

Tennessee Government Leadership

LINK

Newsletter from the Tennessee Government Leadership Council



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Council Committees

- ◆ Vision
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Engagement
- ◆ Systems-Thinking
- ◆ Forward Focus



Tennessee State Government



SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP: COMMISSIONER REBECCA HUNTER HUMAN RESOURCES

What is one characteristic that you believe every leader should possess and why?

Attitude. Leaders must model the way, and bring optimism and positive energy to their work, demonstrating confidence, openness and a willingness to learn. They must also have the ability to exhibit grace under pressure, remaining cool and calm regardless of the circumstances. Leaders with a positive attitude bring energy to their team and give more than they expect to have returned.

What is one mistake you witness leaders making more frequently than others?

Failing to delegate, which is a lost opportunity to generate trust with your team.

What advice can you give to help leaders avoid making that mistake?

I'll reference the author John Maxwell, who wrote that if a member of your team can do the work 85% as well as you, delegate. It demonstrates that you have confidence in their ability. Take the time to explain what they will be doing and why they're doing it if possible, so they have a complete understanding of the project. Then turn them loose, but have frequent follow up discussions to assure they're on the right track. Often the team member finds a more efficient way to complete the work, which provides the leader with an opportunity to learn and to acknowledge the out-of-the box thinking.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing leaders today and why?

Staying relevant and valued in a rapidly changing environment and not getting caught up in the status quo.

What strategies are needed to meet that challenge?

Remaining a life-long learner, which means more than simply reading books, but also keeping up with the trends in your field of study, and networking with other organizations that provide similar services to learn best practices. Communicate as often as possible with senior management to assure your work efforts are aligned with the needs of the organization. Consider serving on a board or serving in a volunteer role that takes you outside your comfort zone and enables you to learn new things from others' perspective.

If you are interviewing for a key leadership role within your organization, what top three competencies do you look for and why?

Customer focus - in a service environment, the ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with your customer is critical for success. When customers' expectations have been exceeded, they become your champion and will share their positive experience with others which brings goodwill to your department. *Developing direct reports* - successful leaders are always thinking about succession planning to assure that the organization can be sustained. Focusing on your team's development demonstrates commitment to their success. True leaders surround themselves with team members who are hungry to grow and learn, assuring that the organization stays forward thinking and avoids the status quo. *Building effective teams* - leaders who master this competency can more easily deliver results, since teams

who have strong morale and a feeling of belonging work collaboratively to solve problems through trust.

What are you doing to ensure you continue to grow and develop as a leader?

Continuously read leadership books, spend development time with mentors, accept opportunities that require me to step outside my comfort zone, spend time with members of my team who are specialists in areas I am not, attend leadership events in the private sector for a different perspective, and develop relationships with leaders I respect from various industries.

What advice would you give someone going into a leadership position for the first time?

Stay humble and hungry – ask questions of your team to understand what they do by meeting one on one with each team member. Let them know their work is valued and if change is needed, enlist their help in creating that change. Always be willing to learn and respect the work that was done before you. Be sure you know who your customers are and ask them how you can best meet their needs, then develop action plans based on those needs with input from your team.

As a leader, generating trust is essential, especially during times of change. What are some leadership factors that tend to generate organizational trust?

Always do what you say you will do. Extend trust to others by asking their opinion on an issue, delegating a critical task or project, keeping confidences, and being willing to admit when you've made a mistake. Change is hard for many people, so involve them in the process by asking for their ideas, understanding their concerns and inviting them to participate in developing the solution.

What would you like your legacy as a leader in public service to be?

That I created an environment where employees feel valued and can thrive through growth and development, and where human resources is recognized as a team of expert problem solvers that helps agencies achieve their mission and reach their goals.



**Thank you Commissioner Hunter for
inspiring us all to be lifelong learners!**

**“In the past a leader was a boss. Today’s leaders
must be partners with their people ... they no
longer can lead solely based on positional power.”**

- Ken Blanchard



2016 Reflections and Insights from the CLO

by Dr. Ernie Ricketts
LEAD Tennessee 2011, TGEI 2014

As the year comes to a close, I thought it would be interesting if we could have our state Chief Learning Officer (CLO), Dr. Trish Holliday, give us her perspective on a few questions. In essence, her thoughts on the past year of leadership development in state government and her future insights.

Ernie: Trish, as you take a glance at the year gone by, with all that has occurred in leadership development and learning, what have been some of the top successes have you experienced as the state's CLO?

Trish: We have been able to accomplish so much this past year. We have seen an increase in executive level support in investing in state employees. All the research indicates that development programs in organizations have greater sustainability if such initiatives are supported by top leadership, and we have that support. As a result of their support, our leadership development programs have multiplied in number.

Only a few years ago we had one Commissioner's Academy. Now we have 17, with more in the planning stages for 2017. These academies are agency specific leadership development programs that exponentially increase the state's number of individuals who will be prepared to assume leadership roles in state government.

We have seen our attendance at our two state-wide conferences increase. Both the HRC (Human Resource Conference) and the TGL (Tennessee Government Leadership) Conferences had record attendance. This tells me that across state government our employees are hungry for opportunities to learn more, grow more, and network with peers more. Our state-wide leadership development programs continue to be successful as well.

Ernie: It truly has been an incredible year. Now, as you look ahead to 2017, what exciting new opportunities for state leaders are planned?

Trish: In addition to continuing our existing programs, we have some new additions. We (DOHR) will host the first ever Learning Conference in 2017. This conference will provide current industry best practice knowledge and skills for our 383 certified facilitators from across the state. We are inviting subject matter experts in the learning and development field to share with our facilitators what is new and "working" in adult learning and facilitation. We also wanted to provide continued learning opportunities for our many state executive administrative assistants. To meet that need, we will host a conference for them, focusing on increasing networks, best practice sharing, collaboration and efficient work practices. These conferences are just two new additions to our efforts to continue the emphasis on leadership development state wide.

Ernie: Trish, as the CLO, what would be one wish you have for state government?

Trish: That we would have a sustained government learning organization that is committed to being the employer of choice...oh, and world peace. Seriously, I believe we can achieve what many think is impossible, and that is to create, in state government, a true learning environment.

When organizations invest in their employees by developing them, then that becomes a place where people want to work, and to stay with for the long term. *And, world peace.*

“Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results not attributes.”

- Peter Drucker



2016 Annual Leadership Conference: Leadership – It's What We Do

A Behind the Scenes Look

by Julie Perry

TGMI 2003, TGEI 2007, LEAD Tennessee 2010

Have you ever attended a wedding or an event such as a large conference or meeting? Have you ever thought "Wow that was a nice event?" I am sure we have all had this experience once or twice in our lifetime. But not until that time in our life when we plan such an event, do we realize how much time, effort, and resources it requires to accomplish the wonderful outcome.

As a member of the Tennessee Government Leadership Council (TGLC), I have participated in planning numerous conferences in recent years. TGLC members take their role in preparing the event seriously, while participating on one or more committees. Each committee's goal is to fulfill its requirements and ensure the attendees are presented with a full day of learning, reading materials, door prizes, as well as a great experience.

This year, I had the opportunity to participate in the planning of a conference that required more time and involvement of me than previous years. One thing I learned was the significance of capturing the plan, the responsible person(s), and monitoring timelines for each main step, which is a great example of the importance of project management.

The Department of Human Resources Strategic Learning Solutions Division (SLS) and TGLC members work diligently together on the conference as well as maintain their roles and responsibilities of their individual jobs! This team determines the theme, the speakers, the giveaways, and details that, unless you are involved, you have no idea are there. The skill involved in keeping numerous speakers engaged, on time, and on message is quite remarkable. Finding a location large enough to create a learning environment for 600 individuals is another daunting task.

In addition, we must include the technical requirements, food service, and parking accommodations for that large of a group.

There is always a hiccup or two during the planning process; an ordered item does not arrive as planned, a great new idea won't work as we had hoped, or an emergency causes a change in plans for a presenter. The wonderful thing about that is because of the commitment of the team and leadership, you, the customer, are never aware of it.

The TGLC and SLS team start developing the next conference almost immediately following the last conference. In the spirit of the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence and Malcom Baldrige criteria, a debriefing meeting is held within two days of the conference. During the debriefing meetings, we discuss the successes and opportunities resulting from the last conference to formulate a plan to include new ideas, improvements, and items to continue. We currently have a date and location reserved for the 2017 Tennessee Government Leadership Conference!

