



# Adopt-A-School Newsletter

Sponsored by: The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Tuscaloosa City & County School Systems

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June 25, 2007

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August 1, 2007

[Adopt-A-School Breakfast & Seminar](#)

September 27, 2007

[Nucor Steel Adopt-A-School Golf & Tennis Tournament](#)

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## 2007 Adopt-A-School Breakfast Seminar

Celebrating twenty-two years of supporting area schools, the annual Adopt-A-School Breakfast Seminar scheduled for Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup> will officially kickoff the 2007-08 Adopt-A-School Year. The seminar, held at University Church of Christ, will begin with breakfast at 7:30AM. Traditionally scheduled the week before teachers officially report to area schools, the Adopt-A-School Breakfast Seminar provides a unique opportunity for school personnel in both the Tuscaloosa County System and the Tuscaloosa City System to meet together and network with community businesses and leaders. Attending the seminar will be representatives from all 48 public schools in the Tuscaloosa City and County Systems, as well as, business leaders representing the 81 business and professional organizations who have chosen to adopt area schools.

Dr. David Thompson, retired educator will give the keynote address during the opening session. The theme, "Celebrating the Arts: Tuscaloosa's Hidden Treasures", will continue the emphasis placed on the arts in the 2007 Alabama Year of the Arts. Following the opening session, school coordinators and business coordinators will attend breakout workshops and develop plans for the 2007-08 school year. "The seminar and workshops are a great opportunity for our partnerships to meet, network, and develop new strategies for the upcoming school year," said Loo Whitfield, Adopt-A-School Director.

Five partnerships that have just completed their twentieth year together will be recognized for their twenty years of participation in the program. Alabama Gas Corporation & University Place Montessori; Cadence Bank & Northington Elementary School; Tuscaloosa Chapter of Credit unions & Lloyd Wood Middle School; Regions Bank & Collins-Riverside Middle School; and Southland International Trucks & Vance Elementary School have all been partners since 1987. Additionally, P.E. LaMoreaux and Associates & Rock Quarry Elementary School; Merrill Lynch & Rock Quarry Elementary School; Junior League of Tuscaloosa & Holt Elementary School; and Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa (formerly Tuscaloosa Steel and Corus Tuscaloosa) & Holt High School have participated in the Adopt-A-School Program since 1997.

For additional information contact Adopt-A-School Director, Loo Whitfield, 391-0