



Creating a BETTER West Alabama

Quarterly Update | April 2021

Upcoming Event Highlight



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

BETTER West Alabama Leadership Training

Effective leaders are critically important for the well-being, development, and sustainability of communities. Local leaders must understand their role within the community and realize the resources and connections needed to best assist local residents. Simply stated, the most successful leaders are effective at addressing local concerns through best practices and the utilization of the proper resources.

To BETTER equip and enhance local leadership, the West Alabama Regional Commission (“WARC”), has teamed up with the University of Alabama to offer a 4-session, solutions-oriented, participatory-based leadership course. Designed to help individuals develop and strengthen their knowledge and skills, the goal of the BETTER West AL Leadership Training is to effectively equip leaders with the following:

- Increased leadership knowledge and strategies.
- A better understanding of leadership in communities.
- Hands-on experience working with teams and mobilizing assets to find solutions to local problems.
- Increased awareness of local assets.
- Better equipped to work with a diverse population.
- Access to an expanded leadership network and resources.

Session Breakdown

Choose from a series of four sessions at your choice of:

Fayette County Civic Center

OR

Hale County Extension Auditorium

from

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

All sessions are FREE and will provide lunch.

Session 1

Fayette County - Saturday, May 8

Hale County - Saturday, May 22

Session 1: BETTER Leadership and Professionalism

Leadership development is most successful when it provides concrete tools and strategies to assist each participant in achieving their goals for the community. This session will help to develop foundational practices for participants to fully utilize their leadership skills to address local situations and for the greater community.

Session 2: Community Driven Development: Utilizing Your Resources and Assets for a BETTER Community

Before a community can reach its economic potential, effort must be invested in building a sustainable foundation. This session will focus on creating BETTER communities through learning how to build consensus, how to organize community resources and assets as well as how to better utilize those resources and assets to build communities that will flourish.

Session 3: Managing Projects to BETTER your Community

Hidden treasures abound in our small communities across Alabama. We often refer to these as “potential” projects. Project planning, management, and implementation can yield significant results for your community, regardless of scale. Using a case study-based approach, this session will provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and resources to hit the ground running with at least one project in their respective communities.

Session 4: Creating Resilience: Building a BETTER Community*

Community resilience is important even in the best of times; however, when disaster strikes it becomes an essential component of a community's survival. This session will provide a framework that includes the key elements of creating a resilient and sustainable community concerning infrastructure, revenue streams, personnel, and partnerships. *Municipal law and presentation of certificates will follow this presentation.

Session 2

Fayette County - Saturday, June 12

Hale County - Saturday, June 26

Session 3

Fayette County - Saturday, July 10

Hale County - Saturday, July 24

Session 4

Fayette County - Saturday, August 14

Hale County - Saturday, August 28

All locations will observe proper safety and social distancing guidelines.

REGISTER

Reach out to Sally Brown with any questions about registration.

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Who is Making West Alabama a BETTER Place?

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

– John F. Kennedy

Congratulations to the following West Alabama municipal officials for their receiving the following designations from the Alabama League of Municipalities:

- **Mayor Stanley Allred, Mayor of Millport, Alabama** was awarded the designation of Certified Municipal Officer, Emeritus by the Alabama League of Municipalities. As a graduate of the program, Mayor Allred is one of only 24 elected municipal officials in Alabama to have completed requirements for the highest certification in the Alabama League of Municipalities' Certified Municipal Officer training program.
- **Councilman James E. Morrow, Town of Boligee** was awarded the designation of Advanced Certified Municipal Officer by the Alabama League of Municipalities. The Advanced CMO certification requires over 40 hours of basic CMO instruction, plus attendance at numerous advanced education seminars throughout the year.

Congratulations also to **Kinya Isaac Turner, Municipal Clerk, Town of Forkland** ; **Bradley Long, City Manager, City of Sulligent**, and **Dineki McCaa, Municipal Clerk, City of Aliceville** on their attendance at the February 2021 Municipal Clerk Institute at the University of Alabama. This certification program allows municipal clerks to extend their knowledge and critical professional capacities at all levels of government and registration sponsorships were made available through the WARC's BETTER West AL project. For more information on sponsorships for the August, 2021 institute, please contact **Cory Johnson at (205) 333-2990 Extension 219**.