For those of you who attended the conference, I hope you ended the day feeling engaged, empowered, proud and fortunate. The TGLC has been charged with instilling a culture of leadership and learning. If you attended and left excited about the books you received and messages of each of the presenters, then I believe our mission was accomplished. I look forward to seeing you at the 2017 TGL Conference. If you would like to participate on a committee, please contact me or Chief Learning Officer Trish Holliday.





2016 Annual Leadership Conference: Leadership – It’s What We Do Reflections and Reactions

by Richard Baisden
DOHR Next Level Leadership Academy 2014

This year’s TGL Conference at Trevecca Nazarene University was undoubtedly one of the best yet!

Dr. Dan Boone, President of Trevecca, welcomed us by defining the university’s unique name, which means “a binding together in love.” The university’s staff certainly reflected this definition at every opportunity. Trevecca’s Boone Business Center facility was “more intimate and encouraged interaction and networking,” commented more than one participant.

Conversations around tables, interactions during breaks and meals, and an overwhelming sense of “leaning in” demonstrated that the conference struck a resonant chord. Below is a sampling of favorite moments:

The diversity of speakers and their backgrounds as well as their inspiring messages provided a positive and common theme. Cynthia Peraza (THDA) said, “At the TGL Conference 2016, I was reminded that leaders must inspire, mentor, and lead with a purpose. We must be innovative and dedicate a minimum of three percent of our work days [to] thinking of ideas and concepts that do not yet exist. It was an impressive and empowering event!” Another attendee expressed excitedly that there was something for everyone and that “the content crossed generations.”

Charmaine McNeilly (THDA) testified, “The conference [featured] excellent, inspiring speakers and great networking opportunities. I would recommend it to my co-workers.”

John O’Leary, the morning keynote speaker, was a conference inspirational favorite. “... John O’Leary

has an amazing story which touched my heart and inspired me to adjust my attitude,” offered an anonymous attendee. She continued, “By asking, ‘What more can I do?’ much more can be accomplished.” What better compliment for any speaker than what one participant remarked, “He asked me to commit to acting on something we got out of his presentation”?

He asked us to commit...what did you commit to as a result of the conference?

Lindsay Hall (THDA) shared one of her inspirational moments: “Best message of the day: the question was asked, ‘Why me?’ Turn it around [and say], ‘Why not me?’ Live to serve. Days are short, challenges are long. Be the change agent!”

It was not just the keynote speakers who inspired leadership passion and touched hearts, either. “There have been so many inspirational speakers at this conference that it’s hard to pick one,” wrote an unidentified attendee. “I have to go with my heart and say that John O’Leary really touched my heart but Ken Medema touched my soul! What a blessing!”

Another conference participant remarked that she was inspired by Danielle Barnes’ reminder that “leadership comes from your heart—not your position.”

In testament to the underlying purpose of the event, Amy Woodard (DOHR) wrote, “The TGL conference was a positive, self-motivating experience which included amazing self-developing skills that I can utilize within my personal life and professional role.”





2016 Annual Leadership Conference: Leadership – It's What We Do What More Can I Do?

by Marcus Dodson
TGMI 2014, LEAD Tennessee 2016



Earlier this year, I read a book which changed how I look at challenges, adversities and life itself. I shared the book with close friends and had a vision to bring the author to the TGL Conference. With the help of many, my vision became reality. Pulling together my Toastmaster skills, I prepared and delivered John's introduction. About half way

through, it hit me: conference attendees were about to hear John's near tragic, life changing story; the story I had read about months before that changed my life. I bowed my head, took a deep breath and continued. Looking back, I can only imagine people wondering what was happening and how an introduction could be emotional. After John's presentation, everyone realized and experienced how impactful and amazing his story is.

As a nine-year-old boy, John was burned on 100% of his body and given less than one percent chance to live. His amazing journey of survival illustrates the incredible power of the human spirit. John and his family kept their experience private until his parents wrote a book, *Overwhelming Odds*, to thank the family and friends who supported them on their journey of healing. The book led to organizations around the world requesting to hear first-hand how John defied the odds. Since then, John has empowered over 500,000 people to "Live Inspired." John shared his powerful message at the TGL Conference on November 2, 2016.

Jack Buck was the sports announcer for the St. Louis Cardinals. When he learned John was defying the

odds to stay alive, Jack visited John in the hospital. Jack asked, "What more can I do?" Jack continued to visit John and once John was home, Jack sent him a baseball signed by Ozzie Smith. Jack included a note, "Kid, if you want a second baseball, all you have to do is send a thank you letter to the man that sent the first one." This was a challenge for John, as he had no fingers, but his desire and internal drive to send the letter allowed him to overcome his challenges and write the letter. Jack's challenge met John at his level. His belief and encouragement is what John used to learn how to write again. John sent the letter and received another baseball. This continued throughout the summer and John collected over 60 baseballs. How amazing! Jack Buck's unwavering encouragement, friendship and support gave John the drive to return to school. John completed all grades and in 1999 graduated from college.

John challenged the TGL Conference audience to look at situations and ask yourself, "What more can I do?" How can you be an inspiration and provide encouragement to help someone less fortunate or in a situation much worse than your own? How can you inspire someone as Jack inspired John?

In March 2016, John's book *On Fire: The 7 Choices to Ignite a Radically Inspired Life* became an instant number one National Bestseller. He was expected to die, but now John travels the world teaching others how to truly live. He encourages people to fight through their challenges and is truly an inspiration. John is a business owner, writer, husband and father of four.

What if one message could change your life? What if one man could provide hope that the best is yet to come? This man is John O'Leary.

"You can't always choose the path you walk in life, but you can always choose the manner in which you walk it."

- John O'Leary



2016 Annual Leadership Conference: *Leadership – It’s What We Do* **Key Note Ken Medema**

by Michelle Hamblin,
TGMI 2015, DCS Commissioner’s Cornerstone Leadership Academy 2015

Ken Medema is a performer who has shared his passion for learning and discovery through storytelling and music in venues around the world that include conventions, colleges, churches, and corporations for over 40 years. Though blind from birth, Mr. Medema sees and hears with heart and mind, singing stories from his audience and accenting themes and perspectives from speakers and workshop leaders. He custom designs every musical moment through improvisation and new composition to bring each event to life with his keyboard/piano and vocal performances.

Ken Medema left an unforgettable impression on us all. Mr. Medema was not a typical keynote speaker.

He did not get up, talk to us, and deliver a speech based on his life experiences and lessons. Instead, Mr. Medema blessed us with the gift of music throughout the day. He demonstrated and shared with us an aptitude of summarizing the previous keynote speakers’ messages into songs that left us laughing or in deep thought. Mr. Medema even managed to incorporate networking through songs, encouraging leaders to interact with each other. Some of the songs included: Leadership - It’s What We Do; On Fire; Bound Together; and Finely Woven. Mr. Medema has a remarkable talent, and we were fortunate to have been able to share in this experience with our fellow leaders.



**“True leaders always practice the three R’s:
Respect for self, Respect for others,
Responsibility for all their actions.”**

Anonymous



2016 Annual Leadership Conference: Leadership – It’s What We Do TN Leadership Talks

by Patricia Smith
LEAD Tennessee 2013

Interspersed throughout the day we heard various short Leadership Talks from three local leaders: Kelly Lang, Marcus Whitney and Dr. Sybril Brown.

Kelly Lang is a performing artist, accomplished songwriter, producer, and member of the North American Country Music Hall of Fame. She has graced the stage of the Grand Ole Opry and Ryman Auditorium, and her songs can be heard on radio waves throughout the world. She is also a cancer survivor. Kelly was our first TN Leadership Talk.

Kelly wants us to be authentic. She knew early on that she was different, dedicated, and serious; recording her first single at 15 and then performing on Music City Tonight and Star Search. She wants us to find a focal point. She knew she wanted to sing.

Kelly’s advice: If you find a person who isn’t smiling, give them yours! Share positive words and let people know you are thinking of them.

Kelly performed her song “Under a Tennessee Moon” while gorgeous pictures of the State were displayed behind her.

Marcus Whitney is President and Co-Founder of Jumpstart Foundry, an equity investment firm with over 60 companies. He is co-owner of Nashville SC professional soccer team, and has a social enterprise called the Unlikely Company that has Create and Orchestrate shows on YouTube. He also serves on several Nashville boards and loves hip-hop. Marcus was our second TN Leadership Talk.

