
BURT JONES
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EXPERIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Blackburn Institute

Fall 2020

Tuscaloosa County

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Meeting Itinerary & Map

Friday, November 6

- 12:00pm Lunch at Bryant Conference Center
- 1:00pm Session I - Business Community Forum at Bryant Conference Center with Bobby Bragg (Director of Practice Growth, JamisonMoneyFarmer PC), Jheovanny Gomez (Owner, Jalapeños Mexican Restaurants), Brad Newman (Plant Manager, ZF Chassis), and Jim Page (President and Chief Executive Officer, The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama)
- 2:15pm Depart Campus
- 2:45pm Session II - Affordable Housing Panel at McKenzie Court with Jeannette Barnes (Resident Commissioner and Board Member, Tuscaloosa Housing Authority), Chris Hall (Executive Director, Tuscaloosa Housing Authority), and Antwon Prince-Sealy (Director of Housing Programs, Community Service Programs of West Alabama)
- 4:15pm Return to Campus
- 4:45pm Session III - Reproductive Health and Services Panel at Bryant Conference Center with Vicki Avery (Founder and Director, Jean Browning Maternity Home), Sandi Horsley (Executive Director, Choices Pregnancy Clinic), JJ Johnson (Site Coordinator, West Alabama Clinic Defenders), Ginger Phillips (Certified Nurse Practitioner, Tuscaloosa County Health Department), and Laurie Roberts (Executive Director, Yellowhammer Fund)
- 6:00pm Dinner at Hotel Capstone
- 7:30pm Evening Reflections and Overview of Saturday at Hotel Capstone
- 9:00pm Closing Remarks

Saturday, November 7

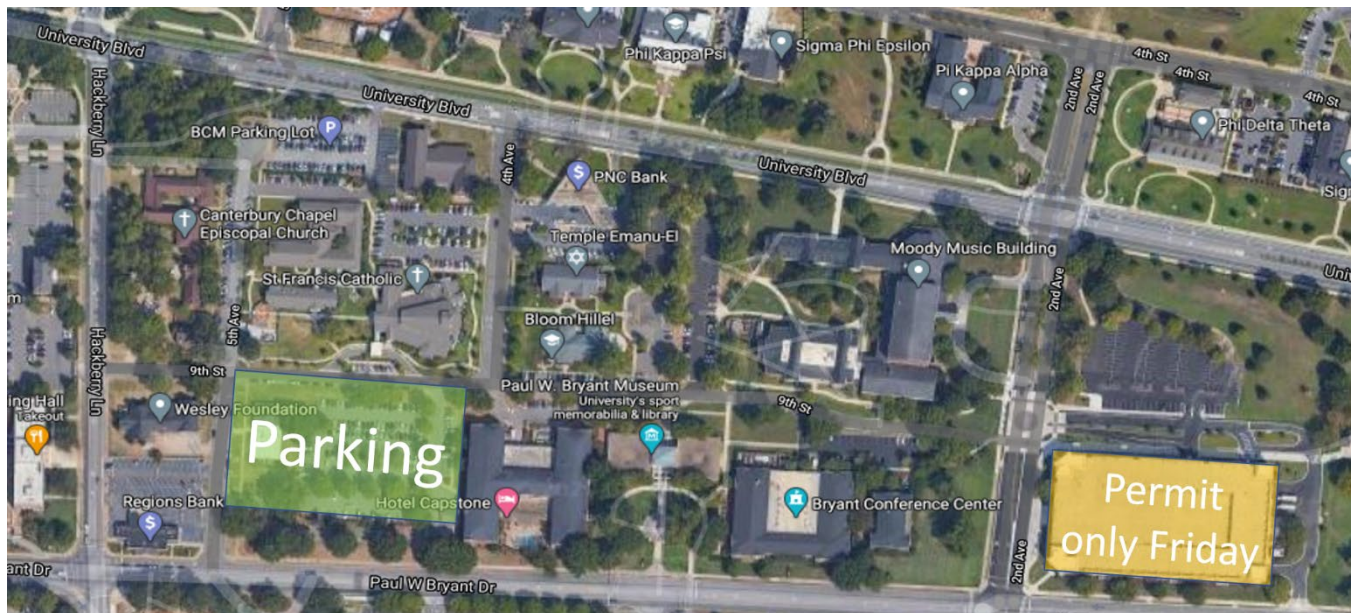
- 9:00am Session IV - Tuscaloosa Bail Out via Zoom with Jenny Carroll (Wiggins, Childs, Quinn & Pantazis Professor of Law, The University of Alabama School of Law), La-Kisha Emmanuel (Co-Founder), Sarah Ann Hughes (Co-Founder), and Allen Slater (Student Attorney, Criminal Defense Clinic, The University of Alabama School of Law)
- 10:15am Depart for Campus
- 10:45am Session V - Intergovernmental Relations Panel at Hotel Capstone with Councilor Raevan Howard (District 2, Tuscaloosa City Council), Hardy McCollum (Interim City Administrator, City of Northport), and Judge Rob Robertson (Tuscaloosa County Probate Judge and Chairman, Tuscaloosa County Commission)
- 12:00pm Lunch at Hotel Capstone
- 1:30pm Session VI - Exploring K12 Education in Tuscaloosa County at Russell Hall with Dr. Terri Boman, (Executive Director, Tuscaloosa Education Foundation), Rev. Dr. Tyshawn Gardner (Founder and CEO, Citizens Impacting Community Association), Dr. Keri Johnson, (Superintendent, Tuscaloosa County School System), Dr. Bryan Oliver (Head of School, Tuscaloosa Academy), and Dr. Barbara Rountree (Director, The Capitol School)
- 3:00pm Session VII - LGBTQ Community Forum at Russell Hall with Russell Howard (President, Druid City Pride), Derrick Steverson (Assistant Director of Community Engagement, Five Horizons Health Services), and Cassandra Leigh Williamson (LGBT Program of Support, Veterans Administration)
- 4:30pm Evening Reflections at Hotel Capstone
- 6:00pm Dinner at Hotel Capstone
- 7:30pm Closing Remarks

Sunday, November 8

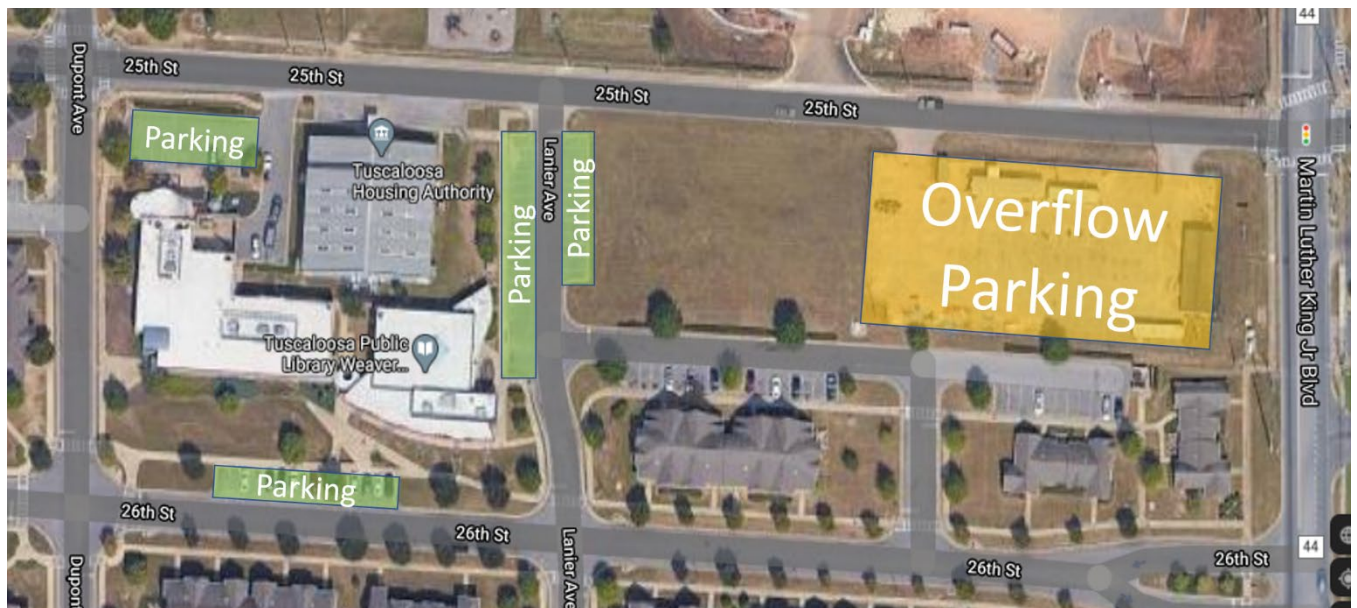
- 7:00pm Post-Trip Debriefing at Hotel Capstone

Hotel Capstone, 320 Paul West Bryant Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401; and

Bryant Conference Center, 240 Paul West Bryant Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401



Tuscaloosa Public Housing Authority, 3301 25th Street, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401



TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA



Tuscaloosa is the seat of Tuscaloosa County and is located on the Black Warrior River. It is the fifth-largest city in Alabama. The city was originally known as Tuskalooza until the early 20th century. Incorporated as a town on December 13, 1819, it was named after Tuskaloosa, the chief of a band of Muskogean-speaking people. They battled and were defeated by forces of Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto in 1540 in the Battle of Mabila, thought to have been located in what is now central Alabama. Tuscaloosa served as Alabama's capital city from 1826 to 1846.

Tuscaloosa is the regional center of industry, commerce, healthcare, and education for the area of west-central Alabama known as West Alabama. Tuscaloosa has been traditionally known as the "Druid City" because of the numerous water oaks planted in its downtown streets since the 1840s. In 2008, the City of Tuscaloosa hosted the USA Olympic Triathlon trials for the Beijing Games.

Quick Facts

Population: 90,468

Racial Composition: 53.8% White, 41.5% Black or African American, 0.2% Native American, 1.8% Asian, 1.5% from other races, 1.1% two or more races, 3% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Median Age: 29

County: Tuscaloosa (county seat)

Random Trivia: Tuscaloosa recently celebrated its 200th birthday on December 13, 2019.



Alabama



NORTHPORT, ALABAMA



Northport is located on the Black Warrior River across from downtown Tuscaloosa, it is currently the 21st largest city in Alabama with an estimated population of 26,115 in 2019. It incorporated in 1871. It is part of the Tuscaloosa Metropolitan Statistical Area.

One of Northport's cultural activities is the Kentucky Festival of the Arts. Each October, artists gather at Kentucky Park to showcase their work in front of visitors. The festival celebrates folk and contemporary art as well as traditional crafts. Potters, quilters, and basketmakers offer educational craft demonstrations throughout the weekend.

Northport schools are part of the Tuscaloosa County School System. The schools serve approximately 5,430 students and employ 390 teachers in six elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The city also has three private schools.



Quick Facts

Population: 23,330

Racial Composition: 68.4% White, 26.9% Black or African American, 0.3% Native American, 1.1% Asian, 2.0% from other races, 1.1% two or more races, 4.1% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Median Age: 33

County: Tuscaloosa

Random Trivia: After the Civil War, a branch of Bryce Hospital was established in Northport for African Americans; the site, is now a popular site for "ghost hunters."

Alabama



TUSCALOOSA COUNTY



The county is named in honor of Tuskaloosa, a paramount chief of the Mississippian culture, who are considered ancestors of the historic Choctaw people of the region. The county is the home of the University of Alabama, Shelton State Community College, and Stillman College.

Tuscaloosa County was established on February 6, 1818. During the antebellum years, the principal crop was cotton, cultivated and processed by African-American slaves. Following Reconstruction, there was violence as whites struggled to regain control of the state legislature. It reached a height in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tuscaloosa County had a total of 10 documented lynchings of African Americans, according to a 2015 study by the Equal Justice Initiative.



Lake Lurleen State Park, named for Governor Lurleen Wallace, offers 1,600 acres for camping and hiking and a 250-acre lake for swimming and fishing.

Quick Facts

Population: 194,656

Racial Composition: 66.3% White, 29.6% Black or African American, 0.3% Native American, 1.2% Asian, 1.5% from other races, 1.1% two or more races, 3.1% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Median Age: 33

Random Trivia: Moundville Archaeological Park, part of the Alabama Museum of Natural History, and is the site of a Mississippian settlement.



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Session I

Below are biographies of the panelists for Session I, a conversation with local business leaders.

Bobby Bragg

Bobby Bragg has served for the last nine plus years as the Director of Practice Growth for JamisonMoneyFarmer, West Alabama's largest and oldest CPA firm, where he is responsible for planning, strategy and new business development for the firm. Bobby has extensive start-up and entrepreneurial experience in three technology-driven companies and has held various ownership and executive management positions in marketing, business development, financial and accounting management, and operations. He also serves on several advisory committees and start-up company boards where he has invested.



To start his career after graduate school, Bobby was in public accounting as a manager in Arthur Andersen's Assurance and Business Advisory Practice. In that capacity, he participated in the planning and coordination of three successful initial public offerings (IPOs). He is an active member of the Birmingham Venture Club and Angel Investment Management (AIM) group, is the Chairman of the Strategic Advisory Committee to The Edge which is Tuscaloosa's startup incubator and accelerator. Bobby is the 2020 Chairman of the Board of the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce.

Bragg, an Alabama and Texas CPA, holds a BBA and a Master's degree from the University of Texas.

Jheovanny Gomez

A native of Colombia, South America, Jheovanny Gomez graduated high school from Redentoristas High School in 1993. In 1997, he received his associate's degree in Computer Networking and Information systems. Jheovanny moved to Tuscaloosa in May 1999 to study English at the ELI (English Language Institute) at the University of Alabama. In 2001, he helped open the first Jalapeños Mexican Grill in Downtown Tuscaloosa while in a management position, and subsequently was offered the opportunity to become an owner. Currently, Jheovanny co-owns and manages three locations in Northport and Tuscaloosa. Appointed by the Governor in 2013, he served for 4 years on the state's Small Business Commission.



Jheovanny's awards include Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama Member of the Year (2014), Minority Business Council Trailblazer Award (2017), and West Alabama Young Leadership Award (2019). He is a former member of the Executive and Steering Committees of the Minority Business Council, vice chair of Membership and Investor Relations for the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, and former president of the Druid City Business League. Jheovanny serves on the board of directors for the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Tuscaloosa Education Foundation, and United Way of West Alabama.

Gomez holds an Associate's Degree in Business Administration from Shelton State Community College.

Brad Newman (Blackburn Advisory Board Member)

Brad Newman has served as plant manager of ZF Chassis Systems Tuscaloosa, LLC since 2012. In this role, he oversees the Just in Time (JIT), Just in Sequence (JIS) supply of complete chassis modules to two Mercedes-Benz U.S. assembly plants in nearby Vance, Alabama. In 2019, his plant received the prestigious recognition of Manufacturer of the Year Award from the Business Council of Alabama (BCA). Prior to ZF, he held plant manager roles at various suppliers and began his career at General Motors as a manufacturing engineer.



Brad is a member of the West Alabama Regional Workforce Council, West Alabama Works Executive Steering Committee, Board Member and Vice-Chair for Education and Workforce Development for The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Board Member of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as appointed by the Governor. He is a German Business Council Founding Member and member of the Alabama Germany Partnership. Brad is actively engaged in developing young leaders, co-leads a statewide effort to improve the process for prisoner re-entry, volunteers his time through prison ministry, and leads The OnTrack Process for juvenile delinquents and underserved youth.

Newman holds a bachelor's and master's in Industrial Engineering from The University of Alabama.

Jim M. Page

Jim became President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama on January 1, 2012. Jim serves as lead spokesman for the Chamber on all public policy issues, economic development projects, and strategic community initiatives. Prior to his tenure in Tuscaloosa, Jim served nine years as Vice President of Public Policy and Business Development for the Decatur Morgan County (AL) Chamber of Commerce. He is a graduate of Leadership Tuscaloosa, Leadership Morgan County, Leadership Alabama, and the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management (IOM). Jim has also earned the professional designations of Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) and Alabama Accredited Chamber Executive (AACE).



A past Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama, Jim serves on the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, where he chairs its University Communities Council and is a member of the Certified Chamber Executive Commission. He is a member of the Tuscaloosa County Road Improvement Commission and is founding Chairman of the Alliance for Alabama's Infrastructure. Jim was appointed by Governor Kay Ivey to serve on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Partnership for Children and is a member of the Alabama School Readiness Alliance Pre-K Task Force.

