

WestStar Class of 2012 Bios

Emory Bradley



Bradley is a self-employed agency manager for Tennessee Farmers Insurance Companies. He is active in the are the Local, State, and National FFA Alumni, the Dresden and Paris Lions Club, the Life Underwriter Training Council Fellowship, the American, Tennessee and Nashville Society of Chartered Life Underwriters, the Henry County and Tennessee Livestock Association. He has been a board member of the Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation, WLJT-TV, Community Developmental Services, and UTM Alumni Council. Bradley has also been an Assistant Scoutmasters in Boy Scouts Troop 28. Bradley is a graduate of the West TN Ag-Star Leadership Graduate Class of 2010 and Leadership Henry Class of 2011. He has received numerous awards such as the Honorary Lifetime Chapter Farmer Degree, and the Melvin Jones Fellowship and Dalstorn Award from the Lions Club. By participating in WestStar, Bradley looks forward to learning new and better ways to communicate. He also looks forward to networking with his classmates and other WestStar Alumni where he can join the “front line” of leaders for West Tennessee.

Henry County

Dave Bratcher



Dave Bratcher is an employee with the West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation. As the vice president of financial services, Mr. Bratcher manages all charitable donations/disbursements, investments, and allocations of funds. He has spent his entire career focused on managing financial assets and risk for organizations across West Tennessee. He is a 2007 graduate of Leadership Jackson and is currently serving in the Jackson Rotary Club and as a member of the board for Aspell Recovery Center. Mr. Bratcher has previously served as a Jackson-Madison County School Board member for District 5. By participating in WestStar, Bratcher hopes to gain a better understanding of what resources and assets are available in West Tennessee.

Madison County

Julie Allen Burke



Burke is the director and executive vice President of the Milan Chamber of Commerce. She is also an independent fashion consultant with CAbi. She is the current Vice President and President Elect for Milan High School Alumni Association and serves on the Executive Committee for Cub Scouts Pack 50. She is a graduate of Gibson County Leadership, a program she also co-facilitates. She currently serves on the Gibson County Workforce Development Committee and is a member of West Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Executives, Tennessee Economic Development Council, International Council of Shopping Centers, American Chamber of Commerce Executives, and Tennessee Association of Community Leadership. By participating in WestStar, Burke hopes to further develop her leadership capabilities to make a difference in her community.

Gibson County

Lisa Casteel



Casteel is the assistant administrator/ CFO for the Henry County Medical Center. Casteel is a board member of the Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, the Tennessee Hospital Association, and the Healthcare Financial Management Association. She is a 2006 graduate of Leadership Henry County and a 2000 graduate of Leadership Clarksville. Casteel has won numerous awards, which include the Service Award and Honor Roll Award from Henry County Medical Center, the Five Pillar of Excellence Awards from Gateway Health Systems, and the United Way Award for excellence in service. By participating in WestStar, Casteel hopes to gain valuable relationships with the ones she will meet in WestStar and a working knowledge of other communities around West Tennessee.

Henry County

Chuck Doss



Doss is the vice president and investment representative of First Citizens Financial Plus Inc. in Union City, TN. Doss is the President of the Obion County Chamber of Commerce, the Secretary of the Union City Rotary, the Treasurer of the Promethean Foundation, and the Vice President of the Community Concert Association. By participating in West Tennessee, Doss hopes to gain a better understanding of other communities in the West Tennessee area and develop relationships with people in other communities in order to work together.

Obion County

Fred Ellis



Ellis is the senior sales representative for Boston Scientific, Inc., in Arden Hills, Minnesota, and resides in Lexington, Tennessee. He is a member of the Lexington Rotary Club and serves on the New Member Orientation Committee. Ellis is also an advisory board member of the Lexington Election System and serves on the Southwest Human Resource Agency Policy Council as President. By participating in WestStar, Ellis hopes to be able to better serve his community by aspiring to be a beacon for his community.

Henderson County

Lessie Fisher**Tipton County**

Fisher is the building official for the City of Covington. She currently serves as Treasurer of the West Tennessee Code Enforcement Association, a member of the Tennessee Building Official Association, a member of Tipton County Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters, and a board member of the Covington TC Chamber. Fisher has previously served on the TC Commission on Aging Advisory Board, served as a Girl Scout Leader, and Project Play Playground coordinator. By participating in WestStar, Fisher hopes to gain an increased level of experience, knowledge and confidence in both her personal and professional lives by the interaction with motivated, community minded individuals who want to make a difference in the lives of others.