Marcus told us leadership is hard and can be lonely. Leadership evolves not telling people what to do, but showing how it’s done. Leaders need love and we should pour it into each other. He recognizes he doesn’t have to craft core values because when he treats people well, work goes well.

His teams show each other how it’s done through love and recognition, inspiring greater efforts.

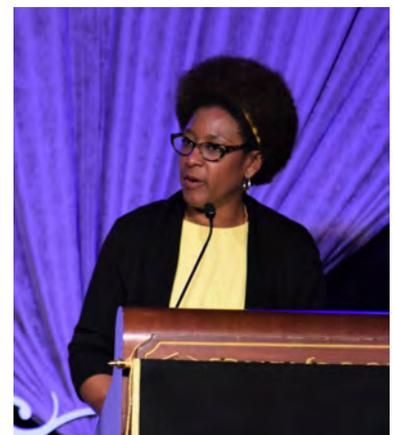
He believes millennials are here to work, not to consume and enjoy. They work with purpose and integrity, where being developed is key.

Dr. Sybil Brown, affectionately known as “Dr. Syb,” is a professor of journalism at Belmont University. She is a two-time Emmy award-winning multimedia journalist, international speaker, and presenter. She has also authored *Innovate: Lessons from the Underground Railroad*, and *The Color-Full Alphabet Book*. Dr. Syb was our third TN Leadership Talk.

Dr. Syb used the Underground Railroad for leadership lessons describing it as among the most effective, disruptive and innovative networks. The system befuddled white owners because it was easier to think of slaves as ignorant beings, not beings who could fashion a system to deliver freedom for others. She recalled one of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s key messages: Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. She reminded us how Craig’s List disrupted the newspaper’s classified business, that word of mouth is still the best form of communication, that Twitter was crucial to the success of the Arab Spring.

She described a series of P’s to consider: Problem, Principle, Purpose, Pioneering, Perspective and Play. A key example is Pioneering – while Henry “Box” Brown was successful in shipping himself to freedom in Philadelphia; the next man copying that wooden crate technique was captured. Looking for the next big change, she invites us to spend 3% - 5% of our days thinking of what doesn’t yet exist.

Dr. Syb believes leadership is about love, loyalty, sacrifice, humor and humanity. We do not need an overseer as a manager.





2016 Annual Leadership Conference: *Leadership – It's What We Do*

State Executives Speak on Leadership

by Melissa Boaz
TGMI 2007, LEAD Tennessee 2012

One of the staples of the annual Leadership Conference is the executive roundtable session where a panel of state leaders, normally commissioners and executive directors, discuss leadership in a question-and-answer format. This year, however, the TGL Council decided to shake things up a bit and ask a different level of leaders to speak. The panel for this year's conference included four deputy commissioners in a session moderated by TGL Council member, Lauren Hill. The panel consisted of Human Resources Deputy Commissioner Danielle Barnes; Health Deputy Commissioner Carl Mallory; Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner Dr. Shari Meghreblian; and Finance and Administration Deputy Commissioner Eugene Neubert.

The panel members provided some useful insights in these key areas of leadership:

What is one characteristic every effective leader should possess?

Leaders should be approachable. Make employees feel like approaching you with ideas, and act on the ideas. Leaders should also try to connect with people at all levels in the department. This will inspire them, which helps them become better leaders. Humility is also an important leadership characteristic. Leaders sometimes forget they came through the ranks. An effective leader leads from the heart, not from their position. Finally, a leader should have a strong work ethic and work hard.

What was your greatest challenge in state government, and how did you overcome it?

One challenge that leaders face is rising through the ranks and supervising people who they once worked with. Let them know you still care, and take time to develop them as leaders. Another challenge, especially for those coming from the private sector, is realizing that government is not like the private sector. Government is a collaborative culture, and leaders need everyone's participation and input in order to achieve objectives. One recent challenge for state leaders was the creation of the executive

internal auditor position. State leaders created an advisory committee to implement this new requirement across the executive branch. Leaders also face the challenge of how to run the business of government while maintaining the public service mission.

What are some characteristics you look for when hiring key leadership positions?

Integrity sets the stage for all other characteristics and is the foundation of leadership. A leader must be able to motivate others and have the ability to get work done. Leaders must also have the right attitude. They have to want to do the job and give it their all. Leaders must also be able to develop relationships, adapt to the entity's culture, and know what motivates people. Leadership takes courage to face challenges, make hard decisions, and do the right thing.

What do you do to continue to grow and develop as a leader?

Learning new things, especially on a daily basis, is essential to growing and developing as a leader. Leaders should ask their teams why they do what they do, and put that knowledge to work. Leaders should also travel and visit branch offices if their agency has other locations. Ask employees there what they need, and witness the challenges the front line teams face. Leaders can learn from getting out in the field with their employees and offering to help them with their work. This also helps with identifying the next leaders.

What do you want your lasting legacy to be?

Leave behind a wide and deep bench of leaders who can continue to lead and who will hire and develop strong leaders for the future. Make the State of Tennessee the employer of choice. Create a better quality of life for people and make a positive impact.





2016 Annual Leadership Conference: Leadership – It’s What We Do Coach Micheal Burt

by Joe Gentry
LEAD Tennessee 2015

Coach Michael Burt represents the new age leader that he refers to as a Super Coach. The Super Coach is a unique blend of a former championship coach who has an entrepreneurial mindset, has become the go-to business coach, author of 10 books, and has an online TV show, "The Super Coach."

The conference was closed with a powerful message by the "Super Coach" Michael Burt and his discussion encouraging the conference participants to become a "Person of Interest." He opened by asking the crowd if they ever had a coach. His premise: a good coach, or mentor, is the catalyst to reaching your potential as a leader. A good leader, or Person of Interest, "confirms and validates potential;" potential that each one of us has in some form! Becoming a Person of Interest falls in line with the impact and engagement that we as leaders strive to promote within our state wide enterprise. Each one of our jobs as Tennessee Government Leaders impact our customers, both internally and externally!

Growing up in Woodbury, TN, Coach Burt discovered a passion and desire to become a Person of Interest early on. By coaching a Jr. Pro basketball team at 15, moving to a junior high basketball coach, becoming a high school assistant and eventual championship winning head coach

at one of the state's biggest high schools, Coach Burt believed that "every day, you are interviewing for your next role." Comporting yourself professionally and with a drive to become someone who "when they speak, people listen" is essential for leaders to encourage teamwork and inclusion, hallmarks of becoming a Person of Interest. One impactful idea Coach Burt shared is the idea of, "behind every great number 1, there is a great number 2." We as leaders must ensure those within our leadership realm are being taught the leadership skills and theories that make the State of Tennessee an innovative and exciting place to work! Creating "bench strength" within our workforce ensures that our customers are continuously served with highest level of customer service regardless of movement or attrition with our current leaders.

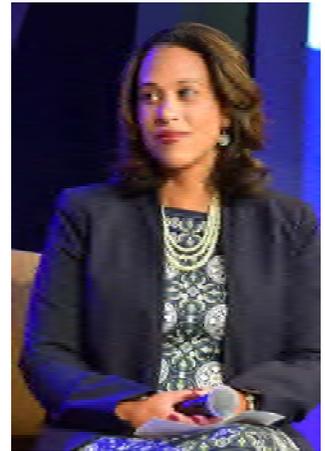
Being that Person of Interest, you are considered as someone whom others want to build a positive relationship with. Persons of Interest bring both tangible and intangible leadership skills and assets to their workplace and positively impact those they come into contact with. Persons of Interest build engaged followers and learners, and touch each and every one of us! The state's customers are wide ranging and many times very demanding; if we strive to become that positive Person of Interest, the impact we each can have as leaders is multiplied!















Vision Committee (VC) Report

LATEST NEWS IN THE LEADERSHIP BLACK BELT PROGRAM



The 2016 Vision – Black Belt committee members include: Kristi Astafan, Alicia Cone, Marcus Dodson, Tammy Golden, Shannon Hall, Kelly Lancaster, Sheila Marchman, Lynette Porter, and Patrice Steinhart.

