

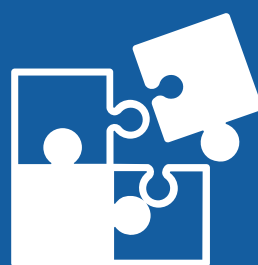


TENNESSEE RECONNECT

*What's Next for Adults?
A Look at Tennessee
Reconnect*



FEATURED SPEAKERS



JESSICA GIBSON

Adult Learner Initiatives
TN Higher Education
Commission



TINA BISHOP

Navigate Reconnect
TN Higher Education
Commission



DESTINEE DUFF

Adult Learner Initiatives
TN Higher Education
Commission



TODAY'S AGENDA

MISSION OF
TENNESSEE
RECONNECT

BENEFITS
OF
PURSUING A
DEGREE AS
AN ADULT

NAVIGATE
RECONNECT
& THE TN
RECONNECT
GRANT

MYTHS AND
FACTS OF
TENNESSEE
RECONNECT

TENNESSEE
RECONNECT
AMBASSADOR
PROGRAM

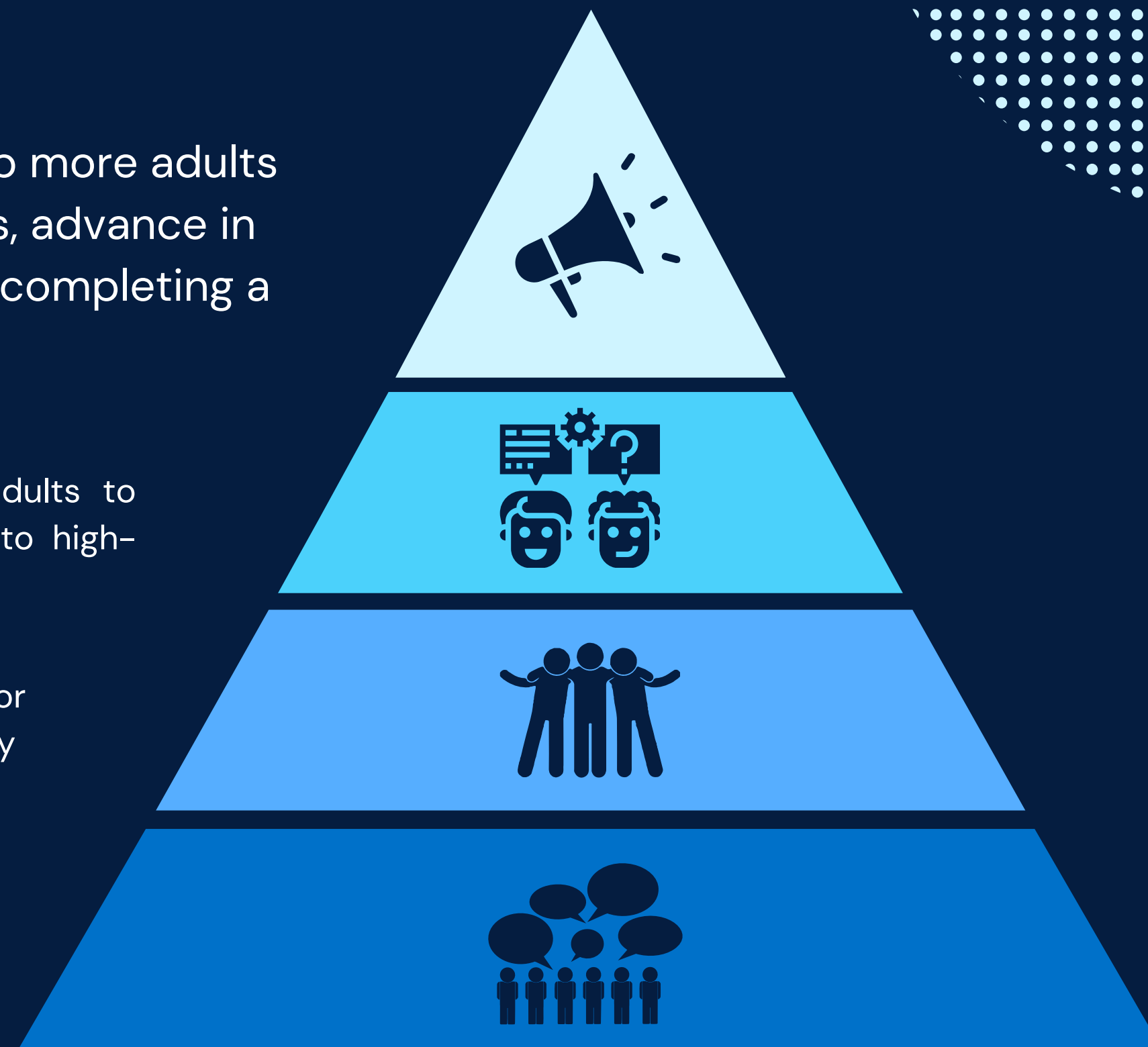
Q&A



MISSION

Tennessee Reconnect is an initiative to help more adults return to higher education to gain new skills, advance in the workplace, and fulfill lifelong dreams of completing a degree or credential.

- 01** Remove barriers and create pathways for adults to obtain post-secondary credentials that lead to high-demand careers and lifelong success.
- 02** Helps more adults attend a community college or technical college and complete a postsecondary degree or credential, tuition-free.





BENEFITS OF PURSUING A DEGREE AS AN ADULT

BENEFITS

On average, individuals with a college degree or certificate earn higher salaries over their lifetime compared to those without higher education qualifications.

EARNING POTENTIAL

Earning a degree or certificate can open doors to higher-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities.

Completing a degree or certificate program equips adults with new skills and knowledge that can be applied in various aspects of life and work.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

EXPANDED SKILL SET

In Tennessee's competitive job market, having a college degree or certificate can enhance job security and increase employability.

JOB SECURITY

BENEFITS

Returning to college provides an opportunity for personal growth and self-improvement, both academically and personally.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Completing a degree or certificate is a significant achievement that can boost self-confidence and provide a sense of pride and accomplishment.

PRIDE AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