West Alabama Regional Commission is immensely grateful to these and other local officials for their service and dedication and for making West Alabama a BETTER place for all!

What's BETTER in West Alabama?

WARC Opens C-19 Disaster Relief Program for New Applications

The West Alabama Regional Commission has announced that it is accepting applications for its [C-19 Disaster Relief Program](#). This newly created revolving loan fund program provides assistance to small manufacturing, retail or service businesses that create or retain jobs and need support specifically due to the economic impacts of Covid-19. With loan limits of \$10,000 - \$25,000 and an interest rate of 3.5%, C-19 loans are for working capital only and have a repayment term of up to 5 years. Businesses and industry located in Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens and Tuscaloosa counties are eligible for each program. For more information on the new [C-19 Disaster Fund](#) or the [WARC Revolving Loan Fund](#) please visit www.warc.info or contact Lisa Baker at (205) 333-2990, Extension 242.

USDA Invests in Distance Learning & Telemedicine Infrastructure to Improve Education & Health Opportunities in Alabama

Two organizations which provide education and healthcare services to residents and student in parts of Bibb County, Alabama have been awarded grants totaling \$1,369,458 through the USDA Rural Development's Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program. [The University of Montevallo](#) has been awarded \$580,308 to establish a telemedicine system to provide access to mental health through its Community Counseling Clinic. Telemedicine end-user units will be installed in high schools in Bibb, Dallas and Talladega counties that will be used to offer tele-mental services to students, teachers and community members. The University will also use distance learning education for professional educators and instructional leaders, as well as high school students in dual-enrollment courses. In addition, [Cahaba Medical Care Foundation](#) has been awarded \$789,150 for telemedicine conferencing equipment to offer distance learning and telemedicine services for medical providers and family medicine residents in rural areas. For more information about USDA investment resources for rural areas in Alabama, please visit www.rd.usda.gov/al.

Greene County Hospital Chosen for Participation in Technical Assistance Program

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) has announced that Greene County Hospital is among three rural healthcare facilities in Alabama chosen to participate in the [Delta Region Community Health Systems Development – Technical Assistance Program \(DRCHSD\)](#). Established in 2017 through a partnership between DRA, the Health Resources and Services Administration and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is designed to enhance healthcare delivery in the Delta through intensive, in-depth and long-term technical assistance to rural hospitals and medical facilities. Technical assistance, provided by subject matter experts at the [National Rural Health Resource Center](#), supports capacity building for quality improvement, telehealth, and integration of social services to help healthcare facilities increase financial viability and operational efficiency. For more information about these and other DRA programs, please visit <https://dra.gov/>

Tools to BETTER Your Community

Grant and Loan Guide for
Governments in West Alabama
West Alabama Regional Commission



The Grant & Loan Guide for Local Governments in West Alabama

The Grant and Loan Guide for Local Governments in West Alabama was prepared to assist local governments in West Alabama with their community and economic development efforts by providing a resource for commonly utilized grant and loan programs that are available for local development purposes. This guide includes information from agencies such as the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Power Foundation, Alabama Departments of Transportation and Environmental Management, Appalachian and Delta Regional Commissions, United States Department of Agriculture, as well as multiple other local, state and national organizations and foundations. For additional information regarding the Grant and Loan Guide, or any community and economic development services offered by the West Alabama Regional Commission, please contact **Cory Johnson** at (205) 333-2990, Extension 219.



Alabama Small Business Development Center Network

ASBDC is a statewide, inter-institutional program to enhance economic growth in Alabama by providing management and technical assistance to small businesses. Professional Business Advisors are available in 10 Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) located at our member university partners across the state. In addition to regular business counseling and lending programs, SBDC Offices are currently involved with providing information regarding the American Rescue Plan for Small Businesses, include the Paycheck Protection Program (application deadlines extended to May 31, 2021), the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant and the COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan. For more information on these, or other SBDC programs, please contact your local SBDC office.

BETTER West Alabama www.warc.info/better-west-alabama