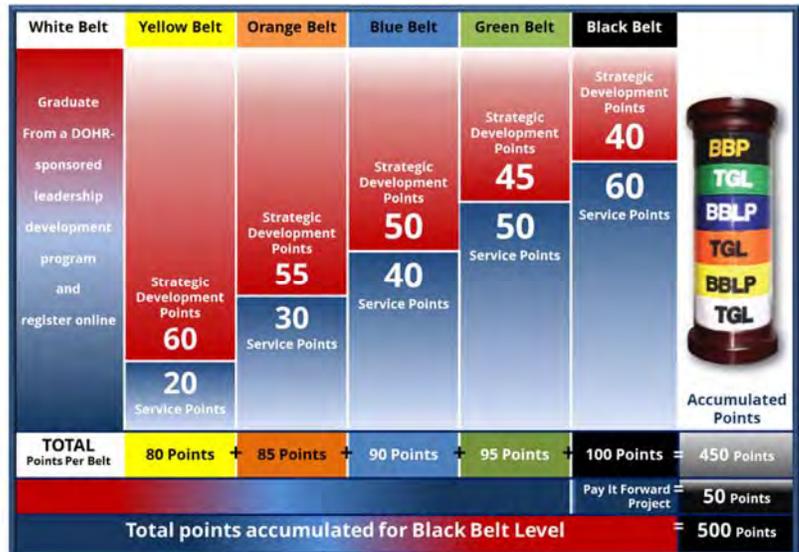
We invite you to celebrate with us the accomplishments of the individuals and the overall Black Belt Program in the statistics listed below.

In 2016 there have been 115 belts awarded:

- 40-Yellow
- 32-Orange
- 25-Blue
- 26-Green
- 2-Black

To date, 219 belts have been approved:

- 91-Yellow
- 56-Orange
- 40-Blue
- 27-Green
- 5-Black



All belts represent 37,028 hours of service entered by participants:

- 9,571 - External Service
- 7,242 - Internal Service
- 2,460 - Pay It Forward Projects
- 28,303 - Strategic Development

There are 311 active members representing 41 different agencies in the program.

The committee appreciates everyone’s patience as we work to improve the program and review belts. If you recently signed up and have not received your white belt or have questions regarding the program, please contact us at Leadership.Council@tn.gov.



Blue, Green and Black Belts



Yellow and Orange belts are awarded to participants at the monthly TGL Council meetings. Blue, Green and Black belts are awarded at the TGL Conference. For 2016, thirteen participants received their Blue Belt and fifteen received their Green Belt (the higher belt awarded is in that number and in the list below). To earn a Blue Belt, participants must first earn the Yellow and Orange Belts as well as 50 Strategic development points, 20 internal service and 20 external service points. After the Blue Belt, participants need 45 strategic development points, 25 internal service points and 25 external service points to earn the Green Belt.

The Blue Belt recipients include:

- Melissa Boaz
- Susan Burdette
- Vickey Coleman
- Susan Dill
- Tina Fox
- Eric Fowlie
- Anthony Hogan
- Richard Kennedy
- Casey Mahoney
- Patricia Merritt
- Nneka Norman-Gordon
- Dana Simons
- Shana Teasdale

The Green Belt recipients include:

- Peggy Birthrong
- Jimmy Bivens
- Elaine Boyd
- Alicia Cone
- Susan Cunningham
- Tammy Gennari
- Michelle Hamblin
- Dr. Kelly Lancaster
- Terry Malone
- Dr. Jeanine Miller
- Julie Perrey
- Elizabeth Shelton
- Michelle Smith
- Patrice Steinhart

Blue Belts Awarded



Melissa Boaz
Comptroller of the Treasury



Susan Burdette
Finance & Administration



Vickey Coleman
Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities



Susan Dill
Finance & Administration



Tina Fox
Board of Parole



Anthony Hogan
Environment & Conservation

Blue Belts Awarded continued...



Richard Kennedy
Commission on
Children & Youth



Casey Mahoney
Environment & Conservation



Pat Merritt
TRICOR



Nneka Norman-Gordon
Human Services

Green Belts Awarded



Peggy Birthrong
Finance & Administration



Jimmy Bivens
TRICOR



Elaine Boyd
Environment & Conservation



Alicia Cone
Council on Developmental
Disabilities



Susan Cunningham
TRICOR



Tammy Gennari
Health Care Finance
& Administration



Michelle Hamblin
Children's Services



Dr. Kelly Lancaster
Finance & Administration

Green Belts Awarded continued...



Terry Malone
TN Housing
Development Agency



Dr. Jeanine Miller
Intellectual & Developmental
Disabilities



Julie Perrey
TRICOR



Michelle Smith
Intellectual & Developmental
Disabilities



Patrice Steinhart
Finance & Administration



Melissa Wiseman
Finance & Administration

Black Belts Awarded



Marcus Dodson
Treasury



Lee Ann Smith
Finance & Administration

Leadership Life Changers – Black Belt Projects

by Tammy Golden
TGEI 2011, LEAD Tennessee 2016



Lee Ann Smith received her Black Belt at conference this year. In 2015, Lee Ann identified a need in her community and worked hard to fill that need. That initiative turned in to her Pay It Forward project. Lee Ann realized that the large church she attended needed a program so that children

with special needs and their parents would feel welcome and have the resources they need to worship comfortably.

That's how Shepherding Hearts was born. Lee Ann attended training for how to start this type of a ministry. She talked with church leadership to get their support. She recruited volunteers, developed the program and its mission, and implemented it. The Shepherding Hearts program matches volunteers to children with special needs so that they get the attention and help that they need to enjoy all of the same worship and Sunday School programs as the other kids. One of the parents whose child participates in the program said, "Having a child with special needs is challenging, and it is so encouraging to have a place to go that allows us as parents to go to worship because there are volunteers willing to assist our child in class if needed...The Shepherding Hearts ministry has been a blessing to our family."



Marcus Dodson also received his Black Belt at conference this year. When Marcus Dodson attended TGMI in 2014, he was changed. It was during his experience at TGMI that Marcus became passionate about leadership and leadership development – so passionate that he participates in everything that comes

his way. He's in Toastmasters, TGL Council and its Vision Committee, TGMI Steering committee, and on and on.

But Marcus knew that if he wanted to be a great leader, he couldn't stop with self-development. A great leader wants to pay it forward by giving others the opportunity to excel. Marcus knew about all the great things that DOHR was doing to develop leaders through their training programs and he wanted the Treasury Department to have access to the same great opportunities that had historically only been provided to the Executive Branch.

Marcus became the bridge between Treasury and DOHR to help develop and create the very first Academy in a constitutional office. Treasury's development programs are now in alignment with the leadership development that DOHR offers through its Strategic Learning Solutions division. In his invitation to prospective applicants for the Treasurer's Leadership Academy, Treasurer Lillard stated, "My hope is for each participant to complete the year with the skills needed to be a stronger leader, and for all participants to have formed an effective network across our divisions that can grow us into a stronger Treasury for the future."

Five Black Belts have been awarded to leadership alumni to date



Pictured left to right: Tammy Golden, Dr. Trish Holliday, April Romero, Lee Ann Smith, and Marcus Dodson



Black Belt Program Participant Interviews



by Benny Romero
TGEI 2014



Jamie Burroughs
Hazardous Waste Permitting/
Corrective Action Manager
Environment & Conservation
Yellow Belt



What's your story?
How did you arrive at your current position?

My first degree was Chemical Engineering. I worked a short time in industry. My first position at the state was in the Division of Construction Grants and Loans. During that time I finished my second degree, MS in Environmental Engineering. Four years later I moved to Division of Solid Waste Management and shortly after passed the Professional Engineers exam. I have been a hazardous waste permit writer, supervisor, manager and current Hazardous Waste Permitting and Corrective Action Manager.

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

I enjoy taking pictures, particularly of outdoors. On our recent trip to New England I enjoyed photographing the spectacular fall colors, waterfalls, sandy and rocky beaches, mountains, general stores, and covered bridges. I need to get my oil paints out again. I also enjoy golfing.

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

During the time I was Division E Director for District 63 Toastmasters, I also served as Fall Conference Co-Chair. My Co-Chair and I met regularly with District Leaders and the team Chairs to keep everything on track providing suggestions and answering any questions. It was a great learning experience for my Co-Chair and me. There were times we had to step in to get the job done. I helped in areas needed such as contacting possible potential donors for the Silent Auction as we were low and helping the Registration Chair to stuff bags for attendees. I worked with the IT person on registration form input and output, flyers, etc. I handled many general to specific questions from members to those making sure they were registered.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

I achieved several Toastmasters levels. I also added responsibility in my position.



