Establishing A Statewide Accreditation Knowledge Network (VRAS)

Linda Birtley, Union Presbyterian Seminary

Cindy Chiarello, James Madison University

Geoffrey Klein, Christopher Newport University

SACSCOC Annual Meeting, Houston

Participant Learning Outcomes

- The benefits of creating/having a statewide (or state regional) network of colleagues involved in the accreditation process

- Strategies for developing an inter-organizational infrastructure to sustain the network

- Strategies for planning and evaluating structured, annual events for knowledge sharing

- Decision points and approaches to recruiting institutions of higher education to join a network

- Participants will be provided with sample surveys, agendas, and planning tools to help create their own event

- Participants will be asked to sit at tables assigned by state (or representing states) to facilitate networking during the active learning segment. Each group (by state) will engage in activities designed to produce preliminary plans for creating in-state knowledge networks.

A Little Background of the VRAS

Context: Higher Education in the Commonwealth of Virginia

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (founded 1956)

- Degree programs
- Instructional sites
- Degree escalations
- Mission statements
- State policy on transfer
- Student learning assessment
- Military-related students
- Operation & capital needs
- Financial aid oversight
- Statewide strategic planning
- SARA

SCHEV Oversight Institutions

- Public Community Colleges (24)
  - Virginia Community College System

- Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities (15)
  - Related yet Independent

- Private, Nonprofit Colleges and Universities (30)

Context: Establishing Virginia's Knowledge Network for Regional Accreditation

A Conversation

- Upcoming Fifth-Year Review
- Reach-Out to Colleague
- Shared Collaborative Dispositions
- Dissimilar Institutions
- Letter & Survey to Liaisons

A Symposium

- Panels of Peers
- Discussion Roundtables
- Boxed Lunches
- SACSCOC VP Guest Speaker
- Follow-Up Survey

Context: Establishing Virginia's Knowledge Network for Regional Accreditation

Logistics and Content of Co-Planning for 1st Symposium

- Interest in attending?
- Ideal month of year?
- Ideal day of week?
- Overnight lodging required?
- Maximum willing to pay for symposium registration?

- Number from institution?
- Organization of lunch session?
- SACSCOC issues of interest?
- Willing to serve as discussant or facilitator?
- Role in your institution?

Context: Establishing Virginia's Knowledge Network for Regional Accreditation

Post-Symposium Survey

- Please describe what aspect of the symposium was MOST beneficial to you. (19 responses)

- Please describe what aspect of the symposium was LEAST beneficial to you. (15 responses)

- If we had another Virginia Regional Accreditation Symposium, what would you do differently? (14 responses)

- If there was a burning question that you didn't get to address in any of the components of the symposium, what was it? (6 responses)

- If you have any additional feedback, please use the space below. (12 responses)

Mission * Vision * Purpose

Mission

A mission should be a clear, concise, memorable statement that reflects an organization's enduring purpose. (Who we are)

VRAS, an active, purposeful network of higher education colleagues in Virginia, advances open discussion and dissemination of knowledge to support institutions' achieving and sustaining SACSCOC accreditation.

Vision

A vision should be an exciting, clear, memorable statement that reflects an organization's most important and broadest objective in support of its mission. (An overarching objective in support of the mission)

VRAS serves the higher education community in Virginia by facilitating inter-institutional relationships and providing accurate information and reliable interpretation of SACSCOC policy.

Purpose

The purposes of the VRAS are to:

1. Build relationships among faculty and staff responsible for compliance with SACSCOC policies and principles.
2. Provide resources for faculty and staff that deal with the intersection of state recognition and regional accreditation.
3. Serve as a forum for discussion about salient accreditation-related issues and how they affect Virginia institutions.
4. Share accreditation-related knowledge and experiences among Virginia institutions that may serve as an example or guidance to colleagues.
5. Welcome, engage, and mentor new members from within our own and other accredited institutions within the Commonwealth to share knowledge and ensure the future growth of the VRAS.

Details Matter!