Returning to college sets a positive example for family members and demonstrates the importance of lifelong learning and personal development.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Higher education has been linked to better health outcomes, increased civic engagement, and overall improved quality of life.



**NAVIGATE RECONNECT & THE
TN RECONNECT GRANT**



Navigate Reconnect is the regionally-organized component of Tennessee Reconnect which focuses on offering adult students a single point of contact for college navigation and support services.

RECONNECT NAVIGATORS PROVIDE



Free, institution-neutral college navigation services.



Career exploration tools.



Assistance understanding financial aid and college costs.



Connection to community resources.



Partnership.



TENNESSEE RECONNECT GRANT

- Last-dollar grant for remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees.
- Applies towards associate degree, technical degree, or technical diploma.
- Use at a TN community college*, TCAT, or other eligible school.
- No income restrictions



TN RECONNECT GRANT ELIGIBILITY

- Be a Tennessee resident.
- Complete the FAFSA and be classified as an independent student OR be at least 23 years of age on or before January 1 of the academic year.
 - Stipulation: Students attending TCAT must qualify as an independent student
- Not have previously earned an associate or baccalaureate degree.
 - Exception: TCAT Reconnect–remain eligible with degree.
- Be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non–citizen.
- Not be incarcerated.*
- Not be in default on a student loan program.
- Not have an outstanding balance of previously awarded financial aid to an institution.
- Be admitted to an eligible institution and enrolled at least part time (minimum 6 hours) in courses leading to a certificate or associate degree.
- Complete the application and Reconnect Success Plan in the TSAC portal.

*Currently incarcerated individuals (if eligible) may work with Re–Entry Navigators to prepare for attendance upon release.



Navigators work with all adults and can help them determine eligibility for other programs.

MYTHS / FACTS OF THE TENNESSEE RECONNECT GRANT





Only adults **without any previous credit** can utilize the Tennessee Reconnect Grant to earn their associate degree.

VS



Previous college credit **does not** disqualify adults from utilizing the grant.