Jim Garland**Chester County**

Garland is the city recorder for the City of Henderson. He is currently a member of the Henderson Tennessee Downtowns Committee and the Chester County Chamber of Commerce. Previously, Garland has served on the Chester County Ag Committee, the Municipal Technical Advisory Service Advisory Board, Henderson, and the Chester County Cattlemen's Association. Garland is a certified municipal finance officer. He hopes that participating in WestStar will provide him with many other viewpoints from the business, professions and industry that will benefit him in performing his job and also the opportunity to look at West Tennessee's strengths and weaknesses from a more regional perspective.

Amy Griffin**Madison County**

Griffin is the vice president and compliance officer for West Tennessee Healthcare. She is a 2009 Leadership Jackson graduate where she is also a member of the Alumni Association and will soon be vice chair of the board. Griffin is a member of the Health Care Compliance Association, the Health Ethics Trust, the Tennessee Hospital Association, and the Rotary Club. In 2011, she participated in the FBI/TBI Citizen's Academy. She was awarded the Jewel Award for Leadership Jackson in 2009. By participating in WestStar, she hopes to benefit from learning about the communities in West Tennessee where she hasn't had the opportunity to live to better serve the region in a more effective way, rather than just serving the community in Jackson and Madison County.

Andy Helms**Haywood County**

Helms is the community development administrator at Southwest Tennessee Development District. He participates in Special Friends for Haywood County Schools, a mentoring program for the local school system. He serves on the SWTDD B.E.S.T. Committee to develop and improve office policies, and has received multiple nominations for employee of the month. Previously he served as an RPO America Member, assisting with rural planning research. Helms believes participating in WestStar will enable him to grow as a young leader in both his home community of Brownsville, as well as in his role as Community Development Administrator for the Southwest Tennessee Development District.

Jill Holland**Carroll County**

Holland is the mayor of the city of McKenzie. She is a board member of the Governor's Council for Greenways & Trails and the Carroll County Agriculture Extension Services. Holland serves as the public service chairperson for United Way and is a volunteer for Meals on Wheels. She has previously served as a School Board member and vice chairman of the McKenzie Special School District and a council member of the McKenzie City Council. Holland feels the experience and knowledge that she will gain from participating in WestStar will be extremely valuable in meeting McKenzie's goals to revitalize the struggling economy. She hopes to learn leadership skill that will help in every facet of her job and to meet leaders that will provide a great support networking system in order to work together to make West Tennessee a shining star throughout the Southeast.

Randy Huffstetler**Weakley County**

Huffstetler is the vice president of Greenfield Banking Company. He is involved in many organizations, which include the Weakley County Chamber of Commerce, the Weakley County Board of Equalization, Weakley County Economic Development Board, and the Greenfield Rotary Club. By participating in WestStar he hopes to gain good ideas and leadership skills to carry back to his work place while networking with leaders across West Tennessee to help him be a better person and leader in his community.

Linda Jones**Haywood County**

Jones is the office supervisor for the Fayette County Health Department. She serves as the secretary for the Stanton Planning Commissions and is the coordinator for the Stanton Christmas Parade. She is also a 2009 graduate of Leadership Fayette. Jones earned the certificate of recognition of respectful workplace for managers and a certificate of appreciation for coordinator of the Stanton Christmas Parade. By participating in WestStar, Jones hope to learns to be a more effective leader in her community and to become more knowledgeable about the infrastructure of communities in the surrounding areas.

Sarah Levy**Haywood County**

Levy is an attorney currently serving as the clerk and master of Haywood Chancery Court. She is a member of the Wolf River Conservancy, friend of the Elma Ross Public Library, volunteer for Heifer International. Levy is on the board for Haywood County Leadership. Levy realizes that she can learn more about economic development from WestStar by meeting more people with different ideas.

Melissa Lindsey**Henderson County**

Lindsey is the owner of Benefits First. She is board member for CASA and president of the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce. In her local Rotary Club, she is active in fundraising and Community Service Programs, and a board member for United Way. Lindsey was awarded the Chamber of Commerce Stepping Stone award in 2010, the Community Service Program/Appreciation Award for LES School, the National Association of Professional Women Leadership Award, and the 5 Star Achievement Award. By participating in WestStar, she believes she will obtain a greater knowledge of West Tennessee and have an improved understanding of its resources along with its weaknesses.

Chad Lowery**Gibson County**

Lowery is the chief of police for the city of Medina. He is a board member of Jackson Area American Red Cross and the WRAP (Women's/Men's Rape Assistance program). He is also a member of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police. He is graduation of Gibson County Leadership Program. He was awarded the 2002 Sheriff's Deputy of the Year given by the Kiwanis Club for the Madison County Sheriff's Department. Through the contacts and networking established by participating in WestStar, he hopes to gain a better understanding and vision of educational, economic, and social development of West Tennessee.