# Past Symposium Numbers

VRAS REGISTRATION TRENDLINE
AVE = 60
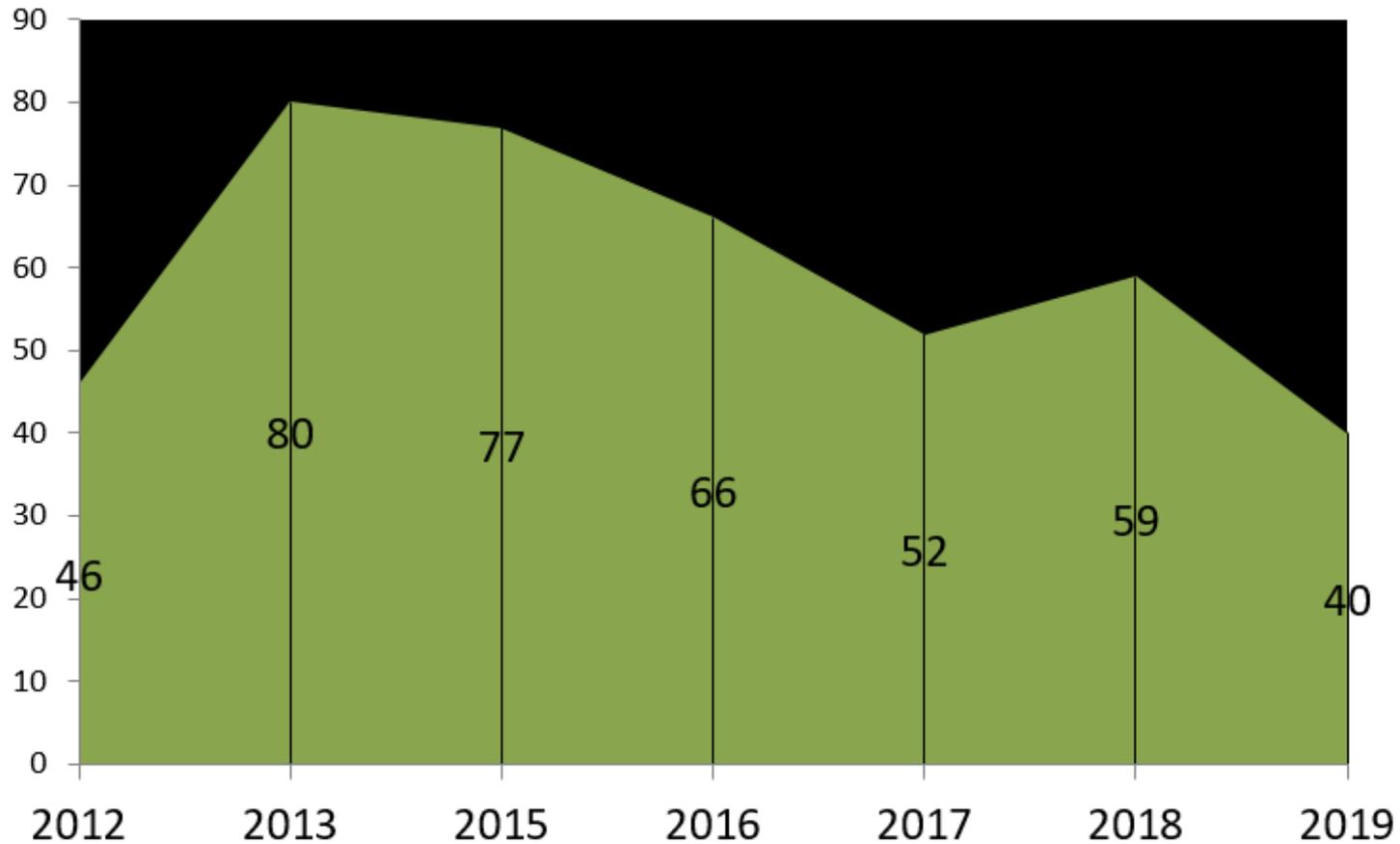
Logistics of the Event

