

# BRIGHTER TENNESSEE



A Publication of the UT Institute for Public Service



## PARTNERSHIPS







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INSTITUTE for PUBLIC SERVICE





# A Word from Dr. Byrd

Partnerships are critical to our Institute mission to serve business and government to improve the lives of Tennesseans. Recently, we compiled a list of organizations that partner with us in providing programs, consulting and technical assistance and found we are currently engaged with almost 200 impressive partner organizations!

At least 51 different state entities - government agencies and departments - have various partnerships with our agencies. For example, the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership (NCEL) has trained state government employees for many years and is launching a new training program in collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Human Resources for state government professionals.

Several of our partnership are with the federal government. The Center for Industrial Services (CIS) has enjoyed a long partnership with federal organizations - the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (U.S. Department of Commerce), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Defense Logistics Agency with the U.S. Department of Defense. CIS has helped many Tennessee manufacturers and small business through the years thanks to its federal contracts. The County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) work closely with the Tennessee Valley Authority and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and the Law Enforcement Innovation Center (LEIC) has long-standing partnerships with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Department of Homeland Security and the National Institute of Justice.

Our partners also include professional associations such as the Tennessee Sheriff's Association, Tennessee City Manager's Association, Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police and the Tennessee Center for Performance

Excellence (TNCPE). CTAS and LEIC work with the sheriff's and chiefs of police on everything from training to partnering to consult on hot button issues in law enforcement. IPS as a whole and most of our agencies formed a partnership with



TNCPE more than 10 years ago. During that time, we've submitted applications in the TNCPE Awards of Excellence program, and using the Baldrige quality criteria to craft our applications we've been able to make continuous improvements to our institute and agencies.

A number of non-profit organizations are key partners. The Tennessee Language Center (TLC) offers foreign language classes, translation and interpretation services and English as a Second language instruction. With more foreign refugees moving into Middle Tennessee and the state as a whole, TLC is partnering with a variety of civic organizations including the GOAL Collaborative, which you'll read about in this issue.

By design and common mission, our partnerships are incomplete without the UT System campuses and institutes, other universities across the state, as well as the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the Tennessee Board of Regents.

If you are one of our partners, I want to thank you on behalf of the institute for working with us to serve Tennesseans! Together we make a measurable, positive difference!



Dr. Herb Byrd III, Vice President





Photography by Nathan Morgan, UT Martin.

## COLLEGIATE FORENSIC ACADEMY CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

**A** trip former Law Enforcement Innovation Executive Director Don Green made to UT Martin to discuss potential training partnerships resulted in a respected, 10-year-old program that prepares criminal justice students for careers in law enforcement.

“We were consistently getting calls from students and parents whose kids wanted to attend the professional NFA,” Green said. “But that’s a 10-week program, that wouldn’t work for students. I’m excited about the fact that it’s in its 10th year and excited to see it progressing.”



Ten years and 213 students after forming the NFA Collegiate Program (NFACP), the program hosted its three-week course at the Law Enforcement Innovation Center (LEIC) in Oak Ridge this summer with students from 16 different universities.

“We fought for two years to get this thing going. We were told it wouldn’t work because UT Martin is academic and IPS is not,” said UT Martin Professor of Criminal Justice Dr. Brian Donavant, who founded the program along with Green. “Seeing it succeed has been phenomenal.”

During the three-week program each summer, students learn crime scene investigation techniques with the same instructors who teach the professional, 10-week NFA. They study digital photography, latent fingerprint processing, crime scene management, bloodstain pattern analysis, forensic anthropology and shooting scene

reconstruction. Students earn course credit for completing the three-week program.

Preparing for a career in law enforcement is exactly what the program did for Madison Zuck, a 2013 graduate of UT Knoxville. Zuck completed the NFACP as an undergraduate and went to work for the Collierville Police Department. Shortly after being promoted to detective early in 2021, Zuck returned to Oak Ridge for the 10-week National Forensic Academy for professional law enforcement officers. Not only did she complete the 10-week session, but at the conclusion she was named winner of the Dr. William Bass award as the most outstanding student.