Joey Mehlhorn**Weakley County**

Mehlhorn is a professor and interim parker chair for the University of Tennessee at Martin. He is the director of the Tennessee Governor's School for Agriculture, volunteer for Santa's Village, and involved with the Future Farmers of America and the UTM Farm Festival. Mehlhorn was awarded the Hardy M. Graham Distinguished Professor award in 2009-2011. For service to the future Farmers of America organization he was awarded an Honorary State FFA Degree in 2005 from the Tennessee FFA. By participating in WestStar, Mehlhorn hopes to become more involved in the region outside of Weakley County to better work with students and producers from around the region and with the hopes of helping UTM become more involved with West Tennessee.

Pam Nash**Madison County**

Nash is the president and CEO of West Tennessee's Exchange Club for the Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse. Some of the organizations in which Nash is involved is the Jackson Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Counsel of Social Work, Southwest Council of Children, and the Executive Council of United Way. Nash has won several awards including the Outstanding Social Worker of the Year and the Angel Award in 2011 for outstanding work in helping make life better for others. By participating in WestStar, she believes she can gain much knowledge, understanding, networking, and be even more involved in making West Tennessee a better place to live and raise families.

Katie Pace**Madison County**

Pace is the executive director of the Jackson Downtown Development Corporation. She is on working committees of the Leadership Jackson Alumni Association, the Jackson Rotary and the Exchange Club, and the Jackson YMCA Regional Board of Directors. She is a certified C.O.P.E. Instructor and a graduation of Leadership Jackson. By participating in WestStar, Pace hopes to gain greater understanding of what the region struggles with, not only economic development, but also the quality of life.

Margaret Prater**Dyer County**

Prater is the vice president for workforce Development at Dyersburg State Community College. She is a member of the Dyersburg State Community College Alumni, the Trimble Area Women's Club and is active in fundraising for Relay for Life. She has made presentations on workforce development at the local, state, regional and national level. Prater was awarded the Tennessee Commissioner Commendation of Outstanding Service. She is a 1995 graduate of Leadership Dyer County. By participating in WestStar, Prater hopes to expand her knowledge of the region and identify potential partners for workforce development.

Phyllis Rauchle**Obion County**

Rauchle is the executive director of the Main Street Union City, Inc. She is currently the director of Obion Adult Leadership program in which is a graduate. She is a hostess of the Miss Tennessee Scholarship Pageant, publicity director of the Community Concert Association, and producer of the Obion County Fair Youth Musical. Rauchle was named 1983 Outstanding Young Woman of the Year. By participating in WestStar, Rauchle hopes to be given the opportunities to further develop and enhance her leadership skills. Also she helps to gain knowledge of the challenges and successes of West Tennessee.

Josh Reed**Henderson County**

Reed is the sports editor of The Lexington Progress newspaper in Lexington and owner of Reed Imaging, a sports photography company. Currently, he serves as president of the Lexington Rotary Club, and assistant governor designee for Rotary District 6760. Also, he is charter board member of the Henderson County Sports Hall of Fame. He is a past member of the Habitat for Humanity, Relay for Life, and Henderson County Imagination Library. By participating in WestStar, Reed hopes to gain a better understanding of the resources and services available throughout West Tennessee.

Tim Stokely**Haywood County**

Stokely is the regional senior lender for INSOUTH Bank in Brownsville. He has served as treasurer for the Brownsville Business Association, member of the Haywood County Ambassador Program, past president of the Haywood County Chamber of Commerce and former member of the Brownsville Rotary Club. His awards include 2007 Rotarian of the Year, 2006 Ambassador of the Year, and 2009 Paul Harris Fellow award. By participating in WestStar, Stokely hopes to create more relationships with other business people across West Tennessee and learn more about the different counties in the region.

Kayla Taylor**Madison County**

Taylor is the marketing account manager for Younger Associates, LLC in Jackson. She is involved with organizations such as American Heart Association, Relay for Life, and American Cancer Society. She is also on serves on the board of the TEAMS institute. She currently serves as a volunteer and coordinator for Hollywood Cemetery and volunteer for the Jackson Theater Guild. By participating in WestStar, she hopes to develop strong leadership skills that will enable her to give back to her community and to join the other great leaders of West Tennessee to keep moving it forward.

John Thorpe**Fayette County**

Thorpe is retired from the United States Army, with 39 years of service in both technical and leadership positions. Thorpe serves in various community and religious organizations. He is a graduate of Leadership Fayette. By participating in WestStar, Thorpe hopes to understand and develop the potential of West Tennessee, to receive ideas from individual counties and be able to take them back to Fayette County.