Creating the Agenda

▶ Use interest survey to determine topics of interest

▶ Invite a SACSCOC VP or staff member to attend the event

▶ Send interest survey to everyone in your state that does anything with SACSCOC
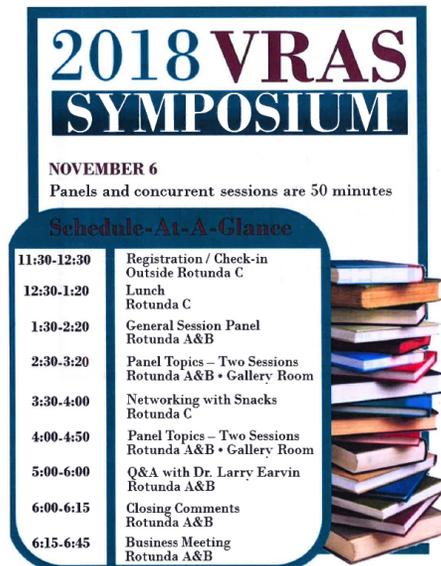
2018 VRAS SYMPOSIUM

NOVEMBER 6
Panels and concurrent sessions are 50 minutes

Schedule-At-A-Glance

11:30-12:30	Registration / Check-in Outside Rotunda C
12:30-1:20	Lunch Rotunda C
1:30-2:20	General Session Panel Rotunda A&B
2:30-3:20	Panel Topics – Two Sessions Rotunda A&B • Gallery Room
3:30-4:00	Networking with Snacks Rotunda C
4:00-4:50	Panel Topics – Two Sessions Rotunda A&B • Gallery Room
5:00-6:00	Q&A with Dr. Larry Earvin Rotunda A&B
6:00-6:15	Closing Comments Rotunda A&B
6:15-6:45	Business Meeting Rotunda A&B

Tips

▶ Include a response beside the topics of interest questions to recruit volunteers with knowledge on those topics

▶ Include preference questions in interest survey for date, lodging needs, registration fee, #attending

▶ Get the event on SACSCOC's radar early

▶ Create a permanent online home for information on the event and survey

Logistics of the Event

Location and Event

▶ Use responses to interest survey

▶ Once date and location are decided, begin planning

▶ Do you need to plan for lodging, food, sound/presentations

▶ Plan for networking opportunities throughout the day

Thank you to the 2018 VRAS Planning Board Chair, Geoffrey Klein, and to the Planning Board members:

Linda Birtley	Lois Myers
Susan Bosworth	Nicole Munday
Jackie Bourque	Oladayo Oyeyiola
Cheryl Carroll	Tisha Paredes
Cindy Grove Chiarello	Christopher Richardson
Herman (Skip) Kastroll	Kristi Shackelford
Craig Lawhorne	Jon Wallin
Clifton Myles	Kathy Walker

Tips

▶ Holding event at host institution is usually less expensive than at a rented venue

▶ The symposium is a good opportunity for institutions who cannot attend the SACSCOC Annual Meeting to get important information...keep these institutions in mind when planning

▶ A planning group to help with responsibilities makes the whole process much easier

Logistics of the Event

Funding and Budget

- Estimate costs of event to determine registration fee

- Plan for unexpected expenses

- Plan for future expansion of group

- Think about any restrictions your institution/state place on expenditure of funds

- Goal is to break even

Tips

- Ask institutions if they are willing to sponsor some or all the event: online registration, SACSCOC VP visit, catering, event space, etc.

- SACSCOC VP/Staff travel is unknown until you receive the invoice...have a back up plan for reimbursement

Next Steps for Virginia's Group

Future of the VRAS

▶ Assessment results from previous annual meetings

    ▶ Post-symposium surveys

2013 Survey (Sample Questions):
Do you have any suggestions to improve the symposium for next year?

Would you like to see more formats for next year's symposium? If so, do you have suggestions (concurrent sessions, presentations, etc.)?

This symposium was scheduled adjacent (date and location) to the VAG conference. Did this make it easier for you to attend the symposium? Next year's VAG conference is in Norfolk, VA. Would you prefer to have a similar situation for the symposium next year?

Would you attend a VRAS-sponsored event this fall if it were offered and if your schedule allowed?

Tips

▶ Keep early evaluations focused on "big picture" items (aka organizational questions and general meeting questions) at your earlier events.

