

# West Tennessee Workforce Investment Board LWIA-11



Southwest Human Resource Agency

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## Upcoming WIA Events: August/Sept.

8/1 Department of Labor and Workforce Development meeting; Central Office

8/14-15 WIA Fiscal Training; Nashville

9/3 TAHRA; Pigeon Forge

9/9-10 State Workforce Board Meeting; Nashville

9/12 Masco Bath Rapid Response; Adamsville

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## The Department of Labor and Workforce Development holds meeting at SWHRA

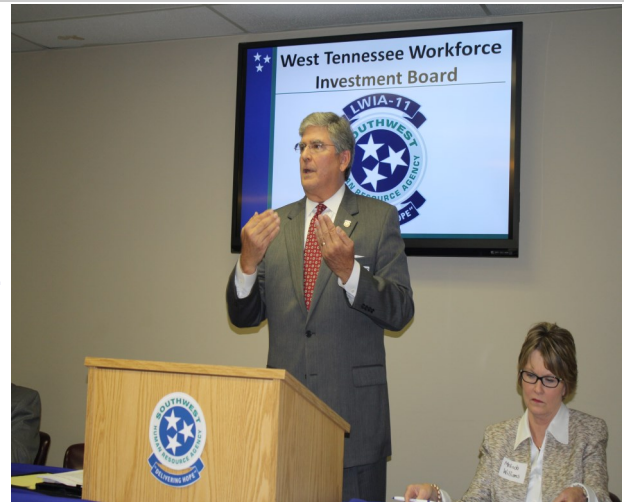
Burns Phillips, the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and a portion of his staff were special guests of SWHRA and LWIA-11 on August 1st.

The purpose of the visit was to update area leaders and elected officials of the current status of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Commissioner Phillips commented on the Governor's Drive to 55 program which aims at increasing the percentage of Tennesseans with a postsecondary degree to 55 percent by the year 2025, but did acknowledge that college is not for everyone. He noted that many businesses do not require degrees, but that many of the potential employees lack the simple soft skills that make it nearly impossible for employers to hire them. Skills such as knowing how to dress, how to treat fellow employees, and showing up for work daily and on time have greatly been ignored by potential employees.

He urged the business leaders in attendance to come together as a team, pool all of their resources, determine the strengths and weaknesses, and from there overcome those weaknesses.

The issue of closing some of the area Tennessee Career Centers was also addressed during the meeting.



Commissioner Phillips addresses the audience during a meeting held at SWHRA on August 1st.

## Department of Labor and Workforce Development continued...



Commissioner Phillips has a brief conversation with District 73 State Representative, Jimmy Eldridge.

Commissioner Phillips explained that due to funding issues, that it became apparent that costs had to be cut. The department had a budgeted amount of money, and all non-recurring funds had been spent. We knew the areas where we had to spend money by law, and we had to allocate money to those programs. Thus, a decision was made to

close many of the Career Centers across the state, however those who could serve the most people in the area (Jackson, Savannah) would remain open.

All WIA offices in every county served by LWIA-11 will remain open.

He also noted that the unemployment insurance benefits process needs to be repaired. The state has a plan, but it may take a couple of years to get the plan implemented. He explained that every single aspect of the unemployment insurance system is being reviewed, including all applications, handbooks, etc. He believes that once the plan is in place that it will truly be one of the best systems in the country.

Various members of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development staff also addressed the audience on various issues. Linda Davis, the Employment Security Administrator, elaborated further on the current unemployment insurance benefits process. Marketing and Communications Administrator Melinda Williams, touched on getting the Workforce and Development brand more visible and also explained the importance of Adult Education. James Robertson, Assistant Administrator for Workforce Services, explained that the sequestration will combine WIA, Wagner-Peyser, WOTC, and Veterans Programs into one single division called "Workforce Services". Closing out the meeting, Director of Field Operations Mike Daniel, discussed the Career Centers that remained open, and the importance of utilizing the mobile Career Coaches that are available.

Commissioner Phillips was named acting commissioner after Karla Davis resigned from the position in March. Governor Bill Haslam officially named him commissioner in June. The 64-year-old received both a bachelor's and master's degrees from Middle Tennessee State University, and also has a law degree from the Nashville School of Law.

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Ph: 731-989-5160  
Roamell Bostick, Career Spec.

### Decatur County

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### Hardeman County

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Jimmy Bell, WIA Director

**\* Address change****Photos from the meeting**

District 72 State Representative, Steve McDaniel shares a laugh with District 80 State Representative, Johnny Shaw.



State Representative, Jimmy Eldridge greets Decatur County Mayor, Michael Smith.



SWTDD Executive Director, Joe Barker, asks a question during the August 1st meeting.



WIA Director Jimmy Bell thanks Commissioner Phillips for coming to SWHRA.



Marketing and Communications Administrator, Melinda Williams speaks to the audience.



Steve Simon, City Manager of Adamsville, asks a question during the August 1st meeting.

**Fall 2013 SETA Conference**

The dates for the Southeastern Employment and Training Association's (SETA) Fall conference in Lexington, KY have been set. The conference will take place on September 22-25 at the Downtown Hilton in Lexington. This year's exciting agenda will be highlighted by a closing session led by Rose Rock, mother of comedian/actor Chris Rock. Several members of the LWIA-11 staff and board members will attend this year's conference.



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## *Southwest Human Resource Agency*

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**“Delivering Hope”**

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*The West Tennessee Workforce Investment Board, Local Workforce Investment Area 11 is administered by the Southwest Human Resource Agency and is comprised of eight counties in West Tennessee. LWLA 11 is under the direction of the twenty-eight member West Tennessee Workforce Investment Board, is composed of representatives from all 8 counties, and meets all requirements for private industry and public representation*

*SWHRA-WLA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, political affiliation or belief, disability regarding employment or provision of educational services.*

*The Workforce Investment Act, administered through SWHRA is an equal opportunity employer program and auxiliary aids services (ADA) are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD: 1-800-484-0298*

*Mission Statement::*

*“The mission of LWLA 11 will continue to be the delivery of quality services to our customers, while focusing on streamlined processes, accountability, flexibility, proper management controls, and positive performance outcomes.”*

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