If an adult attended college in the past, those courses can be **evaluated as transfer credit**.

Previous college credit can actually be an **asset** if it counts toward the degree program an adult is seeking. Adult students may qualify for **Prior Learning Credit** or **Military credit**, depending on their circumstances, allowing them to earn college credits for their previous experiences and training.



I **can't** use the Tennessee Reconnect Grant if I already have a degree.

VS



Students who have a prior associate degree or higher-level degree **can** still use the Tennessee Reconnect Grant at a **TCAT (TCAT Reconnect Grant)** to pursue a technical certificate or license.



My **previous** college GPA makes me ineligible to receive the Tennessee Reconnect Grant.

VS



An adult student's **previous** college GPA **does not impact** the eligibility to receive the Tennessee Reconnect Grant.



A Reconnect Navigator
can confirm my
Tennessee Reconnect
Grant eligibility status.

VS



The **school will determine** Tennessee
Reconnect Grant eligibility. The
school's financial aid office can
confirm grant status and they should
be contacted if a student has any
questions regarding grant status.

A Reconnect Navigator **can** discuss
eligibility requirements and help adult
students prepare necessary financial
aid documentation.



Once I begin utilizing the Tennessee Reconnect Grant, I am **not allowed** to change my major.

VS



Adults **can change** their major while using the TN Reconnect Grant, but need to be aware of how this could delay their graduation date.

Another degree program could require **additional hours**.

Adults are only eligible to receive the TN Reconnect Grant for **5 academic years**.



Re-Entry Reconnect Navigators help individuals get a college education or credential while incarcerated and/or upon release.

RE-ENTRY NAVIGATORS PROVIDE



In-person one-on-one college advising inside the facilities each month.



Support/coaching while incarcerated and continues post release.



Direct referrals to community partner agencies.



Assistance identifying and addressing barriers to college including identifying resources based on location and need.



Communication throughout college journey until graduation to ensure adults have the tools and resources to be successful.

NAVIGATE RECONNECT & THE TN RECONNECT GRANT Q&A



The background of the image shows a group of people in business attire sitting around a wooden table. They are focused on assembling large wooden puzzle pieces. The scene is brightly lit, and the wood of the table and puzzle pieces is a warm, natural tone. The people's hands are visible as they work together to fit the pieces together.

TENNESSEE RECONNECT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

3 PILLARS OF RECONNECT AMBASSADORS



IDENTIFY A POTENTIAL STUDENT

Listen to your friends, family members, or people in your community. Are they looking to upskill in their current career, or want to finish the degree they started years ago?



HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT COLLEGE

Have general conversations, ask open-ended questions, tell them about your story, and answer some basic questions.



CONNECT STUDENT TO RECONNECT INTEREST FORM

Refer potential student to connect with a Reconnect Navigator by completing the TN Reconnect Interest Form.



ROLE OF RECONNECT AMBASSADORS

INSPIRE

INSPIRE STUDENTS

by encouraging education. Education provides stability in life, and it's something that no one can ever take away from them.

BE A RESOURCE

Ambassadors are a valuable RESOURCE for STUDENTS as they work towards achieving their career goals.



ROLE OF RECONNECT AMBASSADORS

BE A CONFIDANTE

STUDENTS can CONFIDE in a trusted person about the challenges and fears of going to school.

BE A CONNECTOR

You CONNECT STUDENTS to a strong support system to empower them to overcome any challenge that comes their way.



Reconnect Grant Choose a Degree/College Path Talk to a Navigator Pay For College

Navigating the process of going to college for the first time or going back to college may seem overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be – we're here to help! This website will help you get the basic information you need to start the process. However, you also have access to personalized assistance and guidance from a Reconnect Navigator.

What is a Reconnect Navigator?

Reconnect Navigators are a single point of contact that can help you navigate the path to college. They provide free, institution-neutral college navigation services, career exploration tools, assistance with understanding financial aid and college costs. Reconnect Navigators can also help you select a college and a major that fit your interests and career goals. Once you've enrolled in college, they will continue to support, guide and encourage you until you graduate.

