can accommodate both Afrikaans and Spanish, respectively.

Katie is to the left, installing software updates on some of the new computers before her shift ends and she starts preparing for the Japanese class she is taking that evening.

As we progress down the hallway, we enter the Translation office, where Project Managers Tyler and Jonathan, and Interpretation Translation Services Director Cesar field translation requests and coordinate with translators. All three of them speak English and Spanish, but Cesar also speaks German and is taking Japanese at TLC.

Further ahead, we encounter our World Languages Department, where group and custom classes are offered in 11 languages, ranging from Hindi to Korean to Russian. Maya Campbell, our Senior

Spanish Instructor, who speaks both Bulgarian and Spanish, is hard at work on her lesson plans for the Spanish classes she will be teaching throughout the week.

Turning the corner, we reach our ESL/TESL Department, where our newest colleague Irma is on the phone assisting interested students in both English and Spanish.

As we continue our tour, the Interpretation Department comes into view on the right-hand side, where Richard and Eric are in constant communication with clients and interpreters of 50-plus languages throughout the day. Richard, who also speaks some Quechua, can be seen working on Spanish and German translations, while Eric continues bolstering his background in Mandarin-Chinese.

As we reach the end of the hallway, we reach our final stop—the office of our Executive Director Janice Rodriguez. Leading TLC's mission of "creating a dialogue with the world", she boasts a masters' degree in Spanish Literature, with advanced studies in Portuguese and Arabic through the years.

*“At TLC, we are committed to fostering connections with our world through language, because we know that language is a passport to better understand those we serve. This is a lifelong journey for us.”*

# EXPERTISE

The institute's staff of 170 employees across the state boasts expertise in a variety of subject areas. Some employees have experience spanning several subject areas.

*This infographic shows how many employees are experts on a given subject.*

2 TRANSPORTATION



21 COUNTY GOVERNMENT



5 PUBLIC WORKS

33 EDUCATION

19

BUSINESS



ENVIRONMENT  
AND ENERGY



PLANNING  
AND ZONING



QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT



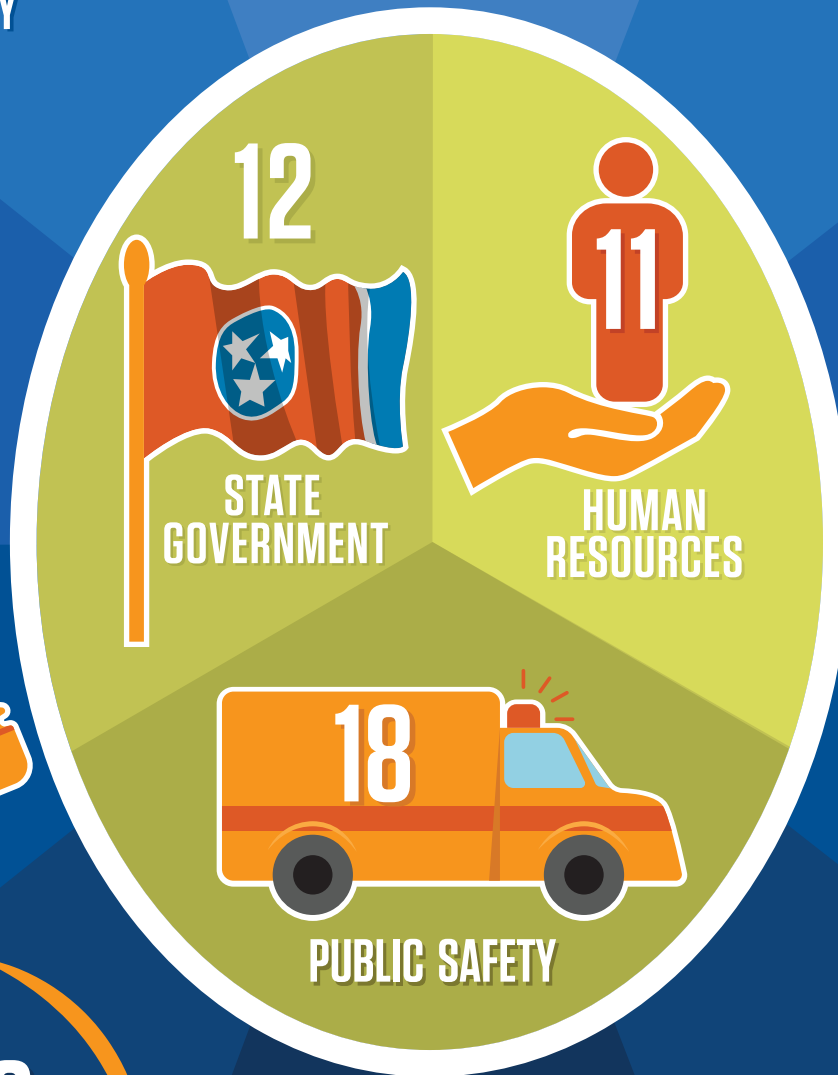
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT



LEGAL/COURTS



MUNICIPAL  
GOVERNMENT



COMMUNICATION



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



OCCUPATIONAL  
HEALTH AND SAFETY

# ex•per•tise

[ekspər'tēz, ekspər'tēs] *noun*

Expert skill or knowledge in a particular field.

## Employees Share Practical Experience to Help Customers

**W**hether someone wants to learn to speak another language or police departments want to offer de-escalation training to their officers, they have a cadre of experts from which to choose within the UT Institute for Public Service (IPS). The institute's six agencies have 170 statewide employees who each boast a number of years of practical experience in their specific fields.

For example, the health and safety program at the Center for Industrial Services (CIS) has three employees, who combined have close to 100 years in emergency response and manufacturing safety. The staffs of the County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) feature a number of employees who previously worked in city, county and state government offices.

CTAS Property Assessment Consultant Joe Griffin brought 18 years of assessing experience when he joined the staff several years ago. Before joining CTAS he was employer assessments manager with the Metropolitan Davidson County Assessor of Property's office. Prior to that he worked for 15 years with the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of Property Assessments.

**“**Having the same or similar experiences as the customers enables a more open and responsive conversation. People are more likely to listen if they realize that you understand them and their particular issue or problem.”

- JOE GRIFFIN -



Likewise, CTAS Training Consultant Rachel Ellington came to the agency after serving as budget director Haywood County.

**“**My previous job gave me hands on experience doing what I now teach in the Certified County Finance Officer (CCFO) program. It also gave me an understanding of the very real challenges that finance personnel face at the local government level, particularly in counties. I am better able to know my audience and provide them with the relevant examples because I have been right where many of them are.”

- RACHEL ELLINGTON -





MTAS Legal Consultant Elisha Hodge worked as the Office of Open Records counsel (OORC) with the Tennessee Comptroller's office for almost seven years before joining MTAS.



**“Working in the OORC, I became aware of and familiar with the charters and codes that govern municipalities. Municipal charters and codes serve as the foundation for the majority of the work that I do as part of the legal team at MTAS. I also developed a niche during my time in the OORC in the areas of public records and open meetings. MTAS legal consultants receive questions from customers almost daily in these two areas and I am fortunate enough to be able to lend some expertise to the responses provided to the customers.”**

- ELISHA HODGE -

Fire departments in cities across Tennessee benefit from the expertise of MTAS Fire Management Consultants Steve Cross and Dennis Wolf. Approaching a combined 65 years in fire services, they travel the state consulting with local fire departments on everything from hiring to policy changes to equipment purchases. They say their previous experience helps tremendously in their current roles.

Cross has 27 years of municipal fire department experience and four years with the State of Tennessee Fire Marshal's Office.