**“ We were consistently getting calls from students and parents whose kids wanted to attend the professional NFA, ”**

Don Green

- Former Law Enforcement Innovation Executive Director







"It was like going back to my old classroom, like coming home," said Madison Zuck, a 2013 graduate of UT Knoxville, who said the NFACP gave her a good baseline in the field of forensic investigations. "It helped me see that I enjoy the forensic side of investigations and that this was an area I wanted to work in. It also gave me a good start with setting myself up career-wise."

Zuck is just one example of the multiple NFACP graduates who has gone on to the professional law enforcement ranks. Green and Donavant made sure that the NFACP curriculum would give students an advantage when they started to look for jobs during their senior years.

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**“It was like going back to my old classroom, like coming home,”**

Madison Zuck  
- 2013 Graduate of UT Knoxville

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"The program has about an 85 percent placement rate in law enforcement for those who completed the program," Green said. "The Tennessee (police) chiefs give preference to those students and I know the Georgia Bureau of Investigation looks at it as an advantage."







## TLC ON BOARD TO HELP NASHVILLE'S UNDERSERVED ADULT LEARNERS

**W**ith a goal of the “right learner in the right seat at the right time,” the GOAL Collective (Growing Opportunities for Adult Learners) is building systems that standardize the adult learner experience and enable essential data sharing to improve efficiencies as individual organizations.

Several years ago, GOAL Collective's backbone organizations – the Nashville Public Library, Nashville Adult Literacy Council and Begin Anew realized there was a need

to collaborate to better serve adult learners in the Nashville and Middle Tennessee area. They put out a call to any organization serving adult learners, and the Tennessee Language Center (TLC) was one of the almost 20 agencies to join the conversation.



GOAL Collective's extensive research uncovered that up to 250,000 adults in Nashville need education support.

- 55,000 are without a high school degree
- 80,000 are functionally illiterate
- 115,000 are limited English proficient

Also,

- 1 in 8 adults lack functional literacy skills needed for everyday life
- 30 percent of Metro Nashville Public School students live in homes where English is not the primary language.

By 2025, the GOAL Collective wants to triple the number of adults reaching their educational goals.

TLC Director of English Programs Jenny Rish helped pull together in-person focus groups of adult learners to begin to create a Common Intake Form that all the agencies would use. Just when the GOAL Collective had gotten the information together and was ready to hire a contractor to make it happen, the COVID-19 pandemic shut things down. The agencies pivoted into offering alternatives to in-person learning, creating three working groups: online learning, learner engagement, and messaging. TLC's Assistant Director of English Programs - ESL-to-Go Erin Keafer took a co-leadership position in the learner engagement group, helping to host a Zoom learner focus group during 2020.

Together, GOAL Collective agencies helped each other with initiatives such as providing Zoom instruction trainings, sharing technology lending policies, creating a digital literacy assessment, determining best online practices and curriculum, navigating PPP loans, gaining understanding of student needs, and connecting students to much needed social services, just to name a few. GOAL also commissioned a report shared with all agencies - Innovations in Digital Learning: How the Pandemic Changed the Way We Serve Learners – to capture the learnings and changes to the field during COVID response.

**“This is a major partnership for us,” Rish said. “The access to collaboration and insights from the other agencies has been and will continue to be invaluable as work to improve our learner experiences and offerings at TLC, ultimately increasing our capacity to serve even more students.”**

Jenny Rish  
- TLC Director of English Programs

## RIGHT LEARNER, RIGHT SEAT, RIGHT TIME

↑ responsibility for

MESSAGING  
WORKGROUP

COMMON INTAKE  
WORKGROUP

FUNDRAISING  
WORKGROUP

↓ coordinated and aligned

### COLLECTIVE PARTNERS

#### RESPONSIBLE FOR:

Common Agenda  
Continuous Communication  
Mutually Reinforcing Actions  
Shared Measures

↓ serves and supports

BACKBONE  
SUPPORT  
PARTNERS

Since February 2021, Keafer has been serving as a leader of the Common Intake Workgroup focused on revitalizing GOAL's progress toward a shared data system by completing an analysis of all partner student intake processes.