▶ Leverage meeting evaluations to aid in the planning for the next one.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	69	97.2
No	2	2.8

Future of the VRAS

2018 Survey (Sample Questions):

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following panels/presentation:
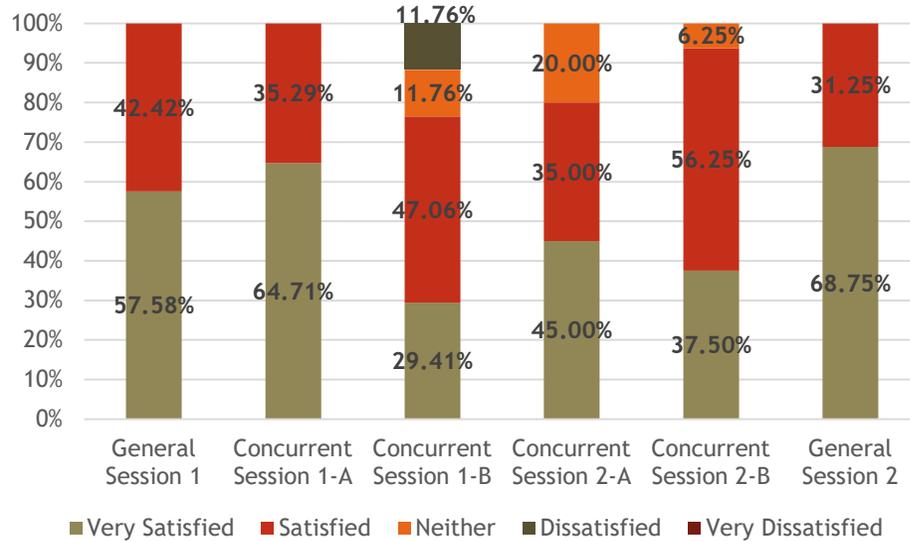
Of what you heard or learned at VRAS this year, what do you plan to bring back to your institution?

"SACSCOC insights on new standards and SCHEV/SACSCOC handout"

"Information about new expectations related to new standards"

"I made connections with colleagues, which will be invaluable."

Future of the VRAS

- Building the group into a non-profit
  - Benefits of being a non-profit
    - Enter into business dealings
    - Form contracts
    - Fiduciary responsibility is the organization's responsibility
  - Create Articles of Incorporation and Create bylaws

- Developing more offerings
  - Spring workshop(s)

Virginia Regional Accreditation Symposium
BYLAWS
Draft 5

ARTICLE 1: NAME
The name of this association shall be the Virginia Regional Accreditation Symposium (VRAS).

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE
VRAS, an active, purposeful network of higher education colleagues in Virginia, advances open discussion and dissemination of knowledge to support institutions' achieving and sustaining SACSCOC accreditation.

The purposes of the VRAS are to:

- Build relationships among faculty and staff responsible for compliance with SACSCOC policies and principles.
- Provide resources for faculty and staff that deal with the intersection of state recognition and regional accreditation.
- Serve as a forum for discussion about salient accreditation-related issues and how they affect Virginia institutions.
- Share accreditation-related knowledge and experiences among Virginia institutions that may serve as an example or guidance to colleagues.
- Welcome, engage, and mentor new members from within our own and other accredited institutions within the Commonwealth to share knowledge and ensure the future growth of the VRAS.

VRAS is organized and shall be operated exclusively for educational purposes and shall not engage in any activity which is not permitted by an organization exempt from taxation under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP
The membership of the corporation shall consist of the members of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 4: EXECUTIVE BOARD AND OFFICERS
Section 1: The governing body of VRAS shall be the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall have control of and be responsible for the management of the affairs and property of the organization.

Section 2: The number of officers shall be fixed from time-to-time by the Executive Board but shall consist of no less than three (3) including the following officers: the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the Past-Chair.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall have authority to make policies for VRAS, which are consistent with the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 4: Nominations or volunteers for service as an officer will be accepted and voted on by the Executive Board annually.

Your Turn!