In 2009, Jim was recognized nationally by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives as one of 40 Under 40: Rising Stars of the Chamber World. He received the 2015 Jamie Wallace Award in recognition of “exceptional leadership, service and dedication to the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama” and was named the 2016 recipient of the prestigious Thompson/Seymour Leadership Award by the Business Council of Alabama. In 2018, Jim was honored by his peers as the Alabama Chamber Professional of the Year.

Page holds a degree in Political Science and Marketing from the University of North Alabama, where he serves as a member of the Board of Trustees.

American Dream: An Interview with Owners of the Jalapeños Mexican Grill Restaurants

Nancy King Dennis / Alabama Retailer June 24, 2018

For Jheovanny Gomez, the path to the American dream began by pursuing his high school sweetheart to Tuscaloosa. In his native country of Colombia, his life choices were pursuing drug cartel members as an undercover Army intelligence operative, going to college there or following his love. Love won.

In 1999, two years after his girlfriend moved to America, Jheovanny followed her and started college in Alabama while working as a busboy in the same restaurant his girlfriend's parents worked. "That was my job to pay for school" at Shelton State Community College, he said.

While working that college job, Jheovanny met Wayne Grimball. "He was my customer. He called me and said, 'Look I have this vision. I know there is potential to have a really good business in downtown. Do you want to be my partner?' I didn't hesitate. I said, 'Absolutely.'"

Thus, began Jalapeños Mexican Grill. "We were just two kitchen people, myself and another waiter," said Jheovanny. "We started with no reputation, with just experience in waiting tables. Six months down the road, we had people lining out the door. Two years later, we decided to build our own restaurant. We built the first restaurant in 2004 in Northport."

That is when Justin Grimball entered the business. Like Jheovanny, Justin began pursuing the American dream when he was in college. While Justin was a student at the University of Alabama, he owned his own graphic design business, working with area bands and businesses. "I was trying to figure out what I was going to do with my life," said Justin, who studied criminal justice. He only uses that degree now for loss prevention and pursuit of worthless checks, some of his many duties at Jalapeños. His father brought Justin into the business when the Northport restaurant opened and after Justin had graduated from college.

Today, Wayne and Justin Grimball and Jheovanny Gomez own three Jalapeños Mexican Grills in Tuscaloosa, Northport and Cottondale. They closed the downtown Tuscaloosa location in 2007. Jheovanny is in all three restaurants, every single day. "I try to be at each restaurant during three different periods each day," he said. The restaurants on Rose Boulevard in Northport, New Watermelon Road in Tuscaloosa and on Old Birmingham Highway in Cottondale, "are close together, but they are so different," he said. Each has its own peak times and loyal customers.

Justin spends much of his time on social media, graphic design and branding for the three restaurants. It was Justin who had the idea for the restaurants' mascots Jala and Penó and to incorporate them into the restaurant's logo. Jala and Penó eventually became people-sized mascots who appear at community and restaurant events. Jheovanny said Wayne and he leave any work associated with computers and technology to Justin. Justin said there is no typical day for him. "I'm in the office, in the restaurants, running errands or doing catering events," he said.

“We’ve got a good partnership,” said Justin. Like Jheovanny, Justin also fell in love with a Colombian. He and his wife, Alexandra, have two daughters, Mariana and Lily.

Living the Dream and Giving Back To Community

Jheovanny, who learned English while waiting tables, has become ingrained in the Tuscaloosa community. He and his wife, Johana, are raising their three children – Jheovanny Jr., Josephine and Jacob – in their Alabama home.

“Jheovanny’s story about moving to the United States, following a beautiful woman, pouring his heart and soul into the American dream, starting a business and raising a family here, it has really been inspiring, not only for others who have followed a similar path, but also the people who are born and raised in Alabama and here in Tuscaloosa,” said Jim Page, president and chief executive officer of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama. Jim said he met Jheovanny on his first day on the chamber job. “I was drawn to him because of his personality and outgoing nature, and you could tell everybody in the restaurant felt the same way.”

Even before Jheovanny was an American citizen, he was the chamber’s Member of the Year. He has served on the chamber board and executive committee, leading the charge for chamber recruitment. In 2016, he was named an Alabama Retailer of the Year. This year, he was named by SCORE, a network of volunteer business mentors, as one of the group’s American Small Business Champions. “Jheovanny sets the standard among the local business community as far as paying his civic rent, as far as being engaged and by leading by example. He is a role model for people who have been in business a lot longer than he has by the way he puts Jalapeños out there as being part of the community,” Page said.

For almost a decade, Jheovanny has served as board member for the Boys and Girls Club of West Alabama. This year, he is the board chairman. He said being involved in the program that provides homework and mentoring support for children from age 6 to 15 “became a passion for me.”

He has also spent time talking with students in the Junior Achievement League and career technical education programs in Tuscaloosa County. “They are the future of America,” Jheovanny said. “It is important to me, through my knowledge and experience as a business leader, to teach them and give them a little bit of knowledge about how to run a business, how to build good character.”

Small Business Advocate

Building up other businesses also appeals to Jheovanny. Since 2014, he has served as a member of the Alabama Small Business Commission, which advises governmental entities on policies that encourage new businesses and expansion of existing businesses. “I’m glad to be a liaison between the small business community and Montgomery,” said Jheovanny.

“I talk to all kind of retailers around town, not only restaurants, but grocery stores and small Mom and Pop shops” about business licenses, taxes and “a whole variety of business issues,” he said, adding it is an honor to be trusted to convey the concerns of small business to governmental leaders.

Still Growing

As for his own business, “we are still in the growing mode, building our brand,” Jheovanny said. Both he and Justin mentioned the possibility of a fourth Tuscaloosa-area restaurant. “Right now, though, we are good just focusing on” improving the three current restaurants and expanding our customer base, Justin added. “We are so blessed and so grateful for this community,” said Jheovanny. “Everybody has embraced us. Everywhere you go in Tuscaloosa, you say ‘Jalapeños,’ and everybody knows who we are.”

The Essentials

Founded: 2001

Number of Employees: 49

Mentor: Wayne Grimball

Smart Move: Bringing Jala and Peño to life as our mascots.

Learning Moment: When we realized that we had to jump on the social media wagon. We used to think: We will never have to use it. We were wrong.

Wisdom Shared: Surround yourself and your business with others you like and who are in similar situations. It’s a lot easier to go through obstacles and face difficulties when you have people who can give you advice and wisdom. Chances are they have been down that road before.

<https://alabamaretail.org/news/american-dream-jalapenos-mexican-grill-member-profile/>

Alabama industries large and small are coming together to support health care workers fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Boeing in Huntsville and Mercedes-Benz in Tuscaloosa County are among the state's biggest employers that are deploying resources to produce face masks and face shields for hospitals and first responders. Beyond that, clothing designers, textile manufacturers, breweries and a host of other companies across Alabama have quickly pivoted their daily operations to turn out protective gear, medical equipment and hand sanitizer. An estimated 45 businesses in the state are looking at shifting to produce personal protective equipment, or PPE, said Alabama Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield.

For some, those shifts have required new capital investments, additional equipment and retraining of employees, he added. "We're proud to see so many companies stepping up in this time of great need, with Alabama workers answering the call to support their neighbors and communities," he said. Employees at the Mercedes-Benz U.S. International plant in Tuscaloosa County are making face masks and face shields for local hospitals. They are using the plant's 3D printers to produce face shields, at a rate of 100 to 150 per day. They're also making masks, which can be sterilized up to 25 times. Other Alabama automakers have joined in the effort as well, producing equipment, donating supplies and providing design and manufacturing expertise.

Meanwhile, Boeing today delivered an initial shipment of 2,300 reusable, 3D-printed face shields to the Department of Health and Human Services. The companywide effort includes its Huntsville employees, who are using additive manufacturing machines to 3D-print a frame with an adjustable headband that allows a clear plastic face shield to be snapped onto it. Boeing worked with healthcare providers across the U.S. to understand the most urgent needs and align those with its manufacturing capabilities. Today's shipment of face shields will be distributed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Boeing employees nationwide are set to produce thousands per week.

"Boeing is proud to stand alongside many other great American companies in the fight against COVID-19, and we are dedicated to supporting our local communities, especially our frontline healthcare professionals, during this unprecedented time," said Boeing President and CEO David Calhoun. Elsewhere in Alabama, Cullman County's HomTex plant has shifted from producing luxury linens to filtered face masks, with a total of several hundred thousand already. And Fort Payne sock maker, Renfro Corp., is ramping up to produce masks as well.

Other efforts include breweries in several communities that are making hand sanitizer and a partnership between Birmingham wedding dress designer Heidi Elnora and Moulton's Red Land Cotton that has so far produced and distributed more than 15,000 face masks.

<https://www.madeinalabama.com/2020/04/alabama-companies-pivot-to-produce-supplies-for-health-care-workers/>

Area Economy: Economic Development in West Alabama

Barkley Garrett / The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama

The greater Tuscaloosa area's progressive business climate has attracted international attention and investment. With an innovative public-private partnership in place, Tuscaloosa County has emerged as one of Alabama's most dynamic economies. The Tuscaloosa/Birmingham region is among the best places in the nation to start and grow a business, according to numerous economic development and business sources including Forbes and Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazines. Tuscaloosa County and its surrounding area offer all of the components necessary for a business to succeed and grow.

With the University of Alabama, Stillman College, the University of West Alabama, Shelton State Community College, Beville State Community College and strong public and private schools, education is big business throughout west Alabama. Healthcare also plays a significant economic role. DCH Health System has two hospitals, DCH Regional Medical Center and Northport Medical Center. The Veterans Administration Hospital is a large complex, and Bryce Hospital serves mentally-challenged patients.

Approximately 30 percent of the non-agricultural workforce has jobs in government, healthcare and education. Sixteen percent of the 95,000-plus non-agricultural workforce finds itself in manufacturing. Those manufacturers include Mercedes-Benz, BFGoodrich, Nucor Steel, Johnson Controls, ZF Lemforder, Hunt Refining, Westervelt and many others. Automotive, electronics, plastic injection molding, steel, wood products, food products and chemicals are just some of the areas of manufacturing in the community.

Tuscaloosa is also proud of its homegrown businesses. Large companies like Randall-Reilly, Fitts Industries and Phifer Wire Products were born and raised in Tuscaloosa County and are prospering with nationwide reach today. Our retail trade is growing and is concentrated in the cities of Tuscaloosa and Northport mostly, where more than 20 percent of the workforce sells everything from specialty items to clothing to outdoor gear and sport utility vehicles.

Construction, transportation, finance, insurance and real estate also thrive in in west Alabama. Many of these are small businesses, the backbone of the economy and more than 85 percent of the membership in The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama. Tuscaloosa County has become an outstanding investment opportunity for small business development and new business startups. In fact, the Tuscaloosa-Birmingham corridor consistently ranks in the top 20 markets in the U.S. for entrepreneurial success.

Our strong major banks, credit unions and other financial institutions have combined deposits of several billion dollars and represent an exceptional base for meeting the needs of an expanding economy and growing community. Support for existing business and entrepreneurs comes from a number of sources, including the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, which has professional economic development officials on staff. The Edge - Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and various entities within the University of Alabama provide services to support commercial, retail, entrepreneurial and small businesses throughout the region.

The Chamber can assist with strategic planning, technology development, training, site assistance, marketing and other business-related initiatives. The Chamber also coordinates retail recruitment for the City of Tuscaloosa through a contract for professional services with the Tuscaloosa City Council.

<https://tuscaloosachamber.com/area-economy>

ZF Chassis Honored With Alabama Manufacturer of the Year

WVUA

May 31, 2019

<https://wvua23.com/zf-chassis-honored-with-alabama-manufacturer-of-the-year/>

CEO Page Tapped For Board of Prestigious Industry Group

Ryan Phillips | Patch

September 23, 2020

<https://patch.com/alabama/tuscaloosa/chamber-ceo-page-tapped-board-prestigious-industry-group>

Mercedes to Construct \$53 Million Plant in Vance, Create 373 Jobs

Stephen Dethrage | Tuscaloosa Thread

September 29, 2020

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/mercedes-to-construct-53-million-plant-in-vance-create-373-jobs/>

Tuscaloosa City Council approves COVID-19 relief package for bars

Kelvin Reynolds | WBRC

September 15, 2020

<https://www.wbrc.com/2020/09/15/tuscaloosa-city-council-approves-covid-relief-package-bars/>

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Session II

Below are the biographies for presenters for Session II, exploring public and affordable housing options.

Ms. Jeanette Barnes

Ms. Jeannette Barnes is a community activist and member of the Board of Commissioners of the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority since March of 2013, and has resided in McKenzie Court for the past 9 years. Prior to her move to McKenzie Court, she resided in Rosedale Court, but was left homeless when a tornado ravaged her community on April 27, 2011. Jeanette previously served as the spokesperson for the Residents' Council of Rosedale Court and currently serves as the Treasurer of the Residents' Council of McKenzie Court. With respect to her years of active participation with the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority, Ms. Barnes said that she "went from being homeless to helping people get into homes." She is actively involved in missionary activities with her church and has served for the past 4 years with the Legends of Integrity Empowerment Program, a community service program designed for older adults which engages the participants in fun activities, retreats and educational workshops. Jeanette's goal is to help heal communities through prayer and outreach.



Chris Hall

Chris Hall began his career at the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority (THA) in 2004 and recently became the agency's Executive Director. THA's housing portfolio includes more than 900 public housing rental units and the management of approximately 1400 Housing Choice Vouchers. Prior to becoming Executive Director, Chris served as THA's Director of Development where he was responsible for the development of approximately 750 mixed-finance, affordable rental units with a combined total development cost of more than \$140 million. He was also responsible for the planning and implementation of THA's capital fund program and the establishment of THA's homeownership program, which has resulted in the development of nearly 50 single-family homes for low to moderate-income, first-time home buyers to date. Chris has served on numerous boards and committees to include the city's Fair Housing Committee, The University of Alabama's Neighborhood Partnership Committee, the Alabama Housing Authority Risk Management Advisory Board, the city's Framework Steering Committee, the Tuscaloosa All-Inclusive Playground Committee, the Alabama Association of Housing & Redevelopment Authorities' Education and Training Committee, and the West Alabama Regional Commission's Agency on Aging Regional Advisory Committee.



Antwon Prince-Sealy

Antwon Prince-Sealy is the Director of Housing Programs for Community Service Programs of West Alabama (CSP). CSP is a Community Action Agency, HUD-approved Local Housing Counseling Agency, and NeighborWorks® Chartered-Member Organization servicing twelve counties throughout West Alabama. CSP's Housing Programs Office is focused on being the premiere housing resource center in West Alabama committed to building stronger families and communities through affordable housing initiatives, financial capability programming, and resident leadership development. Antwon is a husband, and a father of two great sons.



Prince-Sealy is a two-time alumnus of The University of Alabama.

TUSCALOOSA, AL (WBRC) - For the Tuscaloosa Police Department's Police Athletic League, or PAL, times like Spring Break are an opportunity to help keep kids out of trouble, and to strengthen the relationship between young people and officers.

Although PAL operates throughout the year, school breaks are a time when students may find themselves with nothing to do. Police often say that can lead to trouble.

PAL provides activities and mentorship for kids aged 6 - 18, and operates a gym at McKenzie Court in West Tuscaloosa. Although many kids live within walking distance of the gym, parents can also drop kids off at the gym.

"We're here, open this week all during Spring Break," PAL Director Officer Lillie Leatherwood said. "The kids are used to getting up, going to school, and having somewhere to go. So we want this week to be like that, as well, as opposed to them sitting at home, not having anything to do.

"Leatherwood has been with PAL since 1993. After being with the program for more than two decades, she says she has had the opportunity to work with children of former PAL participants. Leatherwood says PAL allows kids to form a bond with officers, and learn to trust the officers.

"Sometimes kids are afraid of police officers," Leatherwood said. "And we don't want that. We are here for them and open for them, and whatever they may want to talk about. And that's what we're designed for. And I think we have made a lot of achievement in that area.