TLC provides three services to assist Tennessee's refugee and immigrant populations with language acquisition. The ESL to Go program is a grant-funded program which provides free English language training to refugees and approved asylees who have lived in the United States for under 5 years. Any immigrant or refugee who doesn't qualify for the grant-funded classes may attend a fee-for-service TLC English class as an affordable alternative. TLC also administers a Teaching English as a Second Language certification program.

#### WEBSITE

[www.goalcollective.org](http://www.goalcollective.org)

#### ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED:

##### Backbone organizations:

Nashville Public Library  
Nashville Adult Literacy Council  
Begin Anew

##### Partner agencies:

Institute for Educational Volunteer Programs (IEVP)  
Martha O'Bryan Center  
Metro Nashville Public Schools Office of English Learners  
Nashville Community Education  
Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE)  
Nashville State Community College  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)  
Tennessee Language Center  
Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce  
Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (TIIRC)  
Workforce Essentials  
YWCA of Nashville and Middle Tennessee



## NAIFEH CENTER, STATE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES LAUNCH NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR STATE EMPLOYEES

**W**hen the Tennessee Department of Human Resources (DoHR) began thinking about a new training opportunity for state employees, they called on their partners at the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership (NCEL) and the Tennessee Government Professionals Institute was established.

DoHR Assistance Commissioner Stephanie Penney assessed all of the agency's learning opportunities shortly after she was appointed to oversee the Learning and Leadership Development division in August 2019.

"While I found we had a very robust leadership platform, I couldn't find a strong presence for our individual contributor roles," Penney said. "My goal was to identify gaps in learning, and development programs and curriculum to fill those gaps so that all state employees could have a meaningful learning journey - not only the leadership of the state."

For more than 30 years, the Institute for Public Service (IPS) has partnered with the DoHR to train state employees at both the manager and executive level. NCEL, an agency of IPS, took over all of the leadership training more than 10 years ago. That training includes the Tennessee Government Executive Institute (TGEI) and the Tennessee Government Management Institute (TGMI), in collaboration with DoHR.

The seed for the professionals' institute, which is scheduled

**“While I found we had a very robust leadership platform, I couldn't find a strong presence for our individual contributor roles,”**

*Stephanie Penney - DoHR Assistance Commissioner*

to launch in early 2022, started to take root when Penney and a colleague were on their way back to Nashville after a TGEI session.

"We began tossing around the idea of a professional institute that was centered around competencies for individual contributors," Penney said. "We needed something for employees who were subject matter professionals, to grow professionally without having to take a leadership role. While I feel that we are all leaders, no matter our title, some individuals would prefer to not lead people, but prefer to be a subject matter expert in their field. After much discussion, we proposed the idea to Macel Ely and his team. They immediately began to smile and nod their heads in agreement. We could all see the need and see the potential that a program like this could bring."

The professionals' institute will be a two-week program over two months. It will include 60 selected state government subject matter experts in their respective fields of public service representing almost 40 state government agencies. The institute will see a highly competitive application process which must include supervisor recommendation and the endorsement of their agency's commissioner or executive director.

"The Tennessee Government Professionals Institute (TGPI) is a program that will have a huge impact on state government in Tennessee," said NCEL Executive Director Dr. Macel Ely. "We're very excited about our continued partnership with the Department of Human Resources to fulfill the mission of making government more efficient and effective. During this program, professionals from virtually every state government agency will network and identify best practices in fulfilling their calling to public service. We are excited and honored to help fulfill this vision for the state."