Vickey Coleman, Ph.D.
State Director of Customer-
Focused Services
Intellectual & Development Disabilities
Blue Belt



What's your story?
How did you arrive at your current position?

For more than 25 years, I have worked in the human services arena with individuals with mental health challenges and/or Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). My amazing journey has been one of diversity, but very rewarding. My experience has involved working in a private mental health center, in a state-operated facility, with the West Regional Protection for Harm Unit, with a contracted community provider, with the Federal Court Monitor in the Arlington Class Lawsuit, with the IDD population in nursing homes, and presently as the Statewide Director of Customer-Focused Services. I also serve as the DIDD Director of the Office of Civil Rights to ensure compliance with Title VI requirements as well as serving as the Commissioner's Step One Appeals Designee.

I feel very fortunate as I believe my career path has come full circle with this special population. I love working with people, especially one of Tennessee's most vulnerable populations. During the 2016 TGL Conference, we were asked to write one word to describe leadership, without hesitation I wrote "servant." I am a servant leader. Interestingly, there were at least 18 other leaders present who were too. Serving and helping others is my calling.

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

My family is very important to me. Therefore, spending time with them is priority and fun. Part of our time together involves going shopping, going to the movies, and going out to eat, etc. I am also an active member of my sorority and we have fun activities that I enjoy.

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

Participating in the Making Strides Walk for Breast Cancer is near and dear to me. I have had family members and friends impacted by this disease. Being in the midst of the sea of pink and what it represents is an awesome experience. In addition to walking, there are touching testimonies shared. Listening to the survivors is a reminder of how blessed I am.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

I was selected to participate in the DOHR Tennessee Employee Mediation Program. As a result, I am now a Rule 31 Listed General Civil Mediator.

Black Belt Program Participant Interviews continued...



Susan Cunningham
Director of Talent Management
TRICOR
Green Belt



What's your story?

How did you arrive at your current position?

There are three family values that I have carried through my life. Service is one that I learned early in life through scouts, church, sports and other activities. We learned that it was important to give to others what we had received. Another family value is learning. Three of my four grandparents were teachers at one point. My mother was a teacher. They taught me that it was important to ask questions, to learn in school but also learn by participating in activities and in the community. The third value is purpose or mission. For me, it is important to be guided by a purpose that brings all three values together. These values have guided me throughout my life to want to share with others. I have been at TRICOR since 2005 in roles of people development through career development. In my current position as Director of Talent Management, I am so fortunate to work in an area that brings my values, my passion and my skills together to be a facilitator of change and opportunity.

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

I have two granddaughters who I love to spend time with as often as possible. Of course, I also love to spend time with their mother and father but the girls are so much fun at 2 and 4! I have also begun taking aqua fitness classes. I did not realize how strenuous exercise is in the water! It's been good for me and fun!

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

My most significant community service activity is participating on a state board for the Department of Health, the Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors. These hours were internal service moving me through the black belt process. The most significant external service was as a board member and as a committee member for the National Correctional Industries Association (NCIA). This is the association that supports correctional industries across the country for which TRICOR is an active member.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

It was my goal to focus my learning and to fulfil my commitments with the two boards I serve. I remain on the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Board and transitioned to a committee with the NCIA. I was accepted by Tennessee State University as a non-degree seeking graduate student and have completed two courses, which I believe helped me to be selected for the current position I am in now at TRICOR.



Marcus Dodson
Infrastructure and Security Manager
Treasury
Black Belt



What's your story?

How did you arrive at your current position?

I have the pleasure to serve in the State of Tennessee Treasury Department. I started my State career with Treasury in 2008 in an entry level, desktop support position. I worked hard and received promotions to my current position as Infrastructure and Security Manager. Hard work, dedication and a drive for continued excellence while doing more with less contributed to my success. My previous positions were in private industry, specifically manufacturing, where I implemented systems to aid in increased productivity and to lower cost.

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

When your work is fun, you don't have to have many activities outside of work to be content. I love my job and have fun working hard. Outside of the office, I enjoy listening to music, dining with friends and spending time with family.

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

My favorite and most significant community service is working at community help centers giving to those less fortunate. Help centers in rural counties are great places to give to others. Rural centers typically have little to no corporate support. Helping at these centers gives me a greater appreciation for life and to realize how blessed I am.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

With the belt level progression from yellow to black, the focus shifts from self to others. I consider myself a lifelong learner and enjoy the environment we are building in Treasury to support such. I share a common goal with other Treasury management to share knowledge and build others. John Maxwell says "Think of yourself as a river instead of a reservoir. Most people who do make personal growth part of their lives do it to add value to themselves. They are like reservoirs that continually take in water but only fill themselves up. In contrast, a river flows. Whatever water it receives, it gives away. That's the way we should learn and grow." My efforts with the Treasurer Leadership Committee and partnership with the Department of Human Resources, to develop the Treasurer's Academy has been very rewarding. The program is going to be an amazing opportunity for Treasury staff. Being part of others' development and watching them grow is very rewarding.

Black Belt Program Participant Interviews continued...



Lee Ann Smith
Assistant Director, Quality Assurance
Finance and Administration
Black Belt



What's your story?

How did you arrive at your current position?

I received a Master's in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Middle Tennessee State University in 2005 and was recruited by the Office of Internal Audit and Consulting. I left Toshiba Manufacturing in Lebanon, TN to take a position as a Management Consultant. In 2010 I transferred to the Office of Criminal Justice Programs as Assistant Director; Monitoring. Recently, due to restructuring, my responsibilities and title changed to Assistant Director; Quality Assurance.

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

I enjoy spending time with my children, their spouses and our 6 grandchildren. I attend as many dance recitals and competitions, gymnastic meets, church programs, football games, baseball games, soccer games and T-ball games as possible. I also enjoy training for 5Ks, sewing, reading and gardening.

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

The most significant project was the Pay It Forward project in which I led our church to start and sustain a ministry to families of children with special needs. This ministry's purpose is to ensure all children, regardless of ability, will be included and nurtured while attending our church. We want children to hear, understand, and respond to the gospel on their level. We want parents to feel comfortable bringing their children to our programs regardless of their needs and entrusting them to someone they know will pay close attention to their child. The need to be intentional about including children with special needs is important to me because I have a grandson with special needs.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

I consider myself a lifelong learner and strive to take advantage of every opportunity to expand in areas related to my job and responsibilities. Being involved with the Leadership Council and receiving encouragement to lead professionally and in my community supported my decision to lead in my church. I have always volunteered in programs and led classes for children but never led, much less started a program. The Black Belt program gave me the opportunity to document the project and share with others to encourage them to think about something bigger than what we already know and do.



Patricia M. Smith
Director of Communications
Tennessee Housing &
Development Agency
Orange Belt



What's your story?

How did you arrive at your current position?

I started my state service with the Tennessee Supreme Court in 1980, moved to THDA in 1984 as Information Officer, left and experienced eye-opening activities at the American Red Cross between 2000 and 2006, returning to THDA as Director of Public Affairs in 2006.

I returned to THDA when the newly-appointed executive director wanted to bring THDA's brand into the public consciousness. THDA had worked for 30 years through local lenders and real estate professionals to identify consumers who would benefit from our straight-forward mortgage loan products. Few customers knew they had a THDA loan. Now we are marketing to the consumer so they have a conscious choice between what the private market offers and what their state finance agency presents. Be ready to see an outreach of *Great Choice* specifically for state employees!

What do you do for fun when you're not at work?

Beyond enjoying my husband and two grown children, I look for volunteer work. I read for church services, gather volunteer teams for Habitat for Humanity builds, served many wonderful years as a Girl Scout leader, serve as an innkeeper for Room in the Inn, and graduated in May 2016 from a 10-month program called Leadership Middle Tennessee (LMT). LMT offers opportunities for continued service to the community and learning. I have just registered as a tnAchieves mentor and am looking forward to assisting students in their educational paths.

What has been the most significant community service activity in which you participated? Why?

My work in LMT grants me access to community leaders in 10 counties. We study what has worked elsewhere and use that information to build our own communities, conscious that ripples move beyond our borders. That's significant for a broad impact. Building a home with a family connects me emotionally to others' dreams.

What professional and personal goals did you achieve during this belt level?