Number of Accredited Institutions and Size of State

STATE	ACCREDITED	SQ MILES
AL	51	50,645.33
FL	76	53,624.76
GA	80	57,513.49
KY	49	39,486.34
LA	39	43,203.90
MS	32	46,923.27
NC	112	48,617.91
SC	51	30,060.70
TN	62	41,234.90
TX	162	261,231.71
VA	70	39,490.09

Creating Networks In Your State

You should be seated at a table with colleagues from your state who are also interested in developing a Statewide Accreditation Knowledge Network...

Exchange contact information!

Creating Networks In Your State

Considerations for how to establish a similar network in your state/locality

▶ Visit the SACSCOC website to find other SACSCOC accredited institutions in your state. http://www.sacscoc.org/membershipInfo.asp

▶ How does the number of accredited institutions and the geography of your state influence the structure of your network?

▶ **What do the size and shape of the state tell you about the types of meetings and frequency of meetings that might be held?**

As a group, write ideas for the following:

▶ Brainstorm at least five events in your state that you can "piggy-back" to get your accreditation knowledge network started. (example in Virginia – the Virginia Assessment Group)

▶ Development of membership: deliberate effort to include different institution types, participants with diverse roles at institutions

▶ Is it important for your state to make sure the event does not end up "belonging" to one institution? If so, create a plan for rotating leadership.

Ideas and Resources

Resources for this concurrent session will be online at
www.jmu.edu/sacscoc/Pres_vras.shtml

Here you can also find sample surveys, past agendas, and planning tools to help create a network and event in your state.

Presenters' Contact Information

- Linda Birtley, Email lbirtley@upsem.edu

- Cindy Chiarello, Email grovecg@jmu.edu

- Geoffrey Klein, Email Geoffrey.Klein@cnu.edu

Presenters' Bios

- ## Linda Birtley, Union Presbyterian Seminary

  - Dr. Linda Birtley currently serves as the Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Accreditation Liaison to SACSCOC and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). In these roles, she works closely with the Seminary's president, vice-presidents, deans, faculty, and unit directors, and serves on the President's Executive Staff. Currently, her focus is on preparation for concurrent decennial reviews (Class of 2022) for SACSCOC and ATS. Linda also served as a lead planner for the Virginia Regional Accreditation Symposium in 2015 and 2016 and is currently on the planning board.

- ## Cindy Chiarello, James Madison University

  - Cindy Chiarello currently serves as the coordinator for Strategic Planning and Engagement and as the SACSCOC Liaison Assistant at James Madison University. She supports departments, committees, and individuals involved with the university planning process, including demonstrating how each unit contributes to the university's mission and telling the story of engagement at James Madison University. For the past several years, Cindy has served on an accreditation team whose purpose is to keep the university current with SACSCOC accreditation standards and submit all required documents to SACSCOC, including a recent Fifth-Year Interim Report and a Compliance Certification in 2013 which received no recommendations. Cindy served as the Chair of the Virginia Regional Accreditation Symposium in 2013 and 2017.

- ## Geoffrey Klein, Christopher Newport University

  - Dr. Geoffrey Klein currently serves as the Vice Provost for Research, Graduate Studies and Assessment at Christopher Newport University. In this role, he works collaboratively with several university offices to provide resources for faculty and students to pursue research opportunities and measure student learning across all programs, including the Liberal Learning Core Curriculum. Geoffrey also serves as Christopher Newport's accreditation liaison. Over the past five years, he led efforts to successfully complete the fifth-year interim report process, conducted a readiness audit for the decennial review, and employed an effective internal review process for the development of the Compliance Certification that led to reaffirmation with no monitoring. He also serves as a SACSCOC reviewer and consultant.

Extra Materials Related to Each State

The SACSCOC Region: Practical Considerations State by State

▶ *How does the number of accredited institutions and the geography of your state influence the structure of your network?*

▶ *What do the size and shape of the state tell you about the types of meetings and frequency of meetings that might be held?*

Virginia

**39,490.09 square miles
71 SACSCOC accredited institutions (using 2018 data)**

Square miles: United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts, Table: Land area in square miles, 2010 at https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table
Accredited institutions: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Membership Directory at http://www.sacscoc.org/search.asp
State shapes: U.S. States – Shapes and Names Clipart at https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/