"Leatherwood says throughout the years, PAL participants return to the gym, and many tell Leatherwood the same thing. "'I'm staying out of trouble,' that's the first thing they always tell me," Leatherwood said. "Because they know that's what we want to hear. And that's always something we've impressed upon them. 'Don't get in trouble, make good decisions.' Because one bad decision, that can change your whole life.

"Aside from being the director of PAL, Leatherwood is also an Olympic gold medalist in track. She earned a gold medal in 1984 and a silver medal in 1988. That allows her to be able to give first hand advice to kids, when it comes to working toward and reaching their goals.

Summer is also a busy time for the program, providing kids with positive activities while they are out of school. Leatherwood says PAL's summer activities include bowling, swimming and going to the movies.

<https://www.wbrc.com/story/31495617/tuscaloosa-police-provide-activities-for-kids-during-spring-break/>

Tuscaloosa's public housing authority will receive more than a half million dollars to assist the city's low-income population and the agency's pandemic-related expenses. The Northport Housing Authority and several other West Alabama housing agencies will receive funds available by the CARES Act legislation to prevent, prepare for and respond to a potential coronavirus outbreak.

The Tuscaloosa Housing Authority will receive \$555,018 and Northport Housing Authority will receive \$261,727. It's part of \$685 million that's being distributed to public housing agencies across the country and \$8.2 million to 17 in Rep. Terri Sewell's 7th Congressional District.

"As many of us know all too well, low to moderate-income families are among the most vulnerable during times of economic uncertainty," THA executive director Chris Hall said in a release Sewell's office. The funds are intended to make more subsidized housing available and help local facilities meet sterilization standards needed to protect residents during the coronavirus pandemic.

Housing authorities can use the money to create or update infectious disease outbreak plans, buy personal protective equipment for staff and assist with childcare services for residents. Funds can be used on many other prevention and response expenses, including travel costs for resident testing, social distancing modifications for communal spaces or staggered work schedules, sick leave, security costs and low-cost computers and tablets for students.

"This funding is invaluable in terms of providing us with the additional resources necessary to assist the families we serve during the COVID-19 crisis," Hall said. "The Tuscaloosa Housing Authority is committed to ensuring that 100% of these funds go directly to those who need it the most."

Greene County Public Housing Authority director Anita Lewis said the funds are much-needed for rural communities. "We have served the community the best, we can, short of PPE and proper protections," she said. "My staff has worked extra hours in order to protect the community from this virus." Both directors expressed gratitude to Sewell for her work to secure the allocations.

"This pandemic has only amplified the real health and economic challenges facing vulnerable communities," she said. "I know that these funds are not enough to solve this problem, but it is my hope that they will help bridge the gap as we continue to work toward finding a vaccine and cure to the COVID-19 crisis."

As of Monday, the Alabama Department of Public Health had reported 9,953 positive cases of COVID-19 in the state. There had been 401 deaths. Tuscaloosa, Marengo and Sumter counties have reported four deaths in each county. Hale and Pickens counties have each reported two deaths while three have been reported in Greene County.

The following housing authorities in West Alabama will also receive funds:

Housing Authority of Greene: \$143,155

Housing Authority of the City of Demopolis: \$109,800

Housing Authority of the City of Aliceville: \$63,676

Housing Authority of the City of Livingston: \$58,076

York Housing Authority: \$53,449

Uniontown Housing Authority: \$48,933

Gordo Housing Authority: \$34,459

Housing Authority of the City of Eutaw: \$29,664

Housing Authority of Reform: \$27,858

Housing Authority of the City of Linden: \$23,712

Housing Authority of the City of Greensboro: \$23,475

Housing Authority of the City of Marion: \$17,224

<https://www.tuscaloosaneews.com/news/20200511/housing-authorities-to-receive-millions-in-covid-19-relief-funds>

Ralph Ruggs is leaving the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority in a better place than he found it. The outgoing executive director is retiring Tuesday, just more than 10 years after taking over an organization in turmoil. In 2009, critical reports from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the housing authority's auditor and an independent consultant concerning questionable management practices ultimately led to the firing of his predecessor.

Ruggs, who had recently retired after 14 years as executive director of Birmingham's housing authority following a 23-year stint in HUD's Birmingham field office, was tapped to calm the waters. Among those making that decision was Lin Moore, chairman of the Tuscaloosa Housing Authority's board of commissioners, who recalled the tumultuous days that led up to Ruggs' hiring. "We were in distress when he got here," said Moore, who has led the Pritchett-Moore Inc. insurance agency since 2004. "He came in, he assessed, he righted the ship and he's just taken us to great heights.

"It's really exciting that we've reached these heights. It's a bittersweet moment in that Ralph is going to be leaving us, but he has prepared us for this perpetuation and we're very confident as a board that we will continue to work very hard each and every day to aspire to uphold the legacy that Ralph Ruggs helped establish here."

A native of Mobile, Ruggs began his career in public housing after graduating from Alabama State University in 1971. Now, at age 71, Ruggs said he's ready to take some time for himself. "I think it's time to transition to let someone else step in and carry the Housing Authority to the next level," Ruggs said. "I've had a wonderful 10 years here as executive director, (but) it's time for me to move on."

The challenges facing Ruggs did not dissipate after resolving the spending and construction issues he faced upon being hired. In April 2011, an EF-4 tornado swept across Tuscaloosa, destroying more than half of the Housing Authority's Rosedale Court complex and immediately displacing 90 families. But as luck would have it, Ruggs and the Housing Authority staff were already in the process of planning the redevelopment of the affordable living development that was originally built in 1952.

The storm just accelerated the process. "I felt very confident at that particular point in time that we would get the support from HUD and the other entities to help us in the redevelopment effort," Ruggs said. "I was never apprehensive about that, in terms of redeveloping that site, I just felt very strongly that it would happen – it would just be a matter of time as we put together our plans for redevelopment."

Among the accomplishments he is most proud of during his tenure is an affordable housing program that, so far, has allowed 44 families to become first-time home owners. Many of these people, Ruggs said, didn't think such a goal was possible. "To see individuals who thought they would never have the opportunity for home ownership to actually own a home, that's tremendous progress and a success, I think, of the Housing Authority."

The man chosen to follow Ruggs is Chris Hall, the Housing Authority's former director of development who assumed his new duties as executive director on Monday.

Hall, 44, is a lifelong Tuscaloosa resident who has been with the Housing Authority since 2004. He said he is looking forward to the redevelopment of other aging Housing Authority properties, such as Hay Court and Branscomb Apartments, while accepting the challenge of upholding Ruggs' legacy.

"Mainly, I just hope that we can carry the momentum left behind from Ralph," Hall said. "One thing about Ralph is that he always did it the right way, and I hope that we continue to do it the right way moving forward."

"When he took over the state of affairs here – we were distressed. And then Ralph came in and he's all about integrity, has a lot of compassion – always cared about the residents, always cared about our staff and always cared about how the housing authority interconnected with the community, and we just hope that we can continue to perpetuate some of the things that he's left in place."

<https://www.tuscaloosaneews.com/news/20191230/tuscaloosa-housing-authority-director-to-retire>

Bed bugs, fire hazards and mold Inside Alabama's worst public housing

Ramsey Archibold and Lawrence Specker | AL.com

January 16, 2020

<https://www.al.com/news/2020/01/bed-bugs-fire-hazards-and-mold-inside-alabamas-worst-public-housing.html>

Alabama grants awarded for emergency housing needs

Keith Lane | NBC 15

September 18, 2020

<https://myNBC15.com/news/local/alabama-grants-awarded-for-emergency-housing-needs>

Digital History of McKenzie Courts

Tuscaloosa Housing Authority | YouTube

July 11, 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5lFr34dmrMMHt4hedt9dQQ>

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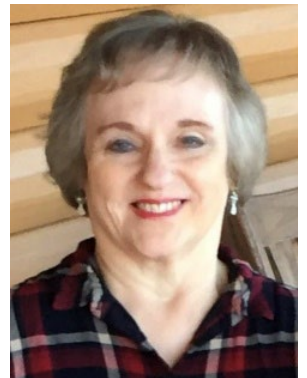
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Session III

Below is the biography of the panelists for Session III, discussing the broad spectrum of reproductive health, services, and education opportunities currently being offered throughout Tuscaloosa County.

Vicki Avery

Vicki Avery married her childhood sweetheart, Dennis Avery, in 1972 at 18. After both graduating Bible College in 1978 and serving at Love Boys Home in Brookwood, AL for 4 years, Dennis became the pastor of Victorious Life Church in Fosters, AL and has remained pastoring the church for 36 years. Vicki founded and established the Jean Browning Home in 2003 opening the doors for residents in July 2005. The home serves as a safe, caring environment for pregnant women, young mothers and their children who are homeless or displaced. The goal of the home is to provide basic needs, ongoing access to medical care, educational classes and workshops, employment opportunities, and a positive, nurturing atmosphere to promote peace of mind and self-esteem.



Sandi Horsley

After graduating from college, Sandi Horsley and her husband, Bruce, moved to California. While he attended seminary, she worked with high school and college students in the Anaheim and Garden Grove communities through the Campus Life/Youth for Christ organization. After her first child was born, they returned to Alabama. She worked as a Personal Shopper for Parisian for over 21 years. She also coached tennis at Hoover High School and the University of Montevallo and still teaches tennis in the Hoover and Tuscaloosa areas. She was hired as the At-Risk Counselor for the Bibb County Schools and Court System in 2006 and worked with at-risk families for six years. Sandi began working with women, families and pregnancy test centers in 2012. She currently works with the Choices Pregnancy Clinic in Tuscaloosa.



JJ Johnson

Jamie “JJ” Johnson, an Alabama native, moved back to Tuscaloosa from North Carolina in 2017 and shortly after, retired from a 35-year career as a medical transcriptionist. For the past three years, she has been a Coordinator for the West Alabama Clinic Defenders, protecting countless patients and their companions from harassment by anti-abortion protestors and monitoring the protestors' activity. Her favorite part of being a clinic escort is providing emotional support to people, and as a resident of a blue dot in a deep red state she hopes to raise awareness about the importance of abortion access and help others understand the need to support those who have abortions.



Ginger Philips

Ginger Phillips is a Family Nurse Practitioner with the Alabama Department of Public Health. She has devoted the majority of her 20-year career as a Nurse Practitioner to providing women's healthcare services to underserved women within the state of Alabama in both urban and rural public health care clinics. Public health nursing with a focus on gynecological care and family planning has been the hallmark of her clinical practice. One of her many passions includes her work in helping to reduce cervical cancer incidence and mortality rates for the women who reside within the state of Alabama. While pursuing her doctor of nursing practice at The University of Alabama, Ginger is working on a quality improvement project to support the need of a patient navigator program to improve adherence to public health follow-up care standards for underserved women with abnormal cervical cytology. Ginger is involved in several professional nursing organizations and has served as a preceptor for many NP students over the years. Mrs. Phillips is also involved in her community, Pickens County, where she resides with her husband and two children.



Phillips is and alumna of The University of Alabama (BSN) and Mississippi University for Women (MSN) as Family Nurse Practitioner.

Laurie Betram Roberts

Laurie Betram Roberts is the Executive Director of the Yellowhammer Fund, an abortion fund and reproductive justice organization focused on the Deep South. She is also the co-founder and former Executive Director of Mississippi Reproductive Freedom Fund (MRFF), the model for Yellowhammer Fund's approach to abortion funding and practical support as just one prong in alleviating the governmental and economic coercion placed on the bodies of people of low income—especially those who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). Laurie is a writer, activist and mother of seven, and organizes across the intersections of gender, race, poverty, disability and sexuality, with the goal of centering and empowering the marginalized communities that she navigates daily in her own life.



Alabama's highest abortion rates are mostly in the Black Belt, where healthcare options are few
Anna Claire Vollers | AL.com May 23, 2019

The flashing sign outside the Sumter County Health Department advertises family planning services every Wednesday. That means birth control and STD testing. It's one of the few places in rural Sumter County where women can get birth control, and it's available for free. But the lines there can be long and the wait time can take two hours or more, said Kierra Bailey, 22. Earlier this month she graduated from the University of West Alabama, just down the road from the health department.

"People in the cities don't know what it's like to drive 45 minutes to get the healthcare you want," she said. The nearest OBGYN is about an hour north, in Tuscaloosa, or 45 minutes west over the state line, in Meridian, Miss. Tuscaloosa is also home to one of the state's three remaining abortion clinics. A look at the data shows that families in Black Belt counties like Sumter will likely be the ones most impacted by the nation's strictest abortion law. It was signed last week by Gov. Kay Ivey, herself a Black Belt native. The law bans nearly all abortion and makes no exceptions for cases of rape or incest.

Alabama counties with the highest abortion rates, like Sumter, are in the Black Belt. It's a region once known for its rich soil, but is now home to some of Alabama's poorest, and often majority-black counties. When you're trying to make ends meet, an unplanned pregnancy can threaten your entire family, said Bailey. In Sumter County, the median household income is not quite \$22,000 a year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That's less than half the state average of \$46,000.

"I don't think people understand that when we say we're struggling, we're struggling," said Bailey. She recently moved back to her hometown in nearby Hale County and is looking for work. "You have to make a decision. Do I eat today, or take my kid to the doctor?" The abortion law was designed as a legal challenge to *Roe v. Wade* and championed by Alabama's Republican legislators. It was sponsored in the House by Rep. Terri Collins, R-Decatur, and in the Senate by Sen. Clyde Chambliss, R-Prattville. Both represent districts where the abortion rates are below the state average.

It's a distinction not lost on some in the Black Belt. "When you're affluent and making decisions for the poor, you can't possibly see where we're coming from," said Bailey. "You want us to conform to your way of living and we don't have the means. You have access and we don't."

Hit the hardest

A few years ago, Adley Joyce thought she was pregnant. At the time, she was a college student and wasn't sure what to do or where to go. She eventually learned her pregnancy test had been a false positive. It was a huge relief. "But in that situation where I thought I was pregnant, I wanted to have a choice," said Joyce, now 26. She works in Sumter County at a packaging company and is in school to earn a master's degree in business. "Now that women can't have a choice, it's a big deal."

In Alabama, 65 percent of abortions are performed on black women and women of color, though they account for only one-third of all pregnancies. And while the Alabama Department of Public Health doesn't report socioeconomic status of women who get abortions, nationwide nearly half of women who get abortions live in poverty.

Greene and Sumter Counties – two of Alabama’s poorest counties, according to the 2017 median household income reported by the U.S. Census – have the second- and third-highest rates of abortion according to 2016 data, the most recent available from the Alabama Department of Public Health. The highest rate is over in Macon, near the Georgia state line. There, about 20 percent of all pregnancies end in abortion. The state average is about 9 percent. “Where we are is a big Bible Belt area,” said Joyce. “But I’ve actually been really surprised to see people I thought would be so against (abortion) say this law is too extreme, that they’re taking it too far.”

Hard to access

One of the reasons women in places like Sumter County seek abortions is the lack of healthcare options, said Candace O’Brien, vice president of healthcare access at the Yellowhammer Fund, a Tuscaloosa-based organization that provides financial assistance to women seeking abortions. “There’s a lack of reproductive and sexual healthcare access in the area,” said O’Brien. “Or they don’t have transportation to get to a medical care facility.”

That lack extends to women who choose to have their babies. Half of all births to Greene County mothers get less than adequate prenatal care, according to ADPH numbers. Statewide, just one-quarter of mothers receive less than adequate prenatal care. And about 47 percent of children in Greene and Sumter Counties live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Because Alabama did not expand Medicaid, only the poorest Alabamians are eligible. That leaves many women without insurance. “When I stopped being eligible for Medicaid, it was hard,” said Bailey. She’s now on her father’s insurance for a few more years, she said, but still has high co-pays and deductibles. “I started not going to the doctor. Do I risk not going, and getting sick? Or having these bill collectors calling?”

More of a say

Tandreka Holloway, 23, is a student at the University of West Alabama and plans to graduate in December with a degree in criminal justice. She’s from Chambers County, which also has an abortion rate much higher than the state average. While she said she personally is against abortion, she doesn’t like the way the law was passed.

“I feel like all women should be able to decide if they want to keep their child or not, especially if they may not be financially stable,” she said. “I just feel that more people who are affected, who might need to have abortions, should have had more of a say-so in this. If they had asked people in the state, it may not have passed.”