# Congratulations

TO THE IPS EMPLOYEES WHO RECEIVED AWARDS DURING THE RECENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN FRANKLIN



**TOM AND DIANE BALLARD** Award of Excellence in Public Service  
**ANGIE MCLEMORE** IPS Administration



**Robert S Hutchison** Outstanding Public Service  
**Professional Award BRETT WARD, MTAS**

## FIVE FRANKLINS AWARD WINNERS



**KELLEY MYERS, MTAS**



**MIKE STOOKSBERRY, CTAS**



**IRMA HERNANDEZ, TLC**



**RICHARD PONCE DE LEON  
MANOSALVA, TLC**



**PATRICK MILLS, NCEL** NCEL Program  
Manager Jeff Stiles accepts a Five Franklins  
Award on behalf of Patrick Mills



**RAMONA WILSON, TLC**



**Pinnacle Award  
TRENT CLAGG, NCE**



**Beacon Award  
FELICIA ROBERTS, CIS**



**Horizon Award  
JEFF HUNDLEY, LEIC**





## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

During the recent IPS Annual Conference in Franklin, IPS employees and retirees celebrated the 50th anniversary of the institute.



▲ Former IPS Vice President Tom Ballard and his wife Diane attended the dinner saluting 50 years of IPS history.

◀ Executive Directors and Vice President Dr. Herb Byrd III

(From left) Dr. Janice Rodriguez (TLC), Margaret Norris (MTAS), Dr. Byrd, Dr. Macel Ely (NCEL), Jon Walden (CTAS interim director), Dr. Paul Jennings (CIS) and Rick Scarbrough (LEIC).







▲ All but one of the former CTAS executive directors was in attendance at the 50th anniversary dinner. Pictured from left are former directors Bob Wormsley, Jim Westbrook and former CTAS attorney David Connor.



▲ Retiree Russell Toone and his wife Debbie Barber, a CIS PTAC consultant.



1. Amy Hall and Emily Miller (LEIC)
2. Kim Henry, Nikki Ballentine and Karisma Williams (CTAS)
3. Doug Brown and Pat Hardy (MTAS)



4. Trent Clagg, Tanya Washington and Will Porter (NCEL)
5. Wes Fernandez (MTAS) and Veronica Clark (CIS)
6. Wesley Robertson, Ben Rodgers, Jim Hart and Mike Galey (CTAS)



# Our Partners



## FEDERAL PARTNERS

- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Army Criminal Investigation Division
- Bureau of Justice Assistance
- Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center
- Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Department of Defense
- Department of Homeland Security Department of Justice
- Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Manufacturing Extension Partnership, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Midwest Consortium, National Institute of Environmental Health Services
- National Institute of Justice
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
- Southeastern OSHA Training Institute, U.S. Department of Labor
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- US Citizenship & Immigration Services

## HIGHER EDUCATION

- East Tennessee State University
- Tennessee Board of Regents
- Tennessee State University
- University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine
- University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville (Baker Ctr, Haslam COB, Engineering)
- University of Tennessee, Martin
- Vanderbilt University Medical Center



## STATE OF TN

- Office of Open Records Counsel (in Comptroller's Office)
- Parks and Recreation Technical Assistance Service (TDEC)
- Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts
- Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
- Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission
- Tennessee Arts Commission
- Tennessee Board of Parole
- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation
- Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability
- Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
- Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury
- Tennessee Department of Agriculture
- Tennessee Department of Children's Services
- Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance
- Tennessee Department of Correction
- Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development
- Tennessee Department of Education
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
- Tennessee Department of Finance & Administration
- Tennessee Department of Financial Institutions
- Tennessee Department of General Services
- Tennessee Department of Health
- Tennessee Department of Human Resources
- Tennessee Department of Human Services
- Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Tennessee Department of Military
- Tennessee Department of Revenue
- Tennessee Department of Safety & Homeland Security
- Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
- Tennessee Department of Transportation
- Tennessee Department of Veterans Services
- Tennessee Division of TennCare
- Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
- Tennessee Fire Academy
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission
- Tennessee Housing Development Agency
- Tennessee Human Resource Agency
- Tennessee Human Rights Commission
- Tennessee Local Government Audit
- Tennessee Local Government Finance
- Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs
- Tennessee Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission
- Tennessee Regulatory Authority
- Tennessee State Board of Education
- Tennessee State Museum
- Tennessee Transportation Assistance Program
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

