



# WAEM

West Alabama – East Mississippi

Building an Enterprise-Ready Region

## Community Leaders Receive Training Via BSCC Distance Learning



Grady Batchelor, Winston County Economic Developer, delivers training to participants of the Community Leadership Training.

Forty-five community leaders from Fayette, Lamar, Marion, Pickens, and Walker Counties gained economic development training through Bevill State Community College's interactive inter-campus television system. Connecting the Economic Development Association of Alabama's revised training program to community leaders using BSCC's distance learning capacity was sparked by Karla Quesenberry, one of the WAEM Initiative coordinators for BSCC.

"Bevill State is always glad to help in any way to improve economic development in our region," said Neal Morrison, Interim President of Bevill State. "Utilizing the distance learning technology is a step forward for our rural communities. It is important that we all work together as a region to improve the quality of life for West Alabamians." BSCC is one of the eight college partners in the 37-county WAEM Region.

The CLT workshops offer community leaders the chance to learn about new and beneficial economic and community development practices that can help their rural

communities become more competitive in today's global economy. Grady Batchelor, Economic Developer for Winston County, served as the presenter for this first session and covered two modules "Who is Our Target Market" and "Working with a Prospect." The total CLT program consists of 10 training modules.

"The event was a great success," stated Quesenberry, adding that participants agreed that the use of Beville State's distance learning technology was a great way to deliver such training.

Ron Scott, Executive Director of the EDAA, welcomed the group and expressed what an exciting time this was for economic development in Alabama. "EDAA wants to provide your communities the tools to be successful and this training is one of those tools" Scott said. "Today is the first time we are using the revised curriculum in the Community Leadership Training Program. EDAA and AIDT (Alabama Industrial Development Training) worked together to update the information and presentations and we think it will be more beneficial to you."

Scott also conveyed the advantages of offering this training through distance learning and thanked Beville State, especially Karla Quesenberry, for facilitating the program's kick-off event. Quesenberry and Thomas Burgett are currently working with the West Alabama East Mississippi (WAEM) initiative to build regionalism and enterprise ready communities throughout this region.

Through her work with communities in the WAEM Region, Quesenberry realized the importance of economic and community development training for community leaders. The CLT modules offered by EDAA satisfies that need, but the challenge was in delivering it to the thirty-seven communities Beville State serves in its WAEM service area. By using Beville State's distance learning capabilities at five different locations, all thirty-seven communities could be served without the participants having to drive far distances. Participants also expressed that the training and discussions they encountered were very beneficial. They all look forward to future EDAA modules that will be presented in this manner.



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