The reading we accomplished in LEAD TN fed into an existing, life-long interest. As I explored opportunities for internal service opportunities, I was allowed to establish a book club for all-comers at THDA. This lunch break club invites everyone to take a taste of self-directed learning which I hope will stimulate interest in continued professional development. We've read six books already. I'm delighted to say two books have been presented on meeting day by other staff, and several people chose to present a chapter from the *17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player*.



From the Desk of the Chief Learning Officer

The Madness of Bibliohetariophobia

Bibliohetariophobia is one of those “made up” words using various Latin terms. In essence it can be understood to mean “the fear of book clubs.” But who would fear such a gathering as a book club? Doesn’t the very idea of a book club conjure up notions of cozy settings, sipping coffee or tea, and that warm feeling one gets when with others of like mind gleanings from reading great works of literature are shared?

In a recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Ed (September 22, 2016) titled “The Dangers of Faculty Book Club – Warning: Reading books with your colleagues can make you mad,” the issue of book clubs gone wrong was addressed. Potential participants argued over what the club should actually be called. Is it more of a “reading forum” rather than a club? And do not most book clubs de-evolve into something like a “knitting society” or “kaffeeklatsches” (coffee gossip session, in case your German is a little weak)? Perhaps it is more of an issue with academics that creates haggling over such peculiarities.

The TGL Book Club was formed to provide another opportunity for alumni of DOHR sponsored leadership programs to continue growing in their leadership knowledge and skills. Books are chosen not because they are popular, easy to read, or have really nice covers. Rather they are chosen to enforce what has been learned previously, to challenge the reader’s thinking, and even at times to make one not like the book. Every book is an interaction with an author, or authors, and the ideas being set forth. There is no belittling of anyone or an idea, just open and honest discussion as to how the concepts can be applied to

one’s role as a leader in state government.

The article ended with a list of “rules” for a book club, and is presented here:

- Be open to what others have to say. Avoid personal attack, criticism, and name-calling;
- Our book club is a collaborative exploration of ideas and their consequences, not a debating society;
- Ask questions for clarification and understanding, not for personal advantage;
- Be careful not to dominate; and
- Enjoy yourself!

The TGL Book Club embraces these notions and the results have been very positive. Participants read books covering a vast range of leadership topics. During the meeting, everyone has an opportunity to share what was learned from the book and how that learning can make one a better leader in state government.

It has been said that not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers. This statement is the unofficial mantra of the TGL Book Club, and now in its third year, the club is going well, and you are invited to consider joining. And on occasion, coffee may be served.

If you have not yet RSVP’d for the 2017 TGL Book Club, please email April Romero to be placed on the waiting list (April.Romero@tn.gov).

“We’re Better Together”

Doc Holliday

TGL Remote Book Club

If we have the interest, we would like to pilot a TGL Remote Book Club in 2017 for TGL alumni that do not wish to or are not able to travel to downtown Nashville. The Remote Book Club can meet along the same time frames and manner that the Nashville in-person TGL Book Club meets. However, we will meet online or via conference call. Books will have to be purchased by members, either a physical book or a download version (or if available from your local library). We will try this pilot with one book to see how it goes. It is so fun to be pioneers! Please RSVP to Nancy Patterson at Nancy.Patterson@tn.gov by January 9th if you are interested. Space will be limited to 20 people.



What I Discovered in TGL Book Club

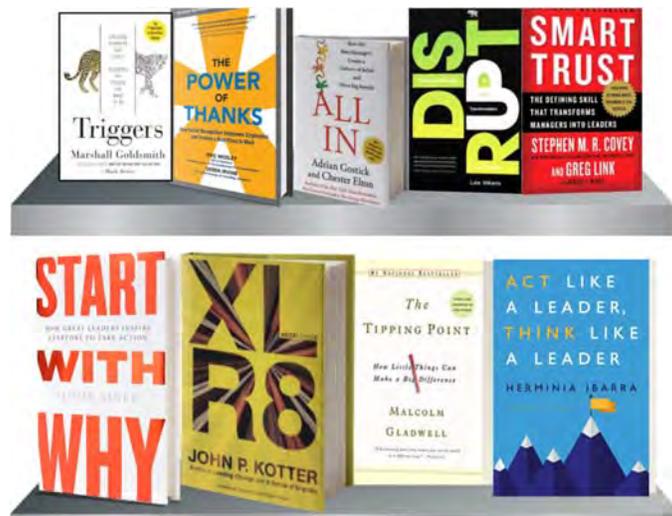
by Ann McGauran
TGEI 2015

Reading has always been one of my favorite activities. Growing up my mother had to 'ground' me from books as the ultimate punishment, which meant only school text books were allowed. Throughout college, I found that reading made those LONG class enrollment lines not just bearable but actually pleasurable as a time of guilt-free reading. Over time, the amount of time I was able to read has ebbed and flowed with life's other commitments but even in this modern age it is something that I always come back to when I want to relax or learn. So it might be a surprise that even after a number of friends shared with me how much they loved the TGL Book Club, I was skeptical about joining.

I wasn't sure that I wanted someone else to dictate my reading selections, and having a circle where everyone shares what they learned wasn't really appealing either. This meant that I only decided to sign up late in the day after the invitation email came out, putting me at waitlist position number 45. When I received the email in May that I was in the club, that only seemed to reinforce my perception that this wasn't that much fun. I mean 45 people had obviously dropped out or been kicked out per the missing two meetings rule. So I thought about declining, but since I love to read, I figured how hard can it be? I learned that it is hard to commit to reading something you did not select and also it's a lot harder to hold two hours a month as sacred on a calendar of ever evolving emergencies and priorities than I imagined; however, it is also very worthwhile.

The very first book, *Start with Why*, taught me how valuable this program was. This book taught me to look beyond what I'm trying to accomplish and how I work in order to look at why these are even important. Reflecting the apparent meandering path of my professional life, I realized that it all came down to one common why – make life easier for people. This why might have been obvious if I had chosen social work but I'm an architect in real estate! This was personally enlightening. And then came the meeting. This was not just a tell everyone what you learned or thought conversation, but a facilitated discussion into why the concepts in the book are important and also understanding that concepts touch people differently depending on where they are in their journey. I was able to share what I discovered with my team who really enjoyed looking at life from a different perspective. They are now encouraged to share books, videos, classes, etc. that they have found inspiring or relevant with the team, which has made our meetings much more valuable and the team connections stronger.

A new book club year will be starting in January and you can count on the fact that I will join my friends in signing up as quickly as possible because I don't want to miss the first few months. I've also learned the value of holding some things as firm on my schedule. Somehow the priorities and emergencies all seem to get addressed over time, but time for oneself, once lost is never recovered.



Get to Know Your Tennessee Government Leadership (TGL) Council Members



Rodney Escobar
Director of Claims and Risk Management
Treasury

by Susan Burdette
TGMI 2008, LEAD TN 2014

What's a typical day or week for you as Director of Claims and Risk Management like?

Each day and every week my team and I have the privilege of working with citizens, state employees, state agencies and departments, and higher learning institutions by managing the State of Tennessee's workers' compensation program, property (building and contents) program, tort liability program, volunteer program, insurance procurement and claims program, criminal injuries compensation program, sexual assault forensic examination reimbursement program, DUI monitoring reimbursement program, and the State of Tennessee risk management operations. Our main commitment and purpose is to be responsive, to provide exceptional service, and to build and maintain partnerships with the people we serve while being faithful stewards of the funds that allow us to provide these services and programs to all state employees and the citizens of Tennessee.

What's the best piece of advice you've received?

I had a boss once tell me, "prepare yourself to seize an opportunity if presented to you through formal education, continuous lifelong learning, developing specific skill sets for your area of interest, and to always keep an open mind as it pertains to new experiences and changes within your organization."

How can you pay your TGL experience forward?

By recruiting and encouraging future and current leaders to apply and participate in all of the TGL programs.

Tell us something unique about you.

I was a member of the 1989 National Championship Collegiate NCAA Division I Wichita State University Baseball Team.



“Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand.”

- General Colin Powell

Get to Know Your Tennessee Government Leadership (TGL) Council Members



Lynette Porter
Deputy Director
Council on Developmental Disabilities

by Susan Burdette
TGMI 2008, LEAD TN 2014

What's a typical day or week for you as Deputy Director of the Council on Developmental Disabilities like?

One of the most interesting things about my role as Deputy Director is that I have no typical day or week. My workflow is quite fluid depending on what the agency needs at the time. I am responsible for the administrative team, operations, and budget, as well as acting on behalf of our appointing authority when needed. We are blessed to have strong, committed staff, and most of our activities and projects are done with a team approach. Often my role is to lead small teams to get big results for Tennesseans with disabilities and their families.

