



Creating a BETTER West Alabama

Quarterly Update

October 2021

What's BETTER in West Alabama?



BETTER West Alabama Action Planning Underway

BETTER West Alabama hosted its first kick-off Action Planning session bringing Greene, Hale and Tuscaloosa counties together on September 17 at Hotel Indigo in Tuscaloosa. Leaders from the three counties prioritized strategic goals and actions at both county and local levels to support their economies as they continue to address the COVID-19 pandemic. A round of follow-up meetings will be scheduled in each county to further refine the action plans and prepare for implementation efforts.

Watch for upcoming announcements regarding dates and locations for these important county-

focused planning sessions.

BETTER Events



Save the Date:
October 15, 2021
9:30 am - 2:30 pm

Action Planning for Bibb and Pickens Counties

The kick-off action planning meeting in Bibb and Pickens counties is

scheduled for **October 15 at Hotel Indigo Tuscaloosa located at 111 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401**. The meeting will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Lunch will be served. Please plan to attend and be part of the team; your input is valued and needed.

Seating is limited; if you have not yet registered, please sign up using this [link](#). **Registration closes at noon on Friday, October 8.**

Who is Making West Alabama a BETTER Place?



BETTER Dedicated Professionals

Local clerks representing each of the seven BETTER West Alabama counties attended sessions offered by the Municipal Clerk's Institute in February and August. Through the bi-annual training institutes and the annual conference, Alabama clerks have the valuable opportunity to learn from experts and each other on best practices for their municipalities and

earn their Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) or Master Municipal Clerk (MMC) certifications.

Several participants in attendance were new clerks or assistant clerks, while others were completing their courses at either the certified or master's level. Our BETTER region is fortunate to have clerks that care so much for our towns and cities. Their dedication to furthering their education and abilities is a true asset.

Pictured L-R front row: Becky Akins, Town of Kennedy; Linda Ferguson, Town of Millport; Dawn Clapp, City of Fayette; Kinya Isaac, Town of Forkland; Shakelvia Spencer, and Joe Powel, City of Eutaw. Back row: Cortez Rice, Town of Lake View; Annette Maughan, City of Reform; Megan Batte, City of Centreville, Sharon Washington, Town of Boligee.

Not pictured: Bridget Ball, Town of Akron; Lorrie Cook, City of Greensboro; Bradley Long, City of Sulligent; Dineki McCaa, City of Aliceville; Tiffney McCulley, Town of Woodstock; Tabatha Tucker, Town of Glen Allen.

Comments from our participants:

"I truly enjoyed the entire workshop and I learned a lot of good information that I can use to better myself and the City of Eutaw." Joe Powel, Assistant City Clerk, City of Eutaw, Greene County.

"I was at the August session, I enjoyed meeting new people and also learning new things about my job." Tabatha Tucker, Assistant Clerk, Town of Glen Allen, Fayette County.

"I received my CMC designation! Thank you for the sponsorship." Kinya Isaac, Clerk, Town of Forkland, Greene County.

"I attended by ZOOM. I learned the most from the Game Show – a question and answer debate. The questions are everyday situations that are discussed afterward in detail. Thank you for allowing me to attend – I need two more sessions to achieve my CMC." Tiffney McCulley, Clerk, Town of Woodstock, Bibb County.

"Thank you so much for sponsoring me for the August Municipal Clerks Training. It was a lot of valuable information. I am now working on my MMC certification. Thank you again!" Becky Akins, Clerk, Town of Kennedy, Lamar County.



BETTER Committed Leadership

Thirty-five local leaders representing the seven-county West Alabama region of Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens and Tuscaloosa counties attended the regional leadership training program sponsored by the West Alabama Regional Commission in partnership

with The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development. The training was carried out over four days during July and August 2021 at Hotel Indigo in Tuscaloosa. Participants enjoyed presentations on a variety of topics including professional development, building community capacity, financing and managing projects, creating resiliency and maximizing assets in their communities. Course materials and reference guides were provided to further support each participant's ability to carry out more effective community and economic development practices.

The training was made possible through funding from the Economic Development Administration to assist efforts of the West Alabama Regional Commission's BETTER (Bringing Economic Tools To Enrich and Revitalize) West Alabama initiative to support economic recovery and revitalization in the seven-county region.

"BETTER is one of the BEST elected officials and community development training sessions that I have attended. I've participated in these types of training throughout my career; however, these sessions were especially inspiring. This program should be required for elected officials and strongly recommended for candidates for public office. I met newly elected officials in West Alabama and feel comfortable to call any of them and say hello or check on their progress." - Phyllis Belcher, Executive Director, Greene County IDA.

"I would like to thank you for the opportunity to attend. I am new to this and gained a lot of information that would have taken me a long time to receive and get some understanding. Thanks to everyone involved and keep doing what you all do. Thank you." - Pearl Shepherd, Greensboro City Council, Hale County.

Pictured above: L-R are Hale County Graduates: Pearl Shepherd, Town of Greensboro; Jonathan Rossell, Town of Akron; Norman Hunter, Town of Akron and Annie Gee, Town of Akron.

Tools to BETTER Your Community



12 COVID-19 Vaccination Strategies for Your Community

Many see COVID-19 vaccination as the key to a post-pandemic life, yet millions in the United States have not been vaccinated despite eligibility and plentiful supply. On [this page](#), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention highlights 12 strategies derived from evidence-based practices that are being applied in communities across the country to promote vaccine confidence and uptake.

[Download the Field Guide](#)



2021-2023 Senior Resource Directory

The secret is out – you don't have to be a senior to love this popular resource, and that's why you'll want to make them available at your office or place of business.

Copies are **FREE** for distribution and supply is plentiful. There's so much useful information in this guide about services and programs to help make everyone's life just a little bit easier that you'll want to pick up one for yourself and a few extras to give to family and friends.

If the pair on the cover are any indication, aging doesn't always mean slowing down - it could get pretty racy - read their story in *Active Living* on page 17.

Contact the [Area Agency on Aging in West Alabama](#) for how to get copies or [view the directory online](#).

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