## ASSOCIATION PARTNERS

- Alliance for Innovation
- American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
- American Small Manufacturers Coalition
- American Translators Association
- Association of County Mayors
- Association of Language Companies
- Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers
- Association of Talent Management, Smoky Mountain Chapter
- Association of Tennessee Valley Governments
- Begin Anew
- Catholic Charities
- Center for Nonprofit Management
- Cheekwood Estate & Botanical Garden
- Consortium of University Public Service Organizations
- County Officials Association of Tennessee
- Dollar General Literacy Foundation
- East Tennessee Development District
- East Tennessee Purchasing Association
- Enfield Management
- First Tennessee Development District
- Frist Foundation
- Gallup
- German-American Chamber of Commerce
- Global Chamber Nashville
- Greater Nashville Regional Council
- Hillcrest Methodist Church
- Hispanic Family Foundation
- International Association for Identification
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- International Economic Development Council
- University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine
- InterNations
- Japan-America Society of TN
- Joint National Committee for Languages & National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS)
- Kettering Foundation
- Legacy Mission Village
- Local Government Corporation
- Martha O'Bryan Center
- Memphis Association of Governments
- Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Nashville Adult Literacy Council
- Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Nashville International Center for Empowerment
- Nashville Soccer Club
- National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators
- National Certified Public Manager Consortium
- National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC)
- National Sheriffs Association
- Nations Ministry
- Nisolo
- Northwest Tennessee Development District
- Pathway Lending
- Public Entity Partners
- Siloam
- Sister Cities of Nashville
- South Central Development District
- Southeast Tennessee Development District
- Southwest Tennessee Development District
- St. Ann Church
- Tennessee Association of Assessing Officers
- Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police
- Tennessee Association of Municipal Clerks and Records
- Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators
- Tennessee Association of Public Purchasing
- Tennessee Association of Utility Districts
- Tennessee Automotive Manufacturers Association
- Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence
- Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives
- Tennessee Chapter of the American Public Works Association
- Tennessee City Management Association
- Tennessee County Attorneys Association
- Tennessee County Commissioners Association
- Tennessee County Highway Officials Association
- Tennessee County Services Association
- Tennessee Development District Association
- Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association
- Tennessee Foreign Language Teaching Association
- Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association
- Tennessee Government Leadership Alumni
- Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
- Tennessee Livability Coalition
- Tennessee Manufacturers Association
- Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Association
- Tennessee Municipal Judges Conference
- Tennessee Municipal League
- Tennessee Office for Refugees
- Tennessee Personnel Management Association
- Tennessee Public Risk Management Association
- Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council
- Tennessee School Resource Officer Association
- Tennessee Sheriffs' Association
- Tennessee Stormwater Association
- Tennessee Water and Wastewater Association
- TML Bond Fund
- TN Latin American Chamber of Commerce
- United Way of Greater Nashville
- University Economic Development Association
- Upper Cumberland Development District
- West Tennessee Mayor's Association
- Williamson County Chamber of Commerce
- Woodmont Hills Church
- Workforce Essential
- World Relief Memphis
- YWCA



## RESEARCH

- Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation
- Tennessee Board of Regents
- Tennessee State University
- University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine
- University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville (Baker Ctr, Haslam COB, Engineering)
- University of Tennessee, Martin
- Vanderbilt University Medical Center



## OTHER

- Knox County E-911
- Metro Action Commission
- Metro Nashville Police Department
- Nashville Public Library
- TFLI Fund Inc.

## TREEDC Names Bolivar Mayor McTizic as West Tennessee Coordinator

**B**olivar Mayor Julian McTizic was recently appointed to the position of West Tennessee Coordinator of the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC). The 108 mayors of TREEDC and the board are looking forward to working with McTizic to help bring in more clean energy development and awareness in West Tennessee. He will help TREEDC transform more West Tennessee communities into sustainable communities that creates new jobs and economic development in the region.

McTizic is a native of Bolivar, a rural town in Hardeman County. On July 1, 2017, at the age of 30, he was sworn in as the youngest, and first African-American elected mayor of the city of Bolivar. He is a Paul Harris Fellow in the Bolivar Chapter of Rotary International, a member of the Bolivar General Hospital Healthcare Foundation, the NAACP, and the Joint Economic and Community Development Board.