Alabama	Florida
50,645.33 square miles	53,624.76 square miles
53 SACSCOC accredited institutions	77 SACSCOC accredited institutions
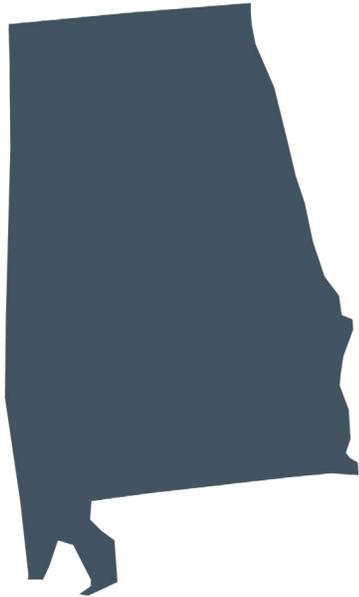
Alabama

Florida

Georgia	Kentucky
57,513.49 square miles	**39,486.34 square miles**
79 SACSCOC accredited institutions	50 SACSCOC accredited institutions

Georgia
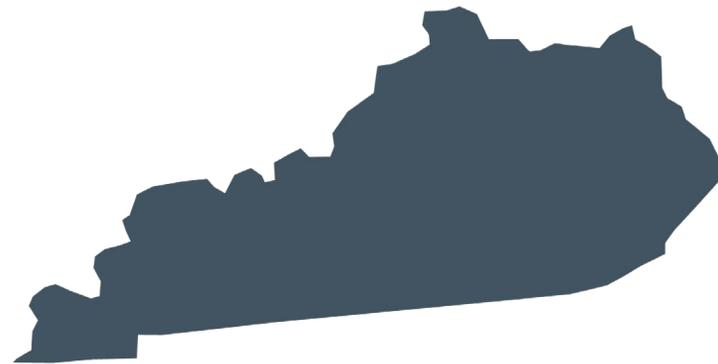
Kentucky

Louisiana	Mississippi
43,203.9 square miles	46,923.27 square miles
40 SACSCOC accredited institutions	15 SACSCOC accredited institutions

Louisiana
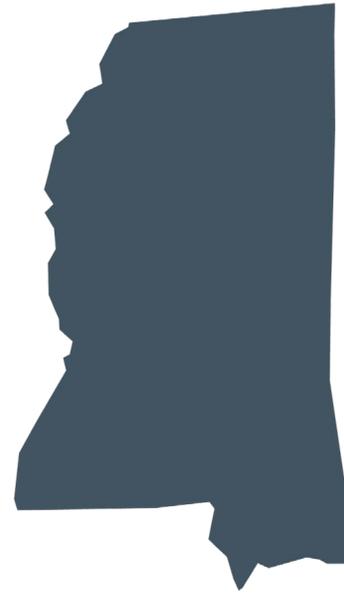
Mississippi

North Carolina	South Carolina
48,617.91 square miles	30,060.7 square miles
112 SACSCOC accredited institutions	52 SACSCOC accredited institutions

North Carolina
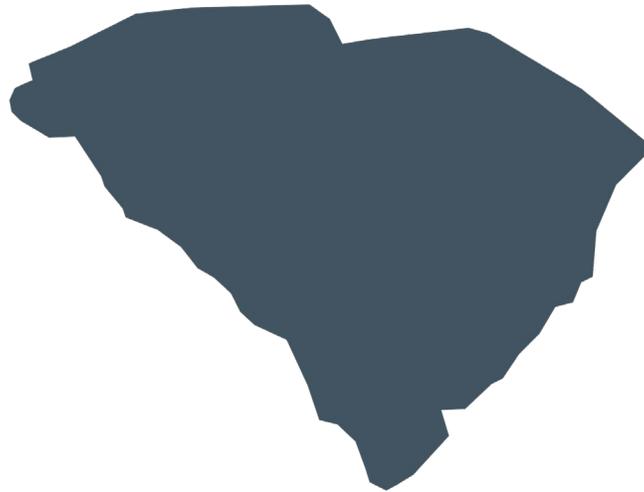
South Carolina

Tennessee	Texas
41,234.9 square miles	261,231.71 square miles
63 SACSCOC accredited institutions	162 SACSCOC accredited institutions

Tennessee

Texas