**“My continual progression through the ranks and responsibility in local and state government coupled**

**with my attitude of continual professional/personal improvement has developed my personality, knowledge, skills, abilities, and practical experience to provide our MTAS customers with expert and proven advice. I believe in leading from the front and mentoring my customers through their leadership journey.”**

- STEVE CROSS -



**“As a former fire chief and municipal department head, I have personal experience with many of the issues and questions we receive at MTAS. The formal education provides the skills for understanding and analyzing the issue.”**

- DENNIS WOLF -

Wolf served as fire chief and emergency management director for the City of Germantown for 34 years before he retired in 2011. He started his career as a volunteer firefighter for the Shelby County Fire Department in 1974.

**To see the expertise among all of the employees, find the dedicated page under the Staff tab at:**

**[www.IPS.Tennessee.edu](http://www.IPS.Tennessee.edu)**



## CIS Surveying Economic Development Leaders About Pandemic Impact

**T**he CIS economic development team is surveying economic development leaders in Tennessee's distressed and at-risk counties about the impacts that the pandemic has had on their economic development needs and goals. The goal is to connect communities to the extensive resources of the University of Tennessee's statewide campuses and institutes to provide technical assistance to address needs and improve economic resiliency.

Assistance could include integrating resiliency into economic development plans, providing support to business and industry to expand market opportunities and enhance competitiveness, providing economic development training to community and government leaders, assessing community

emergency preparedness and continuity plans and other types of University-based support.

This work is supported by the US Department of Commerce's EDA University Center program and builds on ongoing collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and the state's development districts to help communities develop and implement asset-based goals for economic development and provides a framework to address new challenges presented by the pandemic.





**F**ollowing their 10 weeks of intensive forensic investigation training at the Law Enforcement Innovation Center's (LEIC) National Forensic Academy (NFA), participants don't just graduate with the latest investigative skills. Their list of colleagues, who can advise on cases, also has increased.

*Jason Jones and Tim Schade received certificates of appreciation from the Oak Ridge Police Department*

## LEIC's NFA Offers Training and Networking Opportunities

That expanded list benefited the Oak Ridge Police Department and one of its investigators, an NFA graduate, when they investigated two bank robberies. After the first robbery, the investigator brought the note left at the bank to LEIC to get input from NFA Training Specialists Tim Schade and Jason Jones.

"When he first brought the note over, we processed it with iodine fuming and got a bunch of prints off of it," said Schade, who is a Certified Latent Print Examiner through the International Association for Identification. Schade then sent the note to the Knoxville Police Department, where he worked for 28 years, for processing again and it showed the same set of prints. A suspect was soon arrested.

A week after the first crime, a second bank was robbed and

the suspect left a note. Schade and Jones assisted with lifting prints from that note as well, and a different suspect was arrested in that crime.

Schade said it's not unusual for them to receive calls and photos every week from NFA graduates seeking assistance from around the world.

"We encourage all of our instructors to leave their contact information for the students," said Schade, who is also one of the NFA instructors. "Sometimes when we get requests, we'll send a question out to a group of graduates for discussion." Schade and Jones received a commendation from the Oak Ridge Police Department for their assistance in helping to solve both bank robberies.

## Small Businesses Benefit from Knowledge of CIS PTAC Team

**H**undreds of Tennessee businesses benefit each year to the tune of close to \$1 billion with expert help from the Tennessee Procurement Assistance Center (PTAC) staff in the Center for Industrial Services (CIS).

Many of these are minority- and veteran-owned small

businesses that seek the assistance of PTAC staff to help them secure federal contracts. PTAC Program Manager Paul Middlebrooks and his staff of consultants, Debbie Barber, Veronica Clark and Jutta Bangs help businesses across the state navigate through the complex application processes.

*“When a small business wants to do business with the government, it is imperative to have their systems in place. These skills are transferable as I help small businesses to create systems.”*



### VERONICA CLARK

In her previous role, before coming to CIS in 2017, Clark spent much of her time creating systems.