Leaving

About 10 years ago, Bailey said, her mother had to have an abortion because an ectopic pregnancy threatened her life. “She already had three children,” she said. “My mom said it was the hardest decisions to make. It’s something that changes you on the inside. “These women aren’t heartless. They made a decision and chose themselves.”

Bailey said she hopes eventually to leave Alabama. So does Joyce. “Nothing’s changing around here,” said Joyce. “I’ve always said I wanted to be the change, and to try to make change in this area and the state. But we’re only going backwards. I don’t feel the need to stay where we’re not moving forward.”

<https://www.al.com/news/2019/05/alabamas-highest-abortion-rates-are-mostly-in-the-black-belt-where-healthcare-options-are-few.html>

On Tuesday, a group of pro-life individuals gathered outside of the West Alabama Women's Center in an attempt to help women understand the impact of having an abortion. Amanda Delaluz, who stands outside of the clinic almost every day, said she often travels to Montgomery to help persuade young women from getting an abortion.

"We are here because we care about the women and their babies," Delaluz told *Yellowhammer News*. Delaluz explained she wants to help women understand what they are about to go through and the problems that can occur before they endure the procedure.

"We usually have one or two a day that come speak with us," she said. "We have people who come back to us and thank us for saving their baby." Mike Howell has been coming to stand outside of the clinic for around three years to help women understand that abortion is not their only option.

"We offer free doctors, money, adoption, anything to get these men and women to change their minds," Howell stated. Choices Pregnancy Clinic, which operates next door to the West Alabama Women's Center, allows their patients to explore their options before going through with an abortion.

"If we can get them to go to Choices next door, we count that as a win," said Howell. Paul Lake, who told *Yellowhammer News* he has been attempting to persuade women from getting abortions for 10 years, refers to the West Alabama Women's Center in Tuscaloosa as the "abortion capital" in the south.

According to Lake, most women do not even know their child's heart is beating. "The main message is to let the women know that their baby's heart is beating," said Lake.

While speaking with *Yellowhammer News*, Lake shouted out to a stumbling young girl leaving the clinic following an abortion procedure, telling her, "God still loves you. They offer counseling services next door."

The West Alabama Women's Center, which operates in Walt Maddox's backyard, offers abortions and pregnancy testing services among other things.

<https://yellowhammernews.com/pro-life-group-offers-information-alternatives-outside-tuscaloosa-abortion-clinic/>

Exactly a year after Alabama passed into law one of the country's most severe abortion restrictions, the state's abortion fund is taking a major step toward expanding access to the procedure in the Southeast.

Gov. Kay Ivey signed the Human Life Protection Act, which would have effectively banned abortion in the state, on May 15, 2019, though a US district judge issued an injunction that temporarily blocked the law from going into effect. While its future remains in limbo, the passage of the ban drove home just how vulnerable access is in a state that has long been dedicated to winnowing away abortion rights through its legislature.

The state is down to three clinics, two of which were owned by aging proprietors—a fairly commonplace reality in several other states that are hostile to abortion rights. But Alabama is also home to robust grassroots abortion advocacy; one of the biggest beneficiaries of the backlash to last year's law was the Yellowhammer Fund, the state's most prominent abortion fund, which saw a massive influx of cash. Just days after the ban was signed into law, my *Mother Jones* colleague Marisa Endicott reported that the fund was able to support three times the number of clients as the year prior.

Now, on the anniversary of that dark day for abortion rights, the Yellowhammer Fund is purchasing a clinic in Tuscaloosa, the West Alabama Women's Center.

"We're probably going to need more clinics in safe places as executive orders slow things down, as whatever happens with SCOTUS slows things down," says The Very Reverend Katherine Hancock Ragsdale, president and CEO of the National Abortion Federation, a professional association for abortion providers. "Existing clinics can't necessarily handle the volume of the closures that could be looming."

Today, though, is more than a local victory. In fact, it may herald a shift in abortion care strategy much more broadly. Traditionally, abortion funds, which offer financial and logistical assistance to people seeking abortion care, have remained separate from clinics—operating in tandem with them only insofar as to set their clients up with appointments and work through the financials. But consolidating their mission may be exactly what is needed to shore up the precarious network of access in the region and make abortion care available to low-income folks.

"I'd be surprised if we didn't see more funds running clinics in the future," says Gloria Gray, the former owner of West Alabama Women's Center, who reached out to Yellowhammer to ask if it was interested in purchasing the clinic. "I think that would be a good, good way to go—I will say Yellowhammer has totally amazed me at how well they've been able to get to the donors, and how they have done as well as they have."

Gray has owned and operated the clinic since 1993. In recent years, the clinic has provided more than half the abortions in the state, serving women across the Southeast as states in the region have implemented increasingly draconian abortion restrictions. Gray, though, felt now was time to step aside. "I was turning

70 years old,” she tells *Mother Jones*. “I wanted to enjoy my grandchildren, I wanted to travel a bit, I wanted to [go visit] my son—those were my main reasons for wanting someone else that I knew could keep the clinic open and would go in and run it well.”

Amanda Reyes, executive director of the Yellowhammer Fund, explains the organization’s decision to take over the clinic as it sort of coming full circle—after all, she tells me, Yellowhammer started by offering escort services to shield patients from protesters at the same Tuscaloosa clinic. “This gives us an opportunity to have a direct impact on access,” she says. “Even starting the fund was a bit of a pipe dream, but when we started the fund, we had an idea that we would like to buy or start a clinic if we were successful beyond our wildest dreams. And we were!”

The younger generation of abortion rights activists has often been more likely to work with abortion funds or in general activism than to work with or as abortion providers, in part because of a lower economic barrier to entry. Many clinic owners are of a generation that was less bogged down by student debt and the consequences of the 2008 recession; they purchased their businesses when the economy was steadier and the wealth gap was lesser.

“Those of us who are poised to take over this kind of work, we don’t have the money. It’s hard for us, we have all this student debt, we can’t always just spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a clinic that might just be a money pit that we keep open because we believe in the ability of people to have abortion care,” Reyes, who is 31, tells me. “How the economy has played out over the last several decades is a major factor, and student debt is one of the dangers to keeping abortion clinics open.” Reyes adds that having a collective effort like an abortion fund makes for more possibilities than a single prospective buyer, and she explains that most of the clinic’s current staff plans to stay on—meaning they will be able to retain valuable institutional knowledge.

There are, of course, also the challenges and costs associated with keeping a clinic open, particularly in a red state, where anti-abortion legislation is always brewing in the background, creating expensive, burdensome restrictions and policies that clinics must follow to continue operating. “One of the reasons why [independent clinic owners] may have such a hard time retiring is that there’s not always a lot of money in this business,” Reyes says. “And it’s expensive to run this kind of clinic—you have to deal with TRAP laws and all kinds of things, you may not have savings.” Gray also admits that while it’s not why she’s retiring, the constant legislative onslaught, the stress of running a medical practice, and the regular abuse from protesters wore on her. She even recalls a time when an anti-abortion protester called her religious mother to inform her that her daughter had purchased an abortion clinic. “I did get tired, constantly being told what an evil person I was for doing what I did,” Gray says.

For Yellowhammer, the money for the acquisition was actually made possible by the extreme outpouring of support in the wake of last year’s ban. “That’s really fantastic, to be able to say that one year later, after [lawmakers] passed an abortion ban, we now have enough resources to buy a clinic and make not only abortion care more accessible, but comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care more accessible to people in Alabama,” Reyes says. “That’s not something [those lawmakers] were intending to do.”

Ragsdale acknowledges taking on an abortion clinic is a tall ask for anyone—which is another reason why abortion providers are aging out of the business even while there are not enough new providers to take their places, particularly in hostile states like Alabama. Ragsdale notes that red states often rely on traveling doctors to serve as abortion providers, as it's less of a risk if their families live in a state that has more liberal views on abortion. "People go into [this field] out of passion," Ragsdale says. "They go into it to serve their values and to do work that's meaningful, and that's great, but if you're young, you also have a life to build, perhaps a family to build and support. You can't just completely ignore the financial realities."

Under the new ownership, the West Alabama Women's Center plans to expand the services offered at the clinic over the next several years to cover full-spectrum reproductive health care. This too may signal another shift in modern abortion care. Yellowhammer plans to use a model similar to that of CHOICES in Memphis, which was one of the first clinics to bill itself as a reproductive health care center rather than strictly an abortion clinic. "Because our focus is as a reproductive justice fund, there is a whole host of other things that we are interested in," Reyes says, "including comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care, continuation of pregnancies, trans-affirming health care."

These kinds of changes, particularly in the Southeast, are crucial in this moment. Abortion access in the Bible Belt has been whittled down significantly and has become a major battleground in the fight for abortion rights since a wave of bans swept through the region a year ago. While all those laws have since been temporarily blocked in federal court, states in the region more recently tried to use the coronavirus pandemic to reignite the fight over abortion access. And over just the next few weeks, the Supreme Court is set to rule on an abortion rights case that could open the door to more restrictions in 15 states, Alabama included; a new analysis from Guttmacher, a research and policy organization focused on reproductive health care, estimates that the clinic in Tuscaloosa would be one of only two clinics that could withstand that pressure in the state.

"This gives us the chance to try to rework the health care system and provide a model for what health care in this country should look like," Reyes says. "I think that running this clinic and having this knowledge about how the health care system works and using that to our community's advantage will help us create some really great policy ideas, too."

<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2020/05/alabama-yellowhammer-fund-buys-west-alabama-womens-center-abortion-clinic-tuscaloosa/>

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- **Yellowhammer ally organizations in Selma and Birmingham currently distribute material support to marginalized communities impacted by COVID-19, particularly low-income families with young children**

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87 clinics throughout the state offer family planning services.

For more information please contact your local County Health Department or www.adph.org/familyplanning

The Title X Family Planning Program is a federally funded grant program for public and private non-profit agencies to provide reproductive health and educational services.



Alabama Department of Public Health
Bureau of Family Health Services

ADPH FHS 516 | 10/01/09

ARE YOU READY?



There are a lot of ways to prevent pregnancy. **Together** you can decide which method will be best for both of you. Birth control works best when the man and the woman choose the method **together**.

HIS

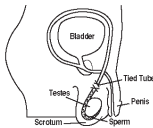
Condom (rubber)

A thin piece of latex that fits over the erect penis to catch sperm.



Withdrawal

Pulling the penis out and away from the vagina before ejaculation.



Vasectomy

Surgery that cuts and closes the tube that carries sperm. This method is **permanent**.

HIS & HERS

Abstinence

Deciding not to have sex and sticking to that decision. This form of birth control is 100% effective against preventing pregnancy.

HERS

HORMONAL METHODS:

Pill

Pills you take by mouth once a day everyday. Very effective if you take them everyday at the same time.



The Shot

A shot that you get every 12 weeks.



The Patch

A thin, stick-on square placed on the skin and changed every week.



Vaginal Ring

A small, flexible ring inserted in the vagina for 3 weeks.



IUD

A small, plastic object that is placed in the uterus by a health care provider. Could provide protection for 5-10 years depending on the type of IUD.



Implant

A single rod that is inserted under the skin of the arm by a trained provider. Provides protection for 3 years.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECPS)

1 or 2 doses of special birth control pills that may prevent pregnancy if taken within 72-120 hours after sex. They are not as effective as a regular birth control method.

HERS

BARRIER METHODS:

Diaphragm

A thin, rubber dome that goes inside the vagina and covers the cervix.



Cervical Cap

A thimble shaped cap that goes inside the vagina and fits over the cervix.

Spermicides

Chemicals (foam, film, cream, jelly or suppository) that are put inside the vagina to kill the sperm. Most effective when used along with a condom.



Female Condom

A thin sheath that fits inside the vagina to catch sperm.

OTHER METHODS:

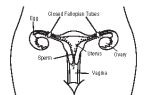
Natural Family Planning

Recognizing changes in a woman's body during the month to determine the days when she could get pregnant.



Sterilization

Surgical and non surgical procedures that prevent pregnancy by cutting and closing, or blocking the tubes that carry the eggs. These methods are known as a Bilateral Tubal Ligation and Essure and are **permanent**.



Birth control – Pick the one that is right for you.
Use it until you are ready to get pregnant.

Each pregnancy should be at least two years apart.
Give your body time to heal and recover.

Rest. Relax. Lower your stress.

Exercise regularly. Avoid extreme diets.
Plan to eat right and keep a healthy weight.

Ask about the shots you may need.

Don't forget to see your healthcare provider for regular
check-ups and dental visits before you get pregnant.

You are in control. Know your risk for STDs and HIV. Get tested!

Plan your family budget. Be ready for the extra cost of a new baby.

Learn how to manage your health problems
such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

Avoid chemicals or harmful substances at home
and work such as lead, mercury, or pesticides.

Newborn risk – If you had a baby born early or underweight, your
next baby may be at risk. See your doctor early if you get pregnant.

Add 400 mcg of folic acid to your diet now before
you get pregnant to help prevent birth defects.

History – Know your medical and family history for high
blood pressure, diabetes, and other health problems.

Evaluate your and your partner's family history of genetic disorders
such as Cystic Fibrosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Sickle Cell Disease, etc.

Ask for help if you are in an unsafe or violent situation.

Don't smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs!

Choose birth control and condoms. If you're having sex, use BOTH EVERY TIME to help prevent pregnancy, HIV & STDs.

Only complete and consistent abstinence from vaginal, anal and/or oral sex is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy and protecting against STDs.

There are many effective birth control methods. Choose the one that's right for you.

YOUR OPTIONS	HOW OFTEN YOU USE IT	WHERE TO GET IT	EFFECTIVENESS
IUD	Can be left in place for up to 3–10 years, reversible	A doctor's office or clinic	99+% Effective
Implant	Can be left in place for up to 3 years, reversible		
Male Sterilization	A one-time surgical procedure		
Female Sterilization	A one-time surgical procedure		
Shot	New shot every 3 months	A doctor's office or clinic	91-94% Effective
Ring	Leave ring in for 3 weeks, remove for week 4		
Patch	New patch once a week for 3 weeks, no patch for week 4		
The Pill	One pill at same time, every day		
Diaphragm Cervical Cap Male Condom Female Condom	Every time you have sex	A doctor's office or clinic or buy at drugstore	71-88% Effective
Spermicide	Every time you have sex	Buy at drugstore	72% Effective
Fertility-Awareness Based Methods	When a woman is most fertile – most likely to become pregnant	Download the fertility awareness based app to your electronic device or purchase a thermometer and calendar from the store.	

(See back for more details on each method)

Emergency Contraception

If your birth control failed or no birth control was used, get emergency contraception (see back for more info).



For more information, call 1-800-545-1098 or visit www.adph.org/familyplanning, or scan here.

This publication was made possible by a Federal Title X Family Planning Grant. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS.