What's the best piece of advice you've received?

I'm thankful that I have received so much wonderful advice from mentors over the years. I think back to my first supervisor after I graduated college, more years ago than I care to confess here. She was a wonderful mentor who took the time to invest in my leadership skills, even though I was in no formal leadership role. Her advice: Never bring a problem to my superiors without thinking through possible solutions. And conversely, when someone brings a problem to me, ask more questions than I offer solutions.

How can you pay your TGL experience forward?

Oh, this is the good stuff! My four years on the TN Government Leadership Council have afforded me so many opportunities for personal and professional growth and development that I have been able to apply to my leadership role in state government. I can take my experiences and use them daily for my agency and collaboratively with all agencies in the state enterprise. As a leader, I have an amazing opportunity to watch for and mentor the emerging leaders, continue to serve in my community, and look for ways to collaborate with other leadership alumni across state government. Paying it forward is the heart of the Tennessee Government Leadership Council!

Tell us something unique about you.

I have a passion for animal rescue and am particularly fond of Shetland Sheepdogs. I've also married someone who loves animals and has an obsessive affection for lap cats. This results in generally six or seven dogs/cats in our home at any point in time. The lesson: unless you are prepared to have a home covered in pet hair, you might consider a life-mate with different hobbies than yours.



**“As we look ahead into the next century,
leaders will be those who empower others.”**

- Bill Gates

Tennessee Leadership Alumni Lunch and Learn

by Susan Dill
TGMI 2012

On October 12, 2016 the TN Leadership Alumni community had the great privilege of hearing from Stephen Smith, the Governor's Senior Advisor for Policy and Strategy. Mr. Smith started his presentation by reminding us all that we are on the same team, acknowledging the good progress happening in Tennessee, and thanking everyone for their hard work. Mr. Smith's presentation was entitled "Tennessee's Progress."

Tennessee's progress in terms of education was one of the highlights of Mr. Smith's presentation. By 2025, 55% of jobs will require a post-secondary degree. In response to this statistic and employers expressing the need for more qualified and well-trained employees, Governor Haslam initiated a Drive to 55 campaign. This campaign incorporates many initiatives to help Tennesseans advance their education in order to obtain higher paying jobs and increase their quality of life. Some of the initiatives covered at the Lunch and Learn are described below:

TN Promise – a scholarship and mentoring program for recent high school graduates providing two years of tuition-free attendance at a community or technical college in Tennessee.

SAILS (Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support) – a program targeting students that have not achieved college readiness benchmarks by introducing the college development curriculum into the high school senior year.

Advise TN – a program to increase the number of students accessing higher education by providing college counselors to 30 public high schools and 10,000 junior and senior students across the state.

TN Reconnect – an initiative to encourage Tennessee adults with some college credit to return to college and complete their degree.

Mr. Smith shared that Tennessee is also making progress in K-12 education as well. Since 2011, Tennessee is the fastest improving state based on a National Assessment of Educational Progress. The 88.5% high school graduation rate is at an all-time high. Tennessee is also outpacing the rest of the nation in teacher salary growth. This emphasis on education is to support the increase in jobs in Tennessee. Tennessee is number one in the country for manufacturing and advanced industry growth, number thirteen in the country in overall job growth, and number one in job creation resulting from direct foreign investment.

Mr. Smith encouraged us that looking ahead we need to keep the momentum, make smart investments and focus on the importance of connectivity with roads and broadband. Both roads and broadband affect nearly all Tennesseans, and Governor Haslam is committed to moving the State of Tennessee forward to address growing traffic concerns; road safety; and to make sure that all Tennesseans have broadband access for vital areas of life like job searches, education, and healthcare.

Next time you get a chance, attend a Lunch and Learn! This is a great opportunity to network with fellow alumni, gain knowledge, and earn strategic development points for the TGL Black Belt Program.



Leadership *Kudos* Corner

If you have any news to share about your own personal graduation, promotion, certifications or awards please submit that information to Leadership.Council@tn.gov with photos and we will publish in future newsletters.

Tennessee Labor and Workforce Development Responds to the Gatlinburg Disaster

by Chris Cannon

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. – The images on social media Monday night, November 28, were unbelievable and unforgettable; photos of a wildfire taking over Gatlinburg, Tennessee. As the sun rose Tuesday morning, the flames' toll had taken on the popular Smoky Mountain city came into focus for everyone to see.

The historic wildfire damaged or destroyed dozens of businesses, leaving hundreds of people without a place to work. The scope of the destruction was so great; leaders with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) quickly implemented an emergency action plan for Sevier County Tuesday afternoon.

"When we realized the magnitude of this disaster, we knew it would impact hundreds of people and their jobs," said TDLWD Commissioner Burns Phillips. "We decided on our initial response and put all of our resources on stand-by, including three new mobile American Job Centers that were recently delivered and still not in service."

A crew from Nashville headed to east Tennessee Wednesday morning in one of the department's mobile American Job Centers. They, along with staff from Knoxville, traveled to Sevier County and brought two mobile job centers to the area.

Under the coordination of Tennessee's Department of Commerce and Insurance, a community resource center opened at the former Boyd's Bear Country on Cates Lane in Pigeon Forge. The two mobile job centers opened Wednesday afternoon. State staff from middle and east Tennessee arrived in Pigeon Forge to operate these centers. Staff from the state's Local Workforce Development Area partners also traveled to Sevier County to help dislocated workers file for unemployment benefits.

People who depended on jobs in Gatlinburg for their livelihood waited in long lines and withstood the bitter cold to get inside the mobile job centers, where staff members could help them through the application process on Jobs4TN.gov.

Volunteers handed out blankets to help keep people warm while they waited, as several did not have coats.

Many of the workers lost everything in the wildfire and no longer had home addresses for their application, or driver's licenses for identification. The crew on the mobile job centers listened to countless stories of how the wildfire impacted these workers. They not only helped them file for much needed unemployment benefits, but staff also consoled the workers, many of whom escaped with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

"The level of professionalism and compassion our team, and the staff from partner agencies, showed during this disaster truly helped many dislocated workers through what will most likely be the most difficult time of their lives," Commissioner Phillips said. "I am very proud of all they did to help everyone affected by the wildfire."



Mobile American Job Center at the Cates Lane location Sevier County 2 - A new mobile American Job Center at the Cates Lane Location

Leadership *Kudos* Corner

Continued...

The line of workers continued Wednesday and the decision was made to request additional resources from across the state. Two more of the department's mobile job centers were dispatched from Nashville and arrived Thursday afternoon. The state now had four mobile job centers operating at the Cates Lane location.

The mobile job centers worked in conjunction with the comprehensive American Job Center on Graduate Drive in Sevierville. Both locations stayed open through the first weekend and by that date, several hundred people utilized the services TDLWD made available.

While the majority of dislocated workers live in Sevier County, many people who work in Gatlinburg reside in neighboring Cocke County. Elected officials requested a mobile job center travel to Newport the following week to help people who could not travel to the other locations.



A fifth mobile American Job Center was brought in from Nashville and set up Monday morning in the parking lot of the Newport Community Center on Prospect Avenue. It was a cold, windy, and rainy day, but 80 dislocated workers braved the elements to file for benefits. Cocke County Mayor Crystal Ottinger brought in tents and chairs to make the wait more comfortable. State Representative Jeremy Faison delivered coffee to help warm up his constituents.

The mobile job center remained in Cocke County for three days and nearly 100 dislocated workers used the services provided by TDLWD.

By Thursday, December 8, the number of workers filing for benefits started to decline and the decision was made to scale

back resources at the Cates Lane location and move a mobile job center to the Rocky Top sports complex where the American Red Cross operated a shelter. Through a second weekend, the department worked to help anyone who needed assistance filing for unemployment benefits.

For 12 straight days TDLWD and partner agency staff operated as many as five mobile job centers, as well as a comprehensive job center. They put in long hours and heard stories of heartbreak and destruction that will stay with them for a lifetime. No one minded the extra days worked or the fact they were away from family. Their focus was on the nearly 1,000 dislocated workers the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development assisted after the historic wildfire in Gatlinburg.