### JUTTA BANGS

Bangs is the newest member of the PTAC team. She came to CIS after serving as the director of the Small Business Development Center at Roane State Community College. In her previous role she assisted businesses with getting started or expanded; and in her new role she counsels assists businesses in securing government contracts.



*“Understanding what the businesses have already taken care of prior to coming to PTAC for assistance gives me a more holistic view of the complete process. Some of the clients that I have worked with a SBDC are now my clients at PTAC. These clients appreciate the continuity because we already have an established relationship.”*



*“[My experience helps] companies understand their strengths and weaknesses, and how outside factors potentially affect their company in determining the appropriate strategies for marketing to the government.”*



## Paul Middlebrooks

Middlebrooks has been with CIS since 1986 and before that he worked with the U.S. Small Business Administration where he also assisted businesses.

## Debbie Barber

Barber is a PTAC counselor for the Middle Tennessee area. She has worked in the field of procurement for 25 years and has retained positions as Program Director at Ohio PTAC and President of the National Contract Management Association. She maintains certifications for Certified Procurement Professional (CPP), Certified Veterans Assistance Counselor, and Certified Contracting Assistance Specialist from the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance.



*“She [Debbie Barber] took me under her wing and helped me get my SAM and CAGE number to work with the Veteran’s Administration. She informed me of the different events taking place that I needed to attend for my business. She introduced me to the department heads that I needed to know. And she has helped submit the application for me to apply for WBENC. I never would have been able to do this by myself.”*

- Sherry Costanza Steady, CEO of Steady Enterprises in Nashville and a PTAC customer



## Center of Industrial Services Receives Additional CARES Act Funding

**T**he Center for Industrial Services (CIS) is one of three organizations to receive \$5.5 million in CARES Act Recovery Assistance grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help the state of Tennessee prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

CIS operates the EDA University Center for Tennessee. The agency will receive \$1 million to implement a Business Continuity Planning program in support of the Tennessee Manufacturing Resiliency Initiative, a statewide effort to enhance resiliency of manufacturers to mitigate pandemic-

related losses and to bounce back from disruptions to the economic base. The project will be matched with \$255,960 in local funds.

These projects are funded under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Public Law 116-136), which provided EDA with \$1.5 billion for economic assistance programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

## Government Employees earn Certified Public Manager Designation

**P**articipants in the Tennessee Certified Public Manager (CPM) program, based in the UT Institute for Public Service's Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership, virtually graduated in February after the year-long program.

Twenty-five participants from local, state, and federal government positions graduated as members of the program's 2021 class. The Tennessee CPM program had cohorts in Knoxville, Nashville and Jackson.

The ceremony included an address from Deputy Governor Lang Wiseman.

Participants in the yearlong program learn about current trends in public management by hearing from subject-matter experts with experience in the field.

The program helps participants gain proficiency in seven fundamental areas: personal and organizational integrity, self-development, work management, public service, leadership of people, change leadership, and systemic integration.

The Tennessee CPM program is accredited by the National Certified Public Manager Consortium and available to UT employees.

**For more information on the CPM  
program, visit:**

**[Leadership.Tennessee.edu](https://Leadership.Tennessee.edu)**





## Inaugural Administrative Professionals Academy Class Graduates

**N**ine administrative professionals from within the Institute for Public Service and the UT System recently graduated from the first ever Administrative Professionals Academy, a program operated by the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership (NCEL).

This first cohort began their journey in April 2019. Over the course of the two-year program, the group met quarterly to learn about different leadership principles and concepts, build their professional networks, and gain insight into their own leadership strengths.

## The administrative professionals who completed the program are:

*Alison Ross – UT System*

*Amy Hall - LEIC*

*Angie McLemore - IPS Administration*

*Doree Brown – UT System*

*Felicia Roberts – Center for Industrial Services*

*Kelley Myers – Municipal Technical Advisory Service*

*Linda Arms – Center for Industrial Services*

*Malea Hinson – County Technical Assistance Service*

*Sharon Sexton - LEIC*



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