



**GOVERNOR BILL LEE
TO SPEAK AT FORUM ON CONNECTING
EX-OFFENDERS TO JOBS**

Governor Bill Lee will be among the speakers at a June 11 forum co-sponsored by the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission on ways to connect skilled ex-offenders to jobs in the Memphis area.

The forum will be held on the University of Memphis main campus. Other official co-sponsors are the University of Memphis' Public Safety Institute, the Tennessee Department of Correction and the Greater Memphis Chamber. More details on the forum and registration information will be included in the Crime Commission's April newsletter.

Governor Lee is focused on several priorities, including good jobs, great schools and safe neighborhoods. He has emphasized the importance of job opportunities for ex-offenders as a key aspect of public safety by reducing the likelihood of these individuals becoming repeat offenders and adding them to the pool of skilled, reliable employees for Tennessee employers.



Tennessee Governor Bill Lee

Governor Lee has been an active participant in Men of Valor, a Nashville faith-based program that works with state inmates while still incarcerated and once they are released as well. At a personal level, he understands the benefits that hiring well trained, qualified, and eager ex-offenders has for businesses, public safety, and individual lives.

This will be the second year the Crime Commission has co-sponsored such a forum. Last year approximately 175 people attended the forum to hear how area businesses could connect with pools of potential workers who happen to be ex-offenders.

SAVE THE DATE!
June 11, 2019, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
University of Memphis, University Center Ballroom

FOCUSED DETERRENCE SHOWS SUCCESSES

Six high-risk individuals participating in a focused deterrence initiative have been recognized for successfully completing a year in the initiative. The recognition occurred at a program held at Monumental Baptist Church on March 19.

The initiative - called Operation Comeback - was launched by District Attorney Amy Weirich in early 2018. Such an initiative is a key objective of the Operation: Safe Community plan. It is patterned after successful efforts in a number of other cities.



U.S. Attorney Mike Dunavant congratulates Frederick Graham for his successful participation in Operation Comeback, started by District Attorney Amy Weirich last year.

The six individuals recognized represent half of the dozen high-risk offenders on probation or parole who were selected last year for a face-to-face meeting with federal, state and local law enforcement officials as well as with an array of social service providers.

The focused-deterrence program offers education, job training, housing and other services for

those who want it, and enhanced prosecution and sentencing for those who choose to continue a criminal lifestyle.

The program recognizes that a relatively small number of offenders commit a disproportionate amount of crime in the communities where they live.

The felony offenders selected last year collectively had been arrested 260 times, were known to have victimized 111 people and had been convicted of 141 crimes, including aggravated assault, felony thefts, aggravated burglary and domestic assault. They also had been the victims of crime 25 times.

The Operation Comeback program requires that the participants avoid any new arrests and that they take meaningful steps toward addressing their education, job skills, substance abuse treatment or other issues.

A second focused-deterrence group was called in last November.

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