Cary Vaughn**Shelby County**

Vaughn is the CEO for Love Worth Finding Ministries in Memphis. Currently, he serves on the board of directors for Jackson State Community College, Memphis YMCA, the University of Memphis-Emerging Leaders, and the Mid-South Gift of Life. He has been a former board member and alumni chapter president at Lambuth University. He is booster club president at Tipton-Rosemark Academy, serves on steering committee at Leadership Millington, and Assistant District Governor of Rotary International, 6800. In 2007-2011, he is listed as Who's Who is America; in 2006 he was named Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International; in 2000 he was Lambuth University Alumnus of the Year. By participating in WestStar, Vaughn hopes to gain insight and influence from many community leaders and to "sharpen the saw" on education, economic development and community leadership.

Frank Wagster**Madison County**

Wagster is an architect/principal at TLM Associates, Inc., in Jackson. He is currently on the board of directors of West Tennessee STAR Center, Tennessee Architectural Foundation, Jackson Rotary Club, and the Jackson Board of Adjustment & Appeals, and a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He is a former president of the Jackson Rotary Club, West Tennessee Chapter of AIA and board member of the Jackson Historical Zoning Board. He is a graduate of Leadership Jackson. Awards include 2011 Jackson Rotary Club Paul Harris Fellowship +1; 2009 Jackson Rotary Club "Service Above Self" Award; 2008 Union University Honorary alumni; and 2005 West TN STAR Center "Moving on Down the Road" Award. By participating in WestStar, Wagster hopes to gain leadership skills and knowledge from the program that will be invaluable as a resource for community involvement.

Alexandra Wardlaw**Fayette County**

Wardlaw is the executive director of Fayette Cares, leading the organization in efforts to end homelessness, break the cycle of domestic violence, and aid families in financial crisis to achieve stability. Wardlaw was named Woman of the Year by Fayette County Business and Professional Women, has received the John S. Wilder Leadership Award from Leadership Fayette, and was selected Citizen of the Year by the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce. Wardlaw is an active member of the Somerville Rotary Club, Fayette County Health Council, BancorpSouth's Community Reinvestment Act Advisory Committee, and is a veteran of the United States Air Force. Wardlaw hopes her participation in the WestStar Leadership Program will allow her to become an exemplary, assertive and dynamic leader who will make substantial contributions to improve both Fayette County and the West Tennessee region.

Emery White**Hardin County**

White is the owner of Whites Cleaners & Laundry in Savannah. He has served in several capacities with Boy Scouts of America and a life member of United States Jaycees. He has been the budget committee chairman, chairman of the jail committee, chairman of the airport commission, ambulance committee, and animal control committee with the Hardin County Commission. The Boy Scouts created the "Emery White" Award to be given annually for a scout that shows the best leadership ability. White was the recipient of Hardin County Man of the Year. By participating in WestStar, White hopes to become a growing network across West Tennessee a better place to live and work.

Patrick Williams**Dyer County**

Williams is the funeral director of the Johnson-Williams Funeral Home in Newbern. He is currently a member of the Newbern Rotary Club, Newbern Lion's Club, and Newbern Depot Days. He is on the board of the directors for the YMCA and a graduate of Leadership Dyer County. He was the recipient of the Emerging Leader Award from the Dyersburg/Dyer County Chamber of Commerce. By participating in WestStar, Williams hopes to gain a better understanding of the communities around him. It will also help him network with other leaders who have the same mission of making West Tennessee better place to live and work.

Tom Witherspoon**Gibson County**

Witherspoon is the mayor of Gibson County. Witherspoon joins WestStar as a political leader who hopes to gain knowledge and experience from other West Tennessee communities. Coming from the private/industrial sector, he hopes to join the other mayors in West Tennessee in making West Tennessee the best place to live and work. By participating in WestStar, Witherspoon hopes to join the network of other leaders in the region who are all on the same mission in improving education, workforce development, and economic development.

Greg York**Lauderdale County**

York is director of operations-door products for Marvin Windows and Doors of Tennessee in Ripley, Tennessee. York joined Marvin in 2001, they have been recognized for achieving several awards of excellence including the Governor's Large Business of the Year, TOSHA Star/VPP Certification, Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership (TP3), ISO 9001 Certification and the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) Achievement Award in 2007. He serves on the board of directors for the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) and Tennessee Rehabilitative Initiative in Correction (TRICOR). He also serves on the Lauderdale County Tennessee Technology Advisory Board, the University of Tennessee at Martin Ripley Center Advisory Committee, and the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Advisory Committee. By participating in WestStar, York hopes to learn more about the issues and challenges facing West Tennessee and then work with other leaders on initiatives that will make a positive difference in our region.