ADPH-FHS-289 6.2015

	YOUR OPTIONS	WHAT IT IS	THINGS TO KNOW
Most Effective 99+%	IUD	A small (about an inch long) device that a doctor or nurse practitioner puts into your uterus (usually can't be felt by your partner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IUD can prevent pregnancy for 3-5 years (hormonal) or 10 years (copper), and the implant for up to 3 years. Can be easily removed by a doctor or nurse practitioner if you want to get pregnant.
	Implant	Tiny rod (about the size of a matchstick) containing a hormone that a doctor or nurse practitioner puts under your skin	
	Male Sterilization	A one time surgical procedure where the doctor closes or blocks the tubes that carry sperm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must use other birth control until the sperm are used up. It usually takes about three months. A simple test - semen analysis - shows when there are no more sperm in your semen. Medicaid will not pay for a sterilization until age 21. Medicaid will not pay for a sterilization until age 21. You may feel tired and have slight pain in your abdomen for 1 to 3 days after the procedure.
	Female Sterilization	A one time surgical procedure where the doctor closes or blocks the tubes that carry the egg(s) to the uterus.	
Very Effective 91-94%	Shot	An injection containing a hormone that is given by your health care provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each shot lasts for 3 months, so visit your health care provider every 3 months for a new shot
	Ring	A soft, flexible piece of plastic containing hormones that you put into your vagina for 3 weeks and then take out for the 4th week (usually can't be felt by partner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You'll need to visit a doctor or nurse practitioner for a prescription Put in a new ring every 3 weeks, remove it for 1 week
	Patch	A thin, beige, plastic patch containing hormones that you stick onto your skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You'll need to visit a doctor or nurse practitioner for a prescription Apply a new patch once a week for 3 weeks, then go 1 week without it
	The Pill	A hormonal pill you take every day at the same time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You'll need to visit a doctor or nurse practitioner for a prescription Take it when you do something else you do everyday, like brush your teeth in the morning
Effective 71-88%	Diaphragm	Silicone cups you put into your vagina every time you have sex (usually can't be felt by your partner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can put it in several hours before you have sex but you must leave it in place for 6 hours after you have sex. You'll need to visit a doctor or nurse practitioner to get the correct size and learn how to use and store it Using condoms reduces the risk of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections and diseases (STIs or STDs) if used for vaginal, anal and oral intercourse. You can purchase at stores without a prescription.
	Cervical Cap	A thin rubber sheath worn on a man's penis during sex as a contraceptive or as protection against infections and diseases.	
	Male Condom	The female condom is a thin sheath or pouch worn by a woman during sex. It entirely lines the vagina and helps to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV.	
Least Effective 72%	Female Condom	Usually a gel, foam, cream or suppository you put into your vagina using your fingers or an applicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to wait 10 minutes after you put it in before you have sex, and it only stays effective for about an hour You can purchase spermicides at stores without a prescription To prevent pregnancy, abstain from vaginal intercourse on your fertile days. Or use withdrawal, a condom, a sponge, a diaphragm, or a cap on those days. If your cycle (period) is not regular, this method is not a recommended form of birth control.
	Spermicide	Fertility awareness-based methods (FAMs) are ways to track ovulation - the release of an egg - in order to prevent pregnancy. Some people call FAMs "natural family planning."	
Fertility-Awareness Based Methods		A pill you can take up to 5 days (120 hours) AFTER you have unprotected sex, forgot to use birth control, or a condom broke, leaked or slipped off.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sooner you take it, the better it works. If taken within 72 hours after unprotected sex, emergency contraception is about 89% effective at preventing pregnancy. So it's smart to get some now and always have it with you. Emergency contraception helps prevent pregnancy. It is not an abortion pill. If you're already pregnant, it will not work.
Emergency Contraception (often called Plan B)			

Use BOTH birth control + condoms every time you have sex. Only condoms help protect against HIV and STDs.

*The percentages indicate the number out of every 100 women who experienced an unintended pregnancy with the first year of typical use of each contraceptive method.

Do I Have Cancer of the Cervix?

IF I HAVE AN ABNORMAL PAP SMEAR, WILL I GET CANCER?

- If your Pap smear is not normal, it does not usually mean that you have cancer.
- Most often an abnormal Pap smear means that you either have an infection or you have changes in the cells of the cervix that could lead to cancer if they are not treated.
- If your Pap smear is not normal, you must get the recommended follow-up and treatment.
- Regular Pap smears and treatment when needed can prevent most cancer of the cervix.

WHAT DOES MY PAP SMEAR RESULT MEAN?

- **NEGATIVE/NORMAL.** This is good. The cervical cells are healthy. If previous Pap smears have also been normal, you won't need a Pap smear for at least 1 year.
- **UNSATISFACTORY** for evaluation. The slide cannot be read. Causes include douching, bleeding, infection, or not enough cells on the slide. The Pap smear should be repeated.
- **BENIGN.** The Pap smear showed infection, irritation or normal cell repair. If you have an infection, you may need medication. Otherwise, your health care provider will most likely recommend another Pap smear in 1 year.
- **ASCUS.** (Atypical cells of undetermined significance) – The Pap smear showed some abnormal changes in the cells, but the cause is not clear. Infection is a common cause, and you may be given medication. Your health care provider will recommend specific follow-up. This may include another Pap smear in 3-6 months or a colposcopy.
- **LOW GRADE CHANGES.** You may have been infected with the Human Papillomavirus (HPV). Some types of HPV are associated with an increased risk for cancer of the cervix.

Your health care provider will recommend specific follow-up. This may include another Pap smear in 3-12 months or a colposcopy.

- **HIGH GRADE CHANGES.** The cells of the cervix may progress toward cancer, but they are not cancer yet. Fewer than half of women with this test result will develop cancer. Colposcopy is needed. Biopsy and treatment may be necessary. Treatment is important – but waiting a few weeks is okay.

WHAT IS COLPOSCOPY?

- Colposcopy is a procedure that allows your health care provider to look at the cervix with a special high power microscope. If abnormal cells are suspected, a biopsy will be taken – a biopsy involves removing a tiny piece of tissue that is sent to the lab for further testing.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BIOPSY RESULTS?

- The cells are normal. Another Pap smear and sometimes another colposcopy may be needed just to make certain.
- **LOW GRADE CHANGES** (HPV/genital warts, mild dysplasia, CIN I) Your health care provider will either treat you or follow-up with a Pap smear every 3-6 months for at least 1 year to watch for changes.
- **HIGH GRADE CHANGES** (moderate to severe dysplasia, CIN II or III) Treatment is needed.
- **CANCER.** Treatment is needed and may include surgery.

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ABNORMAL CERVICAL CHANGES?

Discuss the types of treatments with your health care provider and follow through with the treatment chosen. Be sure your health care provider discusses the risks of each procedure with you.

- **Cryocautery** – The surface of the cervix is frozen. The abnormal cells peel off and new healthy cells grow back. You may have mild cramps during the procedure. This treatment may be used if the abnormal area is small.
- **LEEP / LLETZ** – After you are given a local anesthetic, the surface of the cervix is removed with an electric wire loop. New healthy cells grow back. This treatment may be used if the abnormal area is large.
- **Laser Vaporization** – After you are given a local anesthetic, a beam of light is used to remove the surface of the cervix. New healthy cells grow back. This treatment may be used if the abnormal area is large.
- **Conization** – After you are given a local anesthetic, a cone-shaped area of the cervix is removed to get rid of abnormal cells inside and on the surface of the cervix. New healthy cells grow back. This treatment may be used if the abnormal area is hidden or very severe.

After any of the above procedures you will have some spotting and discharge.

- Hysterectomy – The uterus is surgically removed. This procedure is done in the hospital. You will be given either a regional or general anesthetic. You will no longer have periods or be able to get pregnant.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER TREATMENT? You will need a Pap smear every 6 months for 1-2 years following most of these treatments.

You will likely need a Pap smear at least once a year for the rest of your life, even if you have had a hysterectomy (pre-cancerous cells could develop at the top of the vagina).

- **Get Vaccinated.** Depending on your age, you may be eligible for the HPV vaccine that prevents the types of genital human papillomavirus that cause most cases of cervical cancer and genital warts. The vaccine is routinely recommended for 11 and 12 year old girls, but it is also for girls and women age 13 through 26 who have not yet been vaccinated or completed the vaccine series. This could prevent you from getting cervical cancer later in life.
- **Do not smoke.** It doubles your chance of getting cancer of the cervix.
- **Eat healthy foods** including dark green leafy vegetables, red/orange/yellow fruits and vegetables, and whole grain foods. These foods help the cervix heal.
- **Consider decisions about sex very carefully.** The younger you begin having sex, the greater your risk for developing cancer of the cervix.
- **Being abstinent – not having sex,** prevents sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV/AIDS and greatly reduces your risk for cancer of the cervix.
- **If you do have sex** – Sex with only one STD-free, lifelong partner is the safest sex. Otherwise, limit the number of your sexual partners.
- Do not have sex with anyone who has an STD; always use a condom for sex.
- The more people you have sex with – the greater your risk for STDs, HIV/AIDS and cancer of the cervix.

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Communications and Public Information
P.O. Box 30686 Bethesda, MD 20824-0686
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Fax: 866-592-FAXX (3299)

Source: Contraceptive Technology, Hatcher, 1994
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Reprinted 05/03
Website: <http://opa.oaphs.dhhs.gov>
E-mail: clearinghouse@thopaa.net



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Facts About

Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC): IUD and Implant

What is a LONG ACTING REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTION LARC?

There are two types of LARCs. It can be an Intrauterine Device (IUD) or it can be the Birth Control Implant

An Intrauterine Device (IUD) is a small T-shaped device made of soft, flexible plastic.

A trained provider places the IUD into the uterus. There are two types: one made with copper (it contains no hormones) and one made with hormones similar to the birth control pill.

The copper IUD works by causing the uterine lining to change and makes the sperm move slowly preventing fertilization of the egg. It can be used up to 10 years.

The hormonal IUD, which can be used for up to 3 to 5 years, works in three ways. It keeps the body from releasing an egg that could be fertilized by a man's sperm. It also causes changes to the cervical mucus making it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus and keeps a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus.

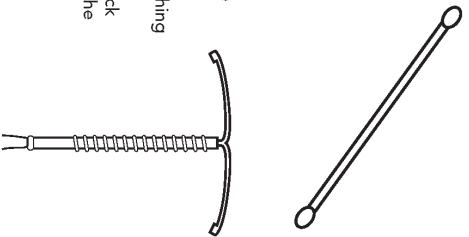
A Birth Control Implant is a single flexible rod about the size of a matchstick that is inserted under the skin in the upper arm. It releases hormones into the body. It can be used for up to 3 years.

How well do LARCs work?

The IUD and the implant are the most effective forms of reversible birth control available. All LARCs are 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. Over the long term, LARC methods are more effective than birth control pills, the patch or the ring.

Why is a LARC a good choice for me?

- No one can tell that you are using birth control and it does not interfere with sex or daily activities.
- It can be inserted immediately after a pregnancy termination, a miscarriage, childbirth and while breastfeeding or after pregnancy has been ruled out.
- All women, including adolescents, can get an IUD, even if they have never had children.
- If you wish to become pregnant or if you want to stop using it, you can have the LARC removed.
- The hormonal IUD or implant may help to decrease menstrual pain and heavy menstrual bleeding.
- The copper IUD also is the most effective form of emergency contraception (EC).



How are the LARCs inserted?

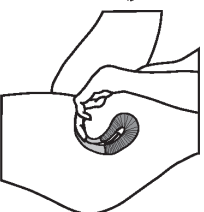
IUD: A doctor or nurse inserts and removes the IUD. The provider will review your medical history and will perform a **pelvic exam**. To insert the IUD, the provider uses a slender plastic tube to place IUD into the **vagina** and guide it through the **cervix** into the uterus. The tube is removed, leaving the IUD in place.

How do you use an IUD?

After the IUD is put in, you do not need to do anything when you have sex. The only thing you need to do is check once a month after your period to make sure the IUD's string is in place.

To check your string:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Squat down or stand with one foot on the toilet.
3. Put your index or middle finger high into your vagina and find your cervix. The cervix is the opening to your uterus (womb). It will feel firm, like the end of your nose.
4. Feel for the string. It will feel small and you may need to ask the nurse or doctor to help you practice before you leave.
5. If you can feel the string, don't do anything.
6. If you cannot feel the string or you are not sure the IUD is in the right place, call your doctor or clinic and use another kind of birth control until your doctor or nurse can examine you.



Birth Control Implant: A doctor or nurse inserts the implant into your arm. First, a small area on your upper arm is numbed with a local anesthetic. It only takes a few minutes for your doctor or nurse to place the implant under the skin with a special inserter. There is no incision when the implant is inserted. An incision is made when it is removed.

Will I have any problems if I use a LARC?

Most women do not have many problems using an IUD or implant. You may have some spotting or irregular bleeding, headaches, nausea, breast tenderness, depression or mood changes, or acne. If using a hormonal IUD and signs or symptoms of a pelvic infection develop such as severe pain, excessive bleeding, fever, etc., call your doctor or clinic.

Smoking increases your risk of serious side effects. Women who use birth control methods with hormones should not smoke. This includes electronic cigarettes.

Copper IUD: Some women may have some cramping and bleeding. The cramping and bleeding may decrease within 1 year of use.

REMEMBER:

- LARCs do not protect you from STIs (sexually transmitted infections) or HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) you can get when you have sex. To protect yourself, use a latex or vinyl condom every time you have oral, vaginal or anal sex.
- Back up contraception may be needed for the hormonal IUDs and birth control implant depending on time of insertion.



BREAST SELF-EXAM "BSE"

What is a Breast Self-Exam (BSE)?

A breast self-exam is when you check your own breasts for nipple discharge, lumps, changes in size or shape of the breast, or any other changes in the breasts or underarm (armpit). Breast self-exam takes little time, costs nothing and can help you be aware of how your breasts normally look and feel. Call your health care provider if you discover any changes in your breasts or underarms. Remember, most breast changes are NOT cancer but DO follow-up with your healthcare provider to be sure!

When should a Breast Self-Exam (BSE) be done?

All women age 20 and older should do breast self-exams — even during pregnancy and after menopause (when you no longer have periods). Also, all men who are at high risk for breast cancer should do a breast self-exam.

Breast self-examination should be done every month.

- If you still have a period, the best time to do BSE is when your breasts are least likely to be tender or swollen, such as 5 to 10 days after the start of your period.
- If you no longer have a period, pick a certain day—such as the first day of each month—to remind yourself to do BSE.
- If you are pregnant, check your breasts on the first day of each month.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) check your breasts on the first day of the month after you empty your breasts.

How to do a breast self-exam:

Examine your breasts by looking and feeling up to the collarbone, out to the armpit, into the middle of the chest and down to the bottom of the rib cage.

LOOK AT YOUR BREASTS IN THE MIRROR!

Begin by looking at your breasts in front of the mirror with your hands pressing in on your hips. Look for changes in size, shape, or dimpling, or redness or scaliness of the nipple or breast skin. (Pressing in on your hips shrinks the chest wall muscles and makes any breast changes more visible.)

FEEL YOUR BREASTS!

The most recent recommendation for checking your breasts is to lie down on your back and place your right arm behind your head. The exam is done while lying down, not standing up. This is because when lying down the breast tissue spreads evenly over the chest wall and is as thin as possible, making it much easier to feel all the breast tissue and for anything that is not normal for you. Use the finger pads of the three middle fingers on your left hand to feel for lumps in the right breast.

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BREAST SELF-EXAM "BSE"

Use overlapping dime-sized circular motions of the finger pads to feel the tissue closest to the skin; medium pressure to feel a little deeper; and firm pressure to feel the tissue closest to the chest and ribs. If you are not sure how hard to press, talk with your healthcare provider. Use light, medium and firm pressure to feel the breast tissue before moving to the next spot.

Move around the breast in an up and down pattern starting at an imaginary line drawn straight down your side from the underarm and moving across the breast to the middle of the chest bone (sternum or breastbone). Be sure to check the entire breast area going down the breast until you feel only ribs and up the breast to the neck or collar bone (clavicle).

Repeat the exam on your left breast, putting your left arm behind your head and using the finger pads of your right hand to do the exam.

Although the above procedure for doing breast self-exam is different from previous recommendations, there is evidence that this position (lying down), the area felt, pattern of coverage of the breast, and use of different amounts of pressure increase a woman's ability to find abnormal areas. However, you may still check your breasts while showering or getting dressed. The important thing to remember is just check your breasts!

SITTING OR STANDING – FEEL!

Examine each underarm while sitting up or standing and with your arm only *slightly* raised so you can easily feel in this area. Do not raise your arm straight up because this tightens the tissue in this area and makes it harder to examine.

GET IT RIGHT!