In his elected position, he is a member of the Young Elected Officials where he serves as the State Director for Tennessee. He is a member of the Executive Board of the Southwest Tennessee Development District and is a Certified Economic Developer from the UT Center for Industrial Services. McTizic is a graduate of Hardeman County Leadership, the 2018 Class of WestStar. In 2019, Bolivar was designated as an Excellence in Community Development Award by TREEDC.

## Local Government Officials Complete Leadership Program

**M**ore than 15 local officials recently completed the Local Government Leadership Program (LGLP) hosted by the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership, an agency of The University of Tennessee Institute for Public Service. Each year, LGLP provides local government leaders with opportunities to connect with each other, expand their leadership capacity, and learn about new and innovative leadership practices and approaches.

The city and county officials who attended this multi-day program in Knoxville were invited by UT County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), sister agencies of the Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership. Each attendee received a leadership



assessment profile offering insight into individual leadership styles and approaches. The program consisted of teambuilding activities and multiple small-group sessions to explore and discuss leadership strategies, best practices, and innovative approaches. Additionally, the program included sessions on ways to build an ethical culture, applying Lean practices in the public sector, and sharing a personal leadership philosophy.

LGLP began over two decades ago with the goal of cultivating proactive government leaders, and to provide these leaders with knowledge and tools to help guide their cities and counties into the future.



## Save the Date: TREEDC 2021 Annual Conference: December 9-10, 2021

The Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) will hold its annual conference at Tennessee Tech University on December 9-10, 2021. The theme of our conference will be “Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery” for our cities, counties, businesses and colleges and universities. Panel presentations and discussions relating to economic recovery resources available to our members, COVID-19 assistance programs from our business members, and lessons learned from our mayors during the pandemic are part of the program. We will have

our annual awards presentations, exhibitors, and networking opportunities. We will also introduce you to our start-up companies that are part of the TREEDC network. Click [Microsoft Word - TREEDC-2021 Conference Agenda1](#) for the tentative agenda.



Members who are interested in giving a presentation can contact TREEDC President Dwain Land at 423-718-3435. We look forward to catching up with everyone at our annual conference.

## Counties look to CTAS for guidance on American Rescue Plan Funds

The Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury released a memorandum regarding additional guidance on the American Rescue Plan Act. In this memorandum, the comptroller referenced the U.S. Treasury expectation to publish their final guidance in September. The comptroller also encouraged local governments wait to finalize plans to use of these funds until the final guidance is received.

The County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) has received various questions regarding eligible expenditures, sub-recipient monitoring, accessing the U.S. Treasury Portal, and reporting requirements. As a result, CTAS has regularly contacted the Tennessee County Services Association, the Comptroller's Office, and Finance and Administration over the last several weeks, working to provide counties with accurate responses. Unfortunately, final guidance remains unpublished, resulting in the inability to answer many questions.

CTAS offers the following suggestions for counties to consider pending publication of the final guidance:

- Establish a committee that will be responsible for reviewing funding requests and developing a spending plan.
- Develop processes that include:
- How funds can be requested;

- Screening and evaluation of funding requests; and
- How to categorize and prioritize the funding requests to ensure they fall within the four authorized categories outlined in the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Interim Final Rule.

Counties have communicated that they are considering multiple options for use of the funds. Before making definite determinations, CTAS encourages counties to plan these expenditures strategically.

- Consider funding those projects/ideas that will have a comprehensive and long-lasting effect on your counties;
- Consider including community stakeholders in soliciting ideas for spending; and
- Consider opportunities for collaboration with state stakeholders.

CTAS is offering these suggestions to assist in developing your spending plans until the final guidance has been published. Once published, the final guidance will provide answers to many questions, enabling counties to properly prioritize the use of their funds. This prioritization will minimize the potential exposure to liability for spending funds inconsistent with one of the four authorized American Rescue Act Plan funding categories.









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