[Connect with a Navigator](#)

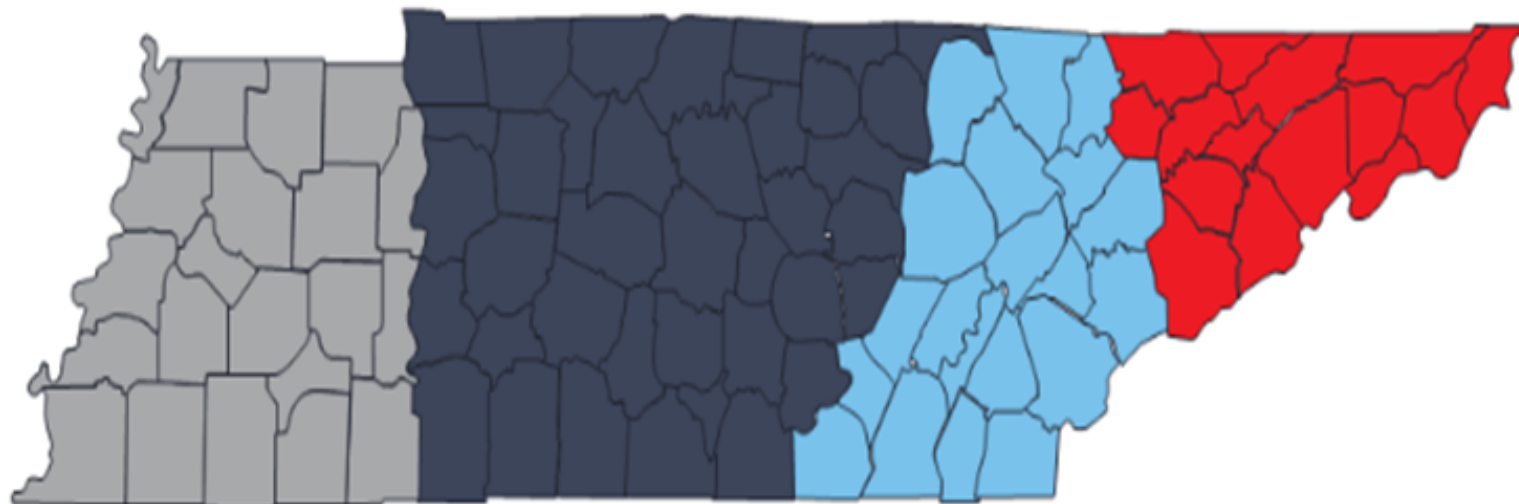
Please click on your county for more information.

West TN

Middle TN

East TN

Northeast TN



AMBASSADORS REFER ADULTS TO NAVIGATE RECONNECT VIA THE INTEREST FORM



AMBASSADORS...



INFORMED ADVOCATE

COLLEGE
ENROLLMENT EXPERT

ENCOURAGING
SUPPORTER

FINANCIAL AID
COUNSELOR

REFERRAL PROVIDER

ACADEMIC ADVISOR

UPCOMING AMBASSADOR TRAININGS



**West Region:
Tuesday, May 7
10 AM**

**East Region:
Wednesday, May 8
10 AM (CST)**

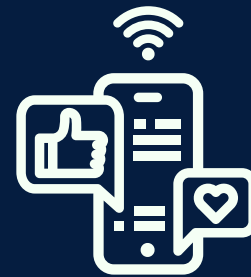
**Middle Region:
Wednesday, May 8
1 PM**



CONNECT WITH US




WWW.TNRECONNECT.GOV




[@TNRECONNECT](https://www.instagram.com/TNRECONNECT)

**Jessica Gibson | Senior Director
of Adult Learner Initiatives**

 (615)-741-7572


 Jessica.Gibson@TN.GOV

**Tina Bishop | Navigate
Reconnect Director**

 (865)-507-8702

 Tina.Bishop@TN.GOV

**Destinee Duff | Coordinator
of Adult Learner Initiatives**

 (615)-812-1598

 Destinee.Duff@TN.GOV

TENNESSEE RECONNECT Q&A