Show your healthcare provider how you are doing your breast self-exam (BSE). Ask them to tell you if you need to do anything different. **EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION!**

REMEMBER:

See your healthcare provider if you notice any of these changes in your breasts:

- Lump, hard knot or thickening
- Swelling, warmth, redness or darkening
- Change in the size or shape
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Itchy, scaly sore or rash on the nipple
- Pulling in of your nipple or other parts
- Nipple discharge that starts suddenly
- New pain in one spot that does not go away

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Tuscaloosa concedes right of way around West Alabama Women's Center

Brandon Moseley | *Alabama Political Reporter*

April 8, 2019

<https://www.alreporter.com/2019/04/08/tuscaloosa-concedes-right-of-way-around-west-alabama-womens-center/>

Why Abortion Rates Are Down In Alabama

Feroze Dhanoa Patch Staff | *Patch*

September 19, 2019

<https://patch.com/alabama/across-al/why-abortion-rates-are-down-alabama>

As Alabama abortion law grabs headlines, a look at the data

WFSA 12 News

May 17, 2019

<https://www.wsfa.com/2019/05/17/alabama-abortion-law-grabs-headlines-look-data/>

WAWC clinic defenders provide support to patients

Meghan Mitchell | *The Crimson White*

October 17, 2019

<https://cw.ua.edu/55728/culture/wawc-clinic-defenders-provide-support-to-patients/>

Alabama abortion clinics deemed essential amid COVID-19 business closures

AL.com news | *Abbey Crain*

March 25, 2020

<https://www.al.com/news/2020/03/alabama-abortion-clinics-deemed-essential-amid-covid-19-business-closures.html>

Ahead of legislation push, in-state students share sex-ed stories

Audrey Harper and Rebecca Griesbach | *The Crimson White*

February 13, 2020

<https://cw.ua.edu/61392/top-stories/in-light-of-legislation-push-in-state-students-share-sex-ed-stories/>

BURT JONES RURAL COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA | Division of
Student Life
Blackburn Institute

Session IV

Below are the biographies for presenters in Session IV, examining the inequalities of the cash bail system, with a particular focus on the founding of Tuscaloosa Bail Out this past summer.

Jenny Carroll

Jenny E. Carroll is the Wiggins, Child, Quinn and Pantazis Professor of Law at The University of Alabama School of Law and the Chair of the State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. She is a former public defender, was the primary author on the recent report, *Barriers to Voting in Alabama*, and has written numerous articles on criminal law and criminal procedure including several on bail reform and abolition.



La-Kisha Emmanuel

La-Kisha Emmanuel is the co-founder of Tuscaloosa Bail Out and a history PhD student at New York University currently residing in Tuscaloosa. Her research examines the intellectual labors and networks of rural African American clubwomen in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American South. Particularly, their juvenile justice reform efforts.

Emmanuel holds a BA in history from Stillman College and an MA in women's studies and history from The University of Alabama.



Sarah Ann Hughes (Blackburn Fellow)

Sarah Hughes is a native of Winfield, Alabama, and grew up on a farm in Fayette County. After college, she worked in political fundraising briefly in Montgomery, then spent four years in Washington D.C. working as a political aide for a local elected official in Fairfax County, VA. Sarah returned to Alabama in 2017 for law school, where she focused her studies in the areas of criminal law and public interest law, and worked as a student attorney in the Criminal Defense Clinic. She was a member of the Public Interest Student Board and served as president of OutLaw, the LGBTQ+ student organization. Sarah is a co-founder of Tuscaloosa Bail Out, a non-profit, abolitionist-minded community bail fund in Tuscaloosa. Tuscaloosa Bail Out is affiliated with the National Bail Fund Network and works to free folks who are detained pre-trial in Tuscaloosa County Jail simply because they cannot afford to pay their own bail. She is the proud mom of one cat, Claudia Jean, and lives in Birmingham with her boyfriend and his twenty-year-old cockatiel, Phoenix.



Hughes is an alumna of The University of Alabama (BA in Political Science, 2013 and JD, 2020).

Allen Slater

Allen Slater is a current law student and former law enforcement officer of nearly five years, having served as a correctional officer, a rural sheriff's deputy, and a municipal police officer. In addition to his regular duties, Allen was trained as a defensive tactics instructor and served with a specialized community policing unit. While in law school, he has worked on behalf of federal capital habeas clients, investigated conviction integrity and law enforcement misconduct cases, and pursued police reform policy work. He has also written an article on police use of force that was recently published in the Berkeley Journal of African American Law and Policy. Allen seeks to use his combined experiences as a person of color, a police officer, and budding lawyer to work toward transparent, accountable policing that recognizes the humanity of both community members and police officers.



Criminal justice reform is a widespread point of focus amid the current social climate, but on the local level, one grassroots group in Tuscaloosa hopes to address an oft-overlooked issue — cash bail and high bail amounts for certain offenses. Tuscaloosa Bail Out, a nonprofit formed earlier this year, has already raised more than \$15,000 to help post bail for certain low-level offenders.

Co-founder La'Kisha Emmanuel, who started the group with fellow co-founder Sarah Hughes, told Patch Tuesday that just in the last week, they bailed out two people from the Tuscaloosa County Jail. But as similar "bail out" groups form in bigger cities to fund the release of protestors caught in the scrum at large-scale demonstrations, the dynamics in Tuscaloosa are noticeably different and more peaceful. This example of civility in local demonstrations spurred a different approach for those in the fledgling group and led organizers to focus on helping certain people who had been incarcerated."

A lot of what is happening in Tuscaloosa are rallies, but rallies working in conjunction with the police," she said. "So I wouldn't really say it's a protest when police are handing out water bottles and everyone is moving down the street. It's just not the same dynamic that's happening in other places where they are pushing back on the system and trying to dismantle them. The one thing here is when people aren't arrested publicly, then you get into the fact that it's systemic."

She explained in many cases, some low-level offenders may need a ride but could be faced with difficulties due to family members or loved ones who need to go to work. Referring to the concept as "criminalizing poverty," Emmanuel said the families of certain offenders want them released in a timely fashion but may have already been in a tight financial situation and can't necessarily risk losing hours on the job to immediately drive to the county jail. "If they can't already afford bail, how could their family member afford to take off work?" she asked, before explaining a hypothetical alternative. "Someone gets to sleep in their bed at night, can go back to their kids and go back to their job."

Public education is a central tenet of the group's platform and one target area Tuscaloosa Bail Out hopes to make headway on is to simply show the community that the issues exist.

"It may not affect you because you're from a different socio-economic background," Emmanuel said. "So you may not see [the bail system] as an issue, and the fact of the matter is, if the issue effects Black people disproportionately, there's often not a lot of research done."

The group is still in its infancy, she commented, but the six-person team is actively communicating with the larger Montgomery Bail Out group and learning from others across the country to better apply their resources to address individual needs in their community.

"Montgomery, they've really been helpful in leading the way for us," Emmanuel said. "There's still so much to learn, you have to make sure you're not reinventing the wheel, but not recreating harmful situations for people going through trauma of imprisonment."

Emmanuel then cited the Minnesota Freedom Fund as a partial inspiration — a group actively working in the same state that sparked recent outcry when George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis in May.

As the group grows and once the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic subsides, its founders hope to begin meeting closely with local churches and community groups to garner support. While the group is small in numbers, Emmanuel said the goal is to continue to expand and capitalize on its potential by helping those most in need.

Tuscaloosa Bail Out has primarily been funded by small donations, Emmanuel said, but the support has been substantial.

"The average donation isn't \$100 or \$1,000," she said. "It's really a modest amount that this community is donating. That's your neighbor down the street donating and it's very local in that way.

"Out of respect for privacy, Emmanuel declined to give specifics on the exact number of offenders helped by the group, but said the money raised had been put to good use for those who needed it most.

"I'm really proud of us for what's been done with six people," she said. "That's why we've been boosting for volunteers, having meetings to bring them on but there is still definitely a need for more."

<https://patch.com/alabama/tuscaloosa/tuscaloosa-advocacy-group-pushes-bail-reform>

Bail reform, which could save millions of unconvicted people from jail, explained

Stephanie Wykstra | Vox

October 17, 2018

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2018/10/17/17955306/bail-reform-criminal-justice-inequality>

Civil Rights Groups Challenge Discriminatory, Wealth-Based Bail Practices in Alabama County

ACLU Press

May 18, 2017

<https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/civil-rights-groups-challenge-discriminatory-wealth-based-bail-practices-alabama>

A historic resolution agreement was reached on April 6, 2018 between the United States Department of Justice and the Tenth Judicial District of Alabama, the first of its kind, in response to a complaint filed by Equal Justice Under Law a Washington, D.C. based civil rights nonprofit that alleges Jefferson County's practice of using money bail discriminates against African Americans in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

The Agreement agrees to carry out the use of risk-based assessments and pretrial release alternatives, acting as substitutes for traditional bail bond requirements in determining which defendants are released prior to trial and to establish a fully-funded pretrial services agency for Jefferson County.

In response to EJUL's complaint, the DOJ's Office for Civil Rights opened an investigation into the bail setting practices in Alabama's Tenth Judicial District in 2016 to determine if Jefferson County's practice of allowing magistrate judges to make subjective assessments of a defendant's risk may have led to discriminatory outcomes for pretrial release decisions. EJUL's complaint and the OCR investigation have since prompted Jefferson County to voluntarily adopt a risk-based individualized assessment tool.

Services will be implemented by establishing a Pretrial Services Agency to supervise individuals and to assess "each defendant's needs for mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and appointed legal counsel"; providing racially neutral pretrial release guidance and supervision. Over the next three years the DOJ Office of Civil Rights will retain federal oversight of the Tenth District's transition requiring them to provide training on the use of the new assessment models and to validate new risk assessment systems within two years of implementation. The results will be measured to determine "whether use of the instrument shows bias against defendants based on their race or national origin."

Phil Telfeyan, Executive Director of EJUL said, "We're glad to see Jefferson County take an important step toward eliminating the inequality that plagues our pretrial justice system, and we hope the Department of Justice and counties across the country continue to make similar changes to ensure equality and fairness for indigent individuals and people of color in our criminal justice system."

This resolution comes amidst nationwide efforts to reform money bail systems. Every day about 450,000 Americans sit in jail because they cannot pay bail.

The Department of Justice is currently investigating similar complaints of pretrial racial discrimination filed by Equal Justice Under Law against numerous counties across the nation.

<https://equaljusticeunderlaw.org/thejusticereport/2018/4/25/historic-resolution-agreement-made-in-alabama-to-reform-money-bail>

In just two days, a new nonprofit group has collected thousands of dollars that will help low-income inmates accused of crimes pay their bonds and get out of the Tuscaloosa County Jail. Tuscaloosa Bail Out is collecting donations that will help pre-trial inmates, innocent until proven guilty, post bonds and provide support as they await court dates.

After launching online Friday, the group had collected more than \$5,000 by Monday morning. There were a few large donations of \$500 and \$250, but the average contribution was around \$42 from average Tuscaloosa residents, said co-founder Sarah Hughes. Criminal defendants are afforded cash bail as a financial incentive to show up in court. “Over the past few decades, however, cash bail has become a mechanism for incarcerating low-income people before trial,” Tuscaloosa Bail Out organizers wrote on the group’s website. “This bail system has increased the jail population by millions thus exacerbating America’s incarceration problem.”

Many people spend more time incarcerated than necessary, Hughes said, simply for the “crime” of being poor. “We’re going to do all that we can to alleviate that in our community,” she said. The spread of the coronavirus in jails has only made their efforts more time-sensitive. “If you’re a person living in poverty in Alabama and you can’t afford to get out of jail, you probably don’t have access to health care or testing,” Hughes said. “It’s like an onion, it compounds all of these issues of rampant poverty in our communities.”

Hughes, who graduated from the Alabama School of Law this spring, and La-Kisha Emmanuel, a spring graduate of UA’s master’s program, met at an organizing meeting that came out of recent protests following the death of George Floyd. They modeled Tuscaloosa Bail Out after a similar community bail program in Montgomery, and quickly recruited a group of activists, defense attorneys and other community members to participate.

“Judges routinely set bail amounts that people cannot afford, particularly for people of color,” the group wrote on its website. “As a result, we have a two-tier system where two individuals charged with exactly the same thing are treated differently based on their race and economic status.”

The volunteers and board will look at jail data and identify inmates who are likely to spend a significant amount of time in jail without assistance. Decisions about who receives assistance will be made collectively, Hughes said. Priorities may be given to older people who may be at a higher risk for COVID-19 or LGBTQ people who may be at a higher risk of victimization by other inmates. Once bonded out, members of the group will help the defendants by contacting family, providing transportation from jail or a small stipend for groceries or safe housing.

<https://www.tuscaloosaneews.com/story/news/local/2020/06/15/tuscaloosa-bail-out-aims-to-help-low-income-inmates/112756138/>

BURT JONES RURAL COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA^{*} | Division of
Student Life
Blackburn Institute

Session V

Below are the biographies for panelists in Session V, a discussion amongst local government elected officials from the City of Tuscaloosa, the City of Northport and the Tuscaloosa County Commission.

Councilor Raevan Howard

Raevan Howard was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama to former City Councilor Bobby Howard and Kim Howard. She graduated from Central High School in 2006 and is pursuing a graduate degree in marriage and family counseling. She enjoys volunteering with nonprofit agencies such as the American Red Cross. Ms. Howard serves on the Board of Trustees for Culver Road Church where she is a Sunday school teacher and has been a member since birth. She is the proud mother of three children, Hillary, Malia and Marcus, who are in the Tuscaloosa City Schools. This will be her first term.



Councilor Howard is an alumna of The University of Alabama (BSW).

Hardy McCollum

Hardy McCollum is the interim city administrator of the city of Northport. He retired in 2019 after serving more than 43 years as Probate Judge of Tuscaloosa County.



Judge Rob Robertson

Judge Ward D. “Rob” Robertson, III was sworn into office January 14, 2019 as the 16th Probate Judge of Tuscaloosa County. In addition to his duties in the Probate Court, he serves as Chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Commission. Rob brings a wide range of experience to the office from the public and private sectors including law enforcement, military service, business, emergency management, community planning, disaster recovery, information systems, and logistics.



Rob seeks to justly serve all stakeholders bringing matters before the Court with efficiency and compassion. He is committed to helping address the growing needs of the mental health community along with community partners and the local legislative delegation. As Commission Chair, he works with his fellow Commissioners and staff daily to ensure Tuscaloosa County becomes an even better place to live, work, and play. Rob served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and is a Veteran of the Persian Gulf War. He’s also a charter member, Christ Harbor Church in Northport.

Judge Robertson holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Business Administration from The University of Alabama.

Bobby Herndon was elected to his third term as mayor of Northport in a contentious runoff election, according to uncertified results released by City Hall Tuesday night.

Herndon, who served as mayor from 2008 until 2016, narrowly lost a runoff against Donna Aaron that year. Aaron did not seek re-election, and after earning 47 percent of the vote in the August general election, Herndon was able to keep his voters motivated in Tuesday's runoff and overcome challenger Dale Phillips, a retired captain in the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office.

Herndon won Tuesday with 1,909 votes to Phillips' 1,332.

In District 4, where incumbent Robby Davis did not seek re-election, Jamie Dykes defeated Michael Daugherty in Tuesday's runoff. Dykes earned 521 votes to Daugherty's 476.

3,241 votes were cast Tuesday, representing around 16 percent of the city's 19,700 eligible voters.

Herndon, a land surveyor at a firm he co-owns and operates, ran on a platform of experience and empathy.

In an interview with the Tuscaloosa Thread Tuesday night, Herndon thanked everyone who came out to vote for him Tuesday and said he was ready to get back to work for the people of Northport.

"I'm just very thankful for the ones who did support me," Herndon said. "It's been a tough four years being on the sidelines and not the first team, but tonight I got my starting position back and we want to move our city forward and it's going to be great, we have a great council coming in and I'm really looking forward to working with them."

Phillips conceded the race in a post to his campaign's Facebook.

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/herndon-elected-to-3rd-term-as-northport-mayor-dykes-wins-runoff/>

The Tuscaloosa City Council unanimously approved new policing protocols Tuesday night that will prohibit biased policing, ban the use of chokeholds and create more interdepartmental accountability at the Tuscaloosa Police Department.

"We felt so strongly about it that we wanted to have something in writing for the city, so that the citizens know that we have taken a look at a lot of different things," Tuscaloosa Police Chief Brent Blankley said.

The changes adopted Tuesday include a ban on "choke hold and vascular neck restraints," the creation of an obligations for officers to prevent and report abuse and a ban on biased policing.

The ordinance defines a choke hold "as a physical maneuver that restricts the blood flow to the brain and/or individual's ability to breath for the purposes of incapacitation."

Officers who are guilty of using these holds face a "Class A offense" under the City of Tuscaloosa's Employee Discipline Policy. According to the Employee Discipline Policy, a Class A offense results in termination.

"You're seeing that all across the country," Blankley said. "We want our officers to definitely protect themselves but to be safe as possible while we do it."

The ordinance also defines a set of guidelines to achieve what the city calls "Unbiased Policing." This section of the ordinance adopted Tuesday calls for all TPD officers to be impartial when dealing with the people they police. Officers are forbidden from treating a suspect differently based on their race or sex, for example, but are also instructed to recuse themselves from any situation in which the officer is friends or family with a suspect and call in another officer to take over.