Emergency action plan meeting at TDLWD headquarters in Nashville Tuesday, November 29, 2016
 (L-R) Sterling van der Spuy, Workforce Services Division Administrator, Deniece Thomas, Workforce Services Assistant Administrator, Melinda Kelsey, Chief of Staff, Mike Needel, Workforce Services Division



Tennessee Government Leadership Events Save the Date

- January 10, 2017 – TGMI Steering Committee Meeting
- January 11, 2017 – Black Belt Leadership Program Brown Bag Lunch – Lois Riggins-Ezzell, TN State Museum Foundation
- January 20, 2017 – LEAD TN Steering Committee Meeting
- February 8, 2017 – Black Belt Leadership Program Brown Bag Lunch – Randy Boyd, Commissioner of ECD
- February 14, 2017 – TGMI Steering Committee Meeting
- February 17, 2017 – LEAD TN Steering Committee Meeting
- March 8, 2017 – Black Belt Leadership Program Brown Bag Lunch – THDA
- March 14, 2017 – TGMI Steering Committee Meeting
- March 17, 2017 – LEAD TN Steering Committee Meeting



Toastmasters for Tennessee Government Leadership

by Helen Ford
TGEI 2002, LEAD TN 2013,
TGL Toastmasters Club President

Good News for TGL Toastmasters from the November 2016 Fall Conference! To maintain its relevance for leaders in the 21st century, Toastmasters International continues to create new avenues for participants to reach their personal and professional goals. Traditionally more emphasis has been placed on public speaking, however; the new program, named "Pathways," will focus more on leadership development. The enhanced program will cover five core competencies: public speaking, interpersonal communication, leading and managing, leading strategically and building confidence.

Since each person joins a club for specific reasons, "Pathways" is tailored to address various goals. The differences in the programs are not a departure from Toastmasters basic principles and goals but a step in the direction to support its mantra "Where Leaders are Made."

TGL Toastmasters will enjoy the new changes because it will open up the learning process to allow more focus on

leadership development. TGL Toastmasters benefits include:

- A model learning tool supported by research
- Enhancement of active listening skills
- Ongoing access to tools and resources for success
- Opportunity to serve others by providing feedback and mentorship
- Opportunity to practice and reinforce new skills
- A group of TN Government leaders supporting each other
- Another TGL education opportunity
- Tools to increase promotional opportunities
- Black belt points!

As you start to focus on your 2017 goals, consider visiting TGL Toastmasters. The club meets each Friday in the TN Tower, 3rd floor Conference Center, Room 254M behind the Multimedia Room from 11:30 – 12:30. For more information about our club visit: <http://4310000.toastmastersclubs.org/>.

Announcing the Tennessee Government Leadership Council's First Cohort for the Certificate in Civic Leadership

Earning Credit Towards a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban Studies

THE COLLEGE OF PUBLIC SERVICE AT TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

The Department of Social Work and Urban Studies in the College of Public Service at Tennessee State University is pleased to announce another new partnership with the Tennessee Department of Human Resources on the implementation of a Certificate in Civic Leadership. The Certificate will be awarded by DOHR and is targeted at students at the undergraduate level and will be offered in an online format. Students will earn 18 hours towards their Bachelors of Science degree in Urban Studies. Students will work with Dr. Robinson (crobin22@tnstate.edu) on an academic roadmap toward degree completion.

The Certificate in Civic Leadership will provide students with an understanding of the political, social, economic, and historical context of communities, institutions, and governing processes. Students will learn real-world, practical skills in policy analysis, organizational leadership, data collection, and human service delivery through an interdisciplinary curriculum of management and urban studies courses. **All students must be approved to enter the program by the DOHR selection process. The deadline is March 1st.**

ADMISSION PROCESS

Application and Payment (\$25) –

https://lepton.tnstate.edu/pls/PROD/bwskalog.P_DisplLoginNon

On the online application select:

- 'Urban Studies' as your major
- Summer 2017 as your admission semester
- Classification is either Freshman or Transfer (if you have any post-high school college credits, select Transfer)

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Freshman:

Tennessee and Non-Tennessee Residents: 2.50 cumulative un-weighted high school GPA
Submit high school transcript

Transfer:

Requirement 1: Must have a 2.0 Cumulative GPA from all colleges/ universities combined
Requirement 2: All Transfer students who graduated from high school after 1989 and have not previously earned the equivalent of a bachelor degree must also submit an official copy of their high school transcript for high school unit purposes
Submit high school and college transcripts (from all colleges attended)

TRANSCRIPTS

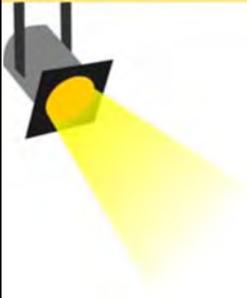
Have your **Official** high school and all college transcripts sent from the institutions directly to:
Dr. Cara Robinson, Avon Williams Campus – TSU, 330 Tenth Avenue North, Box 139, Suite E-400,
Nashville, TN 37203.





Leadership Bright Spots

Recognize someone today!



Engagement Committee (EC) Exemplary Performance and Committed Leadership

The Tennessee Government Leadership Council (TGLC) is recognizing employees and teams of employees considered Bright Spots at all levels in every state Department, Council, Board and Commission. Bright Spots are high performing employees or teams creating cultures of engagement in their workplace and through their achievements.

Bright Spots generate transformational work deserving recognition from state leadership. They are committed to efficient and effective state government. They are positive leaders exemplifying servant leadership to customers and stakeholders.

The Leadership Council shares the accomplishments of these employees and teams who have become workplace Bright Spots as stories of inspiration for all.

For questions or submissions please contact us at Leadership.Council@tn.gov

Communications Committee (CC)

The Communications Committee focuses on creating and distributing the Tennessee Government Leadership Link, which is the official quarterly publication of the Tennessee Government Leadership Council. The publication highlights

current leadership activities across the enterprise. The committee seeks to promote and celebrate the great work of leaders who represent excellence in leadership and serving.

For questions or submissions please contact us at Leadership.Council@tn.gov

Forward Focus Committee (FFC)



Focusing on Connections

The Tennessee Government Leadership Council's Forward Focus Committee recently created a LinkedIn group for alumni. The group will serve as a place for alumni to stay connected by sharing tips, stories, job opportunities and much more. Our hope is the group will also keep alumni updated on the many successes and work our colleagues are doing throughout state government.

LinkedIn is a social networking tool that connects professionals to make them more productive and successful. You must be a member of LinkedIn to join the group. When you join LinkedIn, you get access to people, jobs, news, updates and insights that help you be great at what you do. To find the group, search *Tennessee Government Leadership Alumni* on the website and ask to join.

A committee member will then accept your invitation and you will receive notification through LinkedIn.

The Committee is also working on offering a leadership event that will bring alumni together and provide a leadership lesson. The event is still in the infant stages of planning, but we hope it will become an annual event to give leadership alumni another chance to connect.

The Forward Focus Committee is excited to share these two new connection opportunities. We are all stronger if we grow and work together.

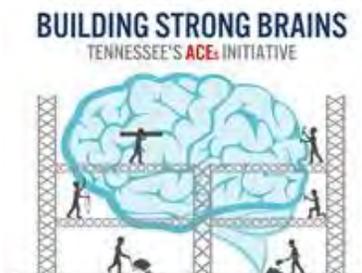
Please feel free to contact any committee member if you have any questions.

For questions or submissions please contact us at Leadership.Council@tn.gov

Systems Thinking Committee (STC)

The Systems Thinking Committee (STC) focuses on celebrating collaborative accomplishments between state, public, private and faith-based organizations. The mission of the STC is to highlight the creative collaborations that positively impact services, products and processes provided by the State of Tennessee that makes this the greatest state to live, work and play.

During the month of January, the STC will highlight the cooperative efforts of the Tennessee Children's Cabinet Commissioners and the public and private partner steering groups creating the **Building Strong Brains Initiative** (Adverse Childhood Experiences).



Did you know?

This initiative was designed to educate community leaders about the devastating and lifelong impact of adverse childhood experiences such as abuse, neglect, exposure to domestic violence and addiction, divorce, poverty, incarcerated parents and homelessness. These experiences can permanently rewire children's brains, leading to long-term societal costs as those children age. Tennessee was one of the first states to begin to measure the prevalence of childhood adversity. Surveys by the Department of Health in 2008 and 2012 found that more than half of Tennessee residents have experienced some form of childhood adversity.

For questions or submissions please contact us at Leadership.Council@tn.gov

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