"We love our community [and] we want the community to love us so we're doing everything we possibly do to make that connection," Blankley said.

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/tuscaloosa-bans-biased-policing-use-of-chokeholds/>

The Tuscaloosa Parks and Recreation Authority broke ground on construction for an inclusive playground at Sokol Park, with the goal to become more accessible to children with disabilities and special needs.

The Tuscaloosa All-Inclusive Playground Project (TAPP) kicked off this \$3.4 million initiative with its first phase, "The Tuscaloosa Phase," with several themed play sites modeled after area landmarks like Denny Chimes and Bryant-Denny Stadium, to name a few. The ground will be made of turf and rubber surfacing, and many amenities will be made wheelchair-accessible.

"This project began back in 2016 when a mother... wanted a playground where her child could play along with her typically developing peers," said Caroline Lassiter, Director of Development with the PARA Foundation.

The project includes a picnic pavilion with wheelchair-accessible restrooms, as well as an expanded parking lot.

This project was made PARA's capital campaign in 2019 after a land purchase of three acres, and it quickly saw generous contributions from the Nick's Kids Foundation, with several other local businesses, and the Northport and Tuscaloosa city governments, following suit.

"This is what Tuscaloosa does best," said Mayor Walt Maddox, who spoke at the event. "I think today is about being together... I grew up understanding that everyone deserves that right and the opportunity in this world."

Others speakers included Judge Rob Robertson with the Tuscaloosa County Commission, Northport City Councilman Jay Logan, Mark Hickman of Peco Foods, and Ken Todd with McAbee Construction. Each spoke about their eagerness to get this project underway, and the cooperation between so many different organizations.

The ceremony closed with a call to action to the citizens of Tuscaloosa and Northport: PARA still has a long way to go with the project funds, and they're urging anyone who can to contribute.

Learn how to donate by visiting the PARA Foundation website.

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/para-breaks-ground-on-all-inclusive-playground/>

Maddox Outlines Sweeping Community Policing Plans for Tuscaloosa

Stephen Dethrage | Tuscaloosa Thread

August 11, 2020

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/maddox-outlines-sweeping-community-policing-plans-for-tuscaloosa/>

Tuscaloosa councilwoman stresses community policing

Chip Scarborough | WTVM 13

October 5, 2017

<https://www.wvtm13.com/article/tuscaloosa-councilwoman-stresses-community-policing/12790176#>

Commission Approves Purchase of Lifesaving Equipment for VFDs

Savannah Bullard | Tuscaloosa Thread

October 8, 2020

<https://tuscaloosathread.com/commission-approves-purchase-of-lifesaving-equipment-for-vfds/>

Working to Change Tuscaloosa's West Side

Jason Morton / Tuscaloosa News Staff Writer

<https://socialwork.ua.edu/blog/social-worker-unseats-longtime-tuscaloosa-councilman/>

Tuscaloosa to restart Framework masterplan process

Jason Morton | Tuscaloosa News

September 23, 2020

<https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/story/news/2020/09/23/framework-master-plan-process-tuscaloosa-restart-month/5790862002/>

Council votes not to raise sales tax

Staff Report | Houma Today

March 5, 2019

<https://www.houmatoday.com/news/20190305/council-votes-not-to-raise-sales-tax>

Fiscal Year 2021 Budget-City of Tuscaloosa

<https://www.tuscaloosa.com/2021budget>

BURT JONES RURAL COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA^{*} | Division of
Student Life
Blackburn Institute

Session VI

Below are the biographies for panelists in Session VI, examining the landscape of K-12 Education in Tuscaloosa County to include public schools, private schools, and community collaborators.

Dr. Terri Boman

Dr. Terri Boman began her career as a classroom Chemistry and Physics teacher in Lamar County, Alabama. She was a field specialist for a Chemistry outreach program called Alabama Science in Motion and became the director of that program in 2010 for the UA/UWA In-Service Education Center at the University of Alabama. She retired from the University of Alabama in December 2018 and has a wealth of experience in leadership, professional learning and growth, and cognitive coaching. She co-authored and a book entitled *Real World Professional Learning Communities: Their Use and Effects*.



Dr. Boman is a certified Cognitive Coach and holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from The University of Alabama.

Rev. Dr. Tyshawn Gardner

Rev. Dr. Tyshawn Gardner currently serves as the Senior Pastor of the Plum Grove Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa. He is the founder and CEO of the Citizen Impacting Community Association, a non-profit dedicated to serving and empowering the intergenerational communities of West Tuscaloosa through a variety of academic and social programs and activities. Tyshawn currently serves as the Vice-President for Student Affairs at Stillman College. He is a respected educator and enjoys teaching classes in the Department of Gender and Race at the University of Alabama and in the Department of Religion and Theology at Stillman College.



Tyshawn was named the Most Distinguished Student at Beeson Divinity School in 2014. His research interests are Kelly Miller Smith, Sr., Social Crisis Preaching, and Rhetoric in the African American Preaching Tradition. Tyshawn is a veteran of the U.S. Navy and served in both Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. He serves on and with numerous educational, social, religious, and civic boards throughout Tuscaloosa including: the Martin Luther King, Jr. Realizing the Dream Committee, Elevate Tuscaloosa Advisory Board, The Tuscaloosa Prayer Network, 100 Black Men of West Alabama, Unity Tuscaloosa, and Macedonia Ministries. He is also the past president of the Tuscaloosa Chapter of the SCLC.

Rev. Dr. Gardner holds a BS in Business Administration from Stillman College, MDiv from Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, and PhD from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dr. Keri C. Johnson

Dr. Keri Johnson serves as Superintendent of the Tuscaloosa County School System. She became Superintendent on July 1, 2020. Prior to joining TCSS, Dr. Johnson served as Coordinator of Secondary Education and exceptional Education for Alabaster City Schools. Keri previously held positions within Shelby County Schools. She has served as an adjunct instructor for Samford University and the University of Montevallo.



Dr. Johnson holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Samford University. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education from Jacksonville State University, a Master of Arts in Special Education from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, a Certification in Educational Administration from the University of Montevallo, and an Education Specialist in Educational Administration from the University of Montevallo.

Brian Oliver (Blackburn Fellow)

Dr. Oliver has had an 18-year career in independent schools and higher education including serving 6 years as High School Principal at Saint James School in Montgomery. He is currently in his third year as Head of School at Tuscaloosa Academy. He spent the first part of his career in Undergraduate Admissions and the Career Center at The University of Alabama before taking a position at Saint James School. While living in Tuscaloosa the first time, he served on the board for the Boys and Girls Club of West Alabama and currently serves on the Board of Advisors for The University of Alabama's College of Education. In 2016, Dr. Oliver was the only person from the state of Alabama selected to participate in the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Aspiring Heads Fellowship, and has been a presenter at the NAIS conference. Bryan is married to Beth, and they have two children John Rivers, 9 and Rex, 6.



Dr. Oliver holds a B.S. in Finance and a Masters and Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from The University of Alabama.

Dr. Barbara Rountree

Dr. Barbara Starnes Rountree is a native of Guntersville, Alabama. She has been a certified teacher in Alabama and Tennessee since 1969 and has taught grades K-8 in public schools. Dr. Rountree taught in the College of Education at The University of Alabama for 22 years where she served as co-chair of the Multiple Ability Program. She worked with children in Tuscaloosa County to help found CHOM, the Children's Hands-On Museum and served as the first Director for 2 years. Dr. Rountree worked as a Consultant with many international schools in Europe, Central and South America. She received the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award in 1992 from the University of Alabama Alumni. In 1993, she founded The Capitol School with Margaret Brown Hill and other outstanding faculty who were former public-school teachers. It was the culmination of a dream to create a world-class PK-12 school based on educational research and best practices. Dr. Rountree was inducted to the University of Alabama's Education Hall of Fame in 2018 in recognition of her many contributions and her devotion to education in Alabama.



Dr. Rountree holds a doctorate from Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education and Human Development.

Alabama public schools and school systems have been assigned letter grades for performance in new report cards released Friday by the State Department of Education. Tuscaloosa City Schools and the Tuscaloosa County School System both earned “B” grades with identical overall scores of 83.

The latest report cards include enhanced graphics and features to make it easier to view data and compare school systems, state education officials said. This is the third academic year that the letter grades have been released.

“We hope this can be used as a catapult to jumpstart conversations about what is working in public schools as well as identifying areas that may need support and/or additional resources,” State Superintendent of Education Eric Mackey said in a statement.

The grades are based not just on the latest test scores, but how much students improve in reading and math from one year to the next. The report cards include information about the percentage of students proficient in subjects, information on academic growth and chronic absenteeism at each school.

The cards also include demographics about the school and school system and the credentials and experience of educators at the school. Legislators in 2012 voted to require A-F grades for schools and school systems.

Here are the grades for Tuscaloosa City Schools:

- Arcadia Elementary: 77, C
- Central Elementary: 67, D
- Central High: 74, C
- Eastwood Middle: 77, C
- Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary: 67, D
- Northridge High: 89, B
- Northridge Middle: 90, A
- Oakdale Elementary: 78, C
- Bryant High: 75, C
- Rock Quarry Elementary: 100, A
- Skyland Elementary: 73, C
- Alberta School of Performing Arts: 74, C
- Tuscaloosa Magnet Elementary: 100, A
- Tuscaloosa Magnet Middle: 98, A
- University Place Elementary: 79, C
- Verner Elementary: 97, A
- Westlawn Middle: 65, D
- Woodland Forest Elementary: 76, C

Here are the grades for Tuscaloosa County School System:

- Big Sandy Elementary: 91, A
- Brookwood Elementary: 76, C
- Brookwood High: 80, B
- Brookwood Middle: 77, C
- Buhl Elementary: 90, A
- Collins-Riverside Middle: 68, D
- Cottondale Elementary: 78, C
- Crestmont Elementary: 83, B
- Davis-Emerson Middle: 72, C
- Duncanville Middle: 85, B
- Echols Middle: 82, B
- Englewood Elementary: 87, B
- Faucett-Vestavia Elementary: 94, A
- Flatwoods Elementary: 73, C
- Hillcrest High: 86, B
- Hillcrest Middle: 80, B
- Holt Elementary: 67, D
- Holt High: 68, D
- Huntington Place Elementary: 90, A
- Lake View Elementary: 87, B
- Matthews Elementary: 67, D
- Maxwell Elementary: 88, B
- Myrtlewood Elementary: 89, B
- Northport Elementary: 90, A
- Northside High: 80, B
- Northside Middle, 87, B
- Sipse Valley High: 77, C
- Sipse Valley Middle: 84, B
- Taylorville Primary: 87, B
- Tuscaloosa County High: 78, C
- Vance Elementary: 83, B
- Walker Elementary: 93, A
- Westwood Elementary: 92, A

The school report cards can be viewed at the state department website,
www.alsde.edu/dept/erc/Pages/home.aspx.

<https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/news/20191018/tuscaloosa-city-county-schools-earn-identical-b-grades-from-state>

Tuscaloosa Education Foundation Gives Grants to 7 Area Schools

Ryan Phillips | Patch

September 24, 2020

The Tuscaloosa County School System (TCSS) on Thursday announced five TCSS schools received grants from the Tuscaloosa Education Foundation (TEF) this week, while Tuscaloosa City Schools (TCS) said two from its system were awarded funds.

Both schools the grants will support individual schools in further developing their character education programs, with all seven schools involved in the Hope Leadership Academy.

TEF, which awarded just short of \$15,000 in its latest round of grant funding, is a nonprofit that seeks to provide support and financial resources to enhance public education through a partnership with both TCSS and TCS.

The Hope Leadership Academy is a three-year process of building a "character-focused school culture," with an expressed goal of enabling educators from participating schools to create strategies that help them develop an environment that promotes character development.

Founded in 2016, the Hope Institute, which oversees the program, is partnered with Samford University's Orlean Beeson School of Education to help provide schools in Alabama with best practices for developing good character in students.

The Hope Institute is currently involved in more than 80 Alabama schools by providing on-site consulting, lectures, professional development opportunities and research to support each school.

TCSS SCHOOLS RECEIVING GRANTS

Davis Emerson Middle School - \$2,200

Cottdale Elementary - \$2,500

Englewood Elementary - \$2,500

Flatwoods Elementary - \$2,500

Brookwood Middle School - \$2,500

TCS SCHOOLS RECEIVING GRANTS

Verner Elementary - \$1,550

<https://patch.com/alabama/tuscaloosa/tuscaloosa-education-foundation-gives-grants-5-tcss-schools>

School is back for some but not for all as Tuscaloosa city and county schools are taking on a staggered learning approach this semester. Returning students are divided into groups and attend in-person instruction on varying days, while others remain home full time. Last semester's sudden in-class end because of the coronavirus pandemic increased the popularity of private tutors and learning pods for those with financial means. But tutoring isn't cheap.

Learning Pods

Some families have decided to pair together to create a learning pod of their own. "My daughter is in third grade with the county and her friend is in fifth with the city," said Heather Lowery, parent of a virtual student. "We made the decision to bring the girls together for remote learning as it was the better choice for our kids. I'm currently laid off so that allows me to sit with the girls every day." It is an adjustment, but many are trying their best to make it work as they take on this new role of both parent and teacher.

Creating a schedule is key when learning from home, Lowery said her girls start their school day at 8:30 a.m. The structure of online school days varies depending on the child's teacher and school. This can cause conflict for parents with children in different schools and in different grade levels. "For my country girl, all subjects are loaded with a video and article," Lowery said. "For my city girl, she has a Google Meet call with her class and then dedicated small group times."

Both students still participate in music, art and physical education classes from home. They have even been able to participate in a virtual field trip to the San Diego Zoo.

What's Next?

In a mass-message sent to parents of Tuscaloosa County Schools said: "Students have the option at each nine weeks to determine if they will be an on-campus learner or a remote learner." This allows families to choose if in-person instruction or virtual learning is the right fit for the time being. Students will begin their status (on-campus or remote) for nine weeks on Monday, Oct. 19, then families will have the option for their child to return to campus or not.

Information for Working Parents

With businesses beginning to reopen, what are working parents supposed to do on the days their children will be learning from home? Several organizations in Tuscaloosa are offering children a spot where they can learn while parents are away. The Tuscaloosa Park and Recreation Authority is offering active classrooms which began on Aug. 31.

At PARA, students have a daily schedule which includes remote learning support time, as well as other activities including recess and art class. Other organizations offering similar support includes Campus Connection, put on by the YMCA and private learning spots.

The University of Alabama's Culverhouse College of Business is offering Learning Initiative and Financial Training. LIFT provides free classes for anyone in the community who would otherwise not have access to such courses, including free tutors. Safety protocols from the CDC, ADPH, and federal, state, and local governments are in place at these active learning locations.

<https://wvua23.com/parents-team-up-ensure-children-have-learning-assistance/>

Enrollment is Dropping in Public Schools around the Country

Anya Kamenetz, Jessica Bakeman, & Marco A. Treviño | Alabama Public Radio

October 9, 2020

<https://www.apr.org/post/enrollment-dropping-public-schools-around-country>

Tuscaloosa County School teachers seek changes in remote, in-person teaching practices

Kelvin Reynold | WBRC

September 14, 2020

<https://www.wbrc.com/2020/09/14/tuscaloosa-county-school-teachers-seek-changes-remote-in-person-teaching-practices/>

Tuscaloosa City Superintendent Mike Daria earns state Innovator Award

Staff Report | Tuscaloosa News

September 19, 2020

<https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/story/news/local/2020/09/19/tuscaloosa-mike-daria-named-alabama-works-innovator-award-winner/5827570002/>

New apprenticeship program begins in Tuscaloosa

Gary Crosby Jr. | Tuscaloosa News

September 12, 2020

<https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/story/news/2020/09/12/apprenticeship-program-kicks-off-tuscaloosa/3472311001/>

BURT JONES RURAL COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

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Session VII

Below are the biographies for panelists in Session VII, a conversation with members of the local LGBTQ+ community as well as those who provide services for this particular population.

Russell Howard

Russell Howard is a native of Tuscaloosa, where he attended Shelton State Community College and The University of Alabama. Russell enjoys being an advocate for his community. Currently he serves as a founding board member and President of Druid City Pride, University Relations Co-Chair of The University of Alabama LGBTQ Alumni Association, and as a deacon at First Presbyterian Church-Tuscaloosa. In 2019, Russell was named one of Tuscaloosa's 40 under Forty Business Professionals by The Tuscaloosa News and was the recipient of Druid City Pride's 2019 Bambi Kira Spirit of Pride Award. Professionally, he is the Office Manager of RealtySouth -Tuscaloosa.



Derek Steverson

Derrick Steverson is the Assistant Director of Community Engagement with Five Horizons Health Services. His passion is to equip all people with the knowledge and tools they need to live their best lives. Birmingham Black Pride (an organization formed to mobilize, empower and educate LGBTQ communities of color in Birmingham) presented Derrick with the "2019 Invisible Warrior Award" for his work with neglected and high-risk communities.



His aim is to bridge the socioeconomic gap in under-served groups by facilitating active participation of people in addressing issues that affect them. With 15 years leading a church music and arts program, Derrick's history of community service and life experiences have equipped him with the skills to build and sustain positive relationships and gain access to normally hard to reach groups.

Cassandra Leigh Williamson

Cassandra Leigh Williamson's interests are centered on improving support for, care, and legal protections for LGBT persons situated in the South. She is a member of the American Psychological Association's Division 44 which is concerned with the psychology of gender and sexual orientation. She is particularly focused on improving care modalities for our LGBT veterans in the community and at the VA. Cassandra is engaged with the Tuscaloosa VA as part of their LGBT program of support, a member of the suicide prevention board, and also a member of the Birmingham VA's Veteran's Advisory Board. She has spoken at or participated in panels at all three of Alabama's main VA systems - Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Montgomery. She also presented at a psychology seminar held in 2019 at the Capstone Hotel and was the MC for the UA Lavender Graduation ceremony in the spring of 2019 (a graduation ceremony set up for LGBT graduates). Cassandra is currently pursuing a second BS from Arizona State University in Psychology and hopes to enter a dual PhD program within two years in Psychology and Gender Studies then take that knowledge and training to assist, help, and conduct research into LGBT veterans, their communities, and their life-long care requirements.



Williamson holds a BS degree from the US Naval Academy in Applied Sciences (in Operations Analysis)

Though the sun had dropped away, spirits were high on a cool, overcast Monday as West Alabama AIDS Outreach officially transitioned to Five Horizons Health Services. Executive Director Billy Kirkpatrick, who has led the organization since 2007, was surrounded by kids at play, friends, supporters and well-wishers as he explained that the name change was about adding services while eliminating stigma.

“We want to make sure the name does not keep people out of here,” said Kirkpatrick, 40. “We want to make sure people are comfortable in utilizing our services and that we are providing as comprehensive of services as we can.” Founded in 1988, West Alabama AIDS Outreach was created to serve a 10-county area as part of the AIDS Service Organization Network of Alabama, a group of nine similar organizations that cooperates to ensure that clients all over the state have quality treatment available to them.

Most of its clients come from the Tuscaloosa metropolitan area, but the agency continuously makes efforts to reach clients in the other nine counties, which are rural, high-poverty areas. With the name change also comes an expansion of the group’s mission. Extensive renovations inside the main facility at 2720 Sixth St. have allowed for the addition of a nurse practitioner and medical assistants to offer clients more medical services than previously offered by the organization.

Five Horizons Health Services also will offer clients pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, which Kirkpatrick has described as a new medication regimen prescribed to individuals at high risk of contracting HIV that can prevent the virus from infecting them. “For the last 30 years, we have provided case management for individuals living with HIV but also dually facing poverty,” Kirkpatrick said, noting that the organization that has provided preventive education, free HIV testing and advocacy has no intention of stopping.

“With the kick-off these new services, we’re going to continue those (prior) services in earnest, but we’re adding clinical service so we can protect the community better from HIV and (sexually-transmitted diseases).” On hand to commemorate the name change was Councilman Kip Tyner and Mayor Walt Maddox, who thanked Kirkpatrick and the organization for adding to the benefits and quality-of-life for many Tuscaloosa residents.

“In my 12 years of serving on the City Council, there are few (agencies) that come to mind when I think of ‘exceptional.’ This is one of them,” Maddox said. “WAAO has always been exceptional in what they do and the delivery of service and their compassion for those in need. So, when the name changed to Five Horizons, I loved it. ... I think about the future of so many who, years ago, knew no future. “The sky’s the limit. Or, you might say, the horizon is.”

<https://www.tuscaloosaneews.com/news/20180205/name-change-brings-added-scope-services-for-aids-group>

More than half of LGBTQ people in the South who responded to a recent survey reported having “fair” or “poor” mental health. The Campaign for Southern Equality and Western North Carolina Community Health Services released a report analyzing the health and health care experiences of LGBTQ people in the South. The report is the largest of its kind, bringing in survey results of 5,617 Southerners, nearly 10 percent of which are from Alabamians.

The Campaign for Southern Equality (CSE) works to improve the lives of LGBTQ Southerners through legal help, healthcare access and research. “More than one third of LGBTQ Americans live in the South,” said Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, executive director of CSE. “That includes more than one third of transgender Americans... For many, many years, LGBTQ Southerners were often overlooked in national conversations about LGBTQ issues, and often invisible in sort of public life in the South.”

The survey concluded that more than half of participants reported “fair” or “poor” mental health, which Beach-Ferrara said is exacerbated by the rejection from social, religious and familial groups and discriminatory legislation in the South. The survey also highlighted what Beach-Ferrara called the “modern-day HIV epidemic” happening in the South. Survey respondents reported rates of living with HIV are more than 15 times higher than the national rate. Of the respondents sampled, five percent reported living with HIV.

“It just speaks to some of the on the ground, reality development work we have to do around increasing access to prevention and testing,” Beach-Ferrara said. “[We need to] make sure that that’s a basic part of primary care needed and then increasing access.” But the survey also pointed to hope in the Southern LGBTQ community. The majority of participants surveyed reported “good” physical health ratings and had positive experiences with their overall health, with 54.7 percent reporting “good” physical health and 15.2 reporting “excellent health.”

But the location of the participants was indicative of the rating reported. Participants in rural areas rated their physical and mental health lower than those living in urban areas, pointing to disparities in access to medical care. The numbers dropped even more significantly for transgender participants. Nearly half, 46.8 percent of transgender respondents chose “fair” or “poor” physical health. Earlier this year CSE released a guide for resources and sources for trans Southerners, including trans-affirming mental health providers, primary care physicians, HIV care specialists, attorneys, [and] endocrinologists.

Beach-Ferrara said teaching accurate and inclusive sex education in school and passing state LGBTQ discrimination laws could go a long way in improving the physical and mental health of LGBTQ Southerners. “[We want] to shine a very bright light on the really specific experience of being an LGBTQ Southerner. It’s a specific lived experience and specific political, cultural and embodied experience.

<https://www.al.com/news/2019/11/campaign-for-southern-equality-shines-light-on-lgbtq-health.html>

Bingo, poetry and pints were just a few of the elements involved in this year's Pride Week. The week consisted of a range of events all centered around creating a seven-day-long celebration for the local LGBTQ+ community.

An LGBTQ+ poetry reading at the downtown bar Icon started the week off, followed the next day by an amateur drag competition, whose winner was decided by crowd applause.

Leland Hughes, a performer and the winner of the Druid City Pride drag competition earlier this year, discussed his role in the event following his persona's coronation as Miss Druid City Pride.

"I have been in entertaining for the past nine years in Tuscaloosa, so I thought the competition would be the proper way to be the first representative of the title, considering I am the face of gay Tuscaloosa now," Hughes said.

Hughes also discussed his take on the importance of the week and how it works to be inclusive for everyone.

"It is nice to have something for people who come from towns that do not have a celebration for themselves," Leland said. "It is nice for people coming to college to have a chance at being who they are and to free. Hopefully, if people come and are having trouble finding their voice, maybe seeing other people who are comfortable in living happy lives, maybe that will inspire them to want to do the same."

The week was not just a celebration of the present. As a reminder of the struggles those in the LGBTQ+ community faced in the past and continue to face, on Tuesday there was a screening of "Upstairs Inferno," a documentary detailing an act of arson in the UpStairs Lounge in New Orleans in 1973. This was the most deadly LGBTQ+ attack before the 2016 shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

Pride Week ended with a festival in Government Plaza, featuring a performance from actress and comedian Lady Bunny. The festival consisted of entertainers and musicians along with other activities.

"The festival in particular is our time once a year to let loose and have a massive enjoyable party," said Russell C. Howard, the head of Druid City Pride.

The community organization Druid City Pride, which has been active for three years now, sponsored this year's festivities. Howard said the organization's origin came from the intention to make the LGBTQ+ community in Tuscaloosa feel more inclusive.

"One of the important things that drew us to form this organization was that, while The University of Alabama has a few LGBTQ+ organizations, there is really nothing for the citizens of Tuscaloosa," Howard said. "We stepped in to fill that void, and it has been wonderful. It has been excellent to see the

community, to come out and support members and it has been through our festival and other events throughout the year, it is an excellent opportunity to come out and meet new allies and LGBTQ+ people in our community.”

This same sentiment was shared by Emma Colson, who attended “Rainbow Connections: An Evening of Local LGBTQ+ History” at Hotel Indigo’s rooftop bar on Thursday.

“I think that it is important for students to be involved in our local pride communities,” said Colson, a senior majoring in African-American studies. “I think that we can do better with that involvement but while we are here, for many of us, Tuscaloosa becomes our home, and it is really great to have this community of people that are older than us but also have more life experience. I love the connections that I have made with the LGBTQ+ community outside of the campus from Druid City Pride.”

Those who are interested in finding out more details on the organization or upcoming Druid City Pride events are encouraged to follow the organization on Facebook.

<https://cw.ua.edu/45636/top-stories/tuscaloosa-celebrates-a-week-of-pride/>

Elektra Vontrell crowned Miss Druid City Pride 2020

Kinsley Centers | The Crimson White

February 10, 2020

<https://cw.ua.edu/61035/culture/elektra-vontrell-crowned-miss-druid-city-pride-2020/>

New project uncovers Deep South's hidden LGBTQ history

Associated Press | NBC News

August 20, 2018

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/new-project-uncovers-deep-south-s-hidden-lgbtq-history-n902181>

Alabama senate passes bill making it a felony for doctors to help trans youth

Alex Bollinger | LGBTQ Nation

March 6, 2020

<https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2020/03/alabama-senate-passes-bill-making-felony-doctors-help-trans-youth/>

Alabama's LGBTQ charter school denied again by state commission

Trisha Powell Crain | AL.com

September 10, 2020

<https://www.al.com/news/2020/09/alabamas-lgbtq-charter-school-denied-again-by-state-commission.html>

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Student Expectations

Each and every interaction with a Blackburn Student, Fellow, Advisory Board member, or friend of the institute provides you with a unique opportunity to build your personal brand through positive networking experiences. Be mindful that poor behavior reflects poorly not only on yourself, but your family, your region, your state, the Blackburn Institute, and The University of Alabama.

Broadening Horizons:

A primary mission of the Blackburn Institute is developing ethical, broad-thinking leaders. In order to become a leader of this caliber, individuals must be willing to entertain new ideas and expose themselves to new people and experiences.

- Have the courage to not only embrace, but to seek out, new experiences.
 - Show empathy and understanding for others in all that you do.
 - Tolerate and learn from differing viewpoints.
 - Develop a positive attitude towards interacting with people unfamiliar to you.
-

Professionalism:

As a leadership development organization, the Blackburn Institute places a heavy emphasis on professionalism. Ethical leaders should exemplify professional ideals and enact them in his or her daily life, but especially during Blackburn-sponsored events.

- Engage in meaningful dialogue aimed at increasing mutual understanding; never adversarial debate aimed at conquest or victory.
- Respect every individual regardless of class, rank, title, or responsibilities.
- Ask insightful questions in search of knowledge and understanding; never use questioning as a mechanism to trap or discredit someone.

General Decorum:

Ensure that you always use proper manners at Blackburn-sponsored events and please keep in mind the useful tips we learned from the Blackburn Essential Skills Workshops.

- Utilize appropriate dining etiquette.
 - Maximize networking opportunities.
 - Engage in civil discourse and dialogue.
 - Ask thoughtful and respectful questions.
 - Show respect and courtesy to members of the Blackburn Institute, speakers, invited guests, and all others.
-

Conduct:

As a member of the Blackburn Institute, you represent the Institute and The University of Alabama at all Blackburn events.

- Remember, you will be held accountable for all policies contained in the [Code of Student Conduct](#) when off campus representing The University and the Blackburn Institute.
- From [The University of Alabama Alcohol and Other Drug Policy](#):
“The University of Alabama is an institution of higher education which seeks to create a community that promotes respect, responsibility for actions, civility, upholds state and federal laws, and fosters an environment conducive to learning for members of the academic community. The misuse of AOD can hinder the University’s mission and its role in preparing students for responsible citizenship through appropriately focused educational, environmental and enforcement activities related to student health, safety, and wellbeing.”
- Consuming and/or being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs are strictly prohibited for all students in all Blackburn student programs. A limited exception for alcohol is made for students age 21 and over during institute-designated events with Fellows and Advisory Board members. Expectations of appropriate conduct, decorum, and professionalism remain in place at all times.

I, _____ (print), as a student member of the Blackburn Institute have read, fully understand, and agree to the Student Expectations.

Signature

Date

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Dress Classifications

The Blackburn Institute utilizes a standard dress classification system to help its community identify appropriate attire for a variety of events. Attire will be noted in all invitations for Blackburn Institute events. This system provides flexibility for personal style, while ensuring a consistent appearance and level of professionalism.

Business Formal

- Business-style dress
- Dress with a jacket
- Stockings (optional in summer)
- Heels, low or high
- Business suit
- Matching vest (optional)
- Dress shirt
- Conservative tie
- Dress shoes and dress socks

Business Casual

- Skirt, khakis, or pants
- Open-collar shirt, knit shirt, or sweater (no spaghetti straps or décolleté)
- Dress
- Flats or heels
- Seasonal sport coat or blazer with slacks or khakis
- Dress shirt, casual button-down shirt, open-collar or polo shirt
- Optional tie
- Loafers or loafer-style shoes with socks

Casual

- Anything in which you are comfortable!

If you want specific guidelines for this category, here are some suggestions:

- Sundress
- Long or short skirt
- Khakis or jeans (clean, no holes)
- Shorts (depending on occasion and climate)
- Plain t-shirt (no slogans), polo shirt, or turtleneck
- Casual button-down blouse or shirt and/or sweater
- Loafers, sneakers, or sandals

Suggested Packing List

Clothing

- General Attire Guidelines (see previous page for descriptions)
 - Friday - Business casual for full day
Note: There will be a short walk outdoors at the Tuscaloosa Public Housing Authority.
 - Saturday - Business casual for full day
- Socks and appropriate footwear
- Belt

Miscellaneous

- Mask - **required**
- Nametag - **required**
- Portfolio - **required**
- Personal hand sanitizer or other PPE - **optional**

Not Recommended - Students are strongly discouraged from bringing the following items.

- Laptops
- Large amounts of study materials
- Excessive cash
- Expensive jewelry

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Post-Trip Self-Assessment

1. Name:

2. How would you rate your general level of knowledge of the following issues impacting the state of Alabama on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least knowledgeable and 10 being the most knowledgeable?

Arts and Culture

Business/Industry

Education

Geography/Environment

History and Social Issues

Local Government/Politics

3. How would you rate your personal level of empathy and appreciation for other people's perspectives on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least empathetic and 10 being the most empathetic?

4. How would you rate your ability to engage in meaningful discussions among the following groups on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being unable to have meaningful discussions and 10 being fully able to have meaningful discussions?

Your Blackburn Class

Your Class Small Group

All Blackburn Students

Blackburn Fellows

Blackburn Advisory Board

Blackburn Staff

Those Outside of Blackburn

5. What do you think are the biggest issues impacting this region of the state?

6. What do you think are the state's greatest resources/advantages for this region of the state?

7. What did you learn from this travel experience?

8. What content did you enjoy most about this travel experience?

9. What content did you enjoy least about this travel experience?

10. What area of the state would you like to see next year's fall travel experience explore?

11. Did you have any concerns about the content or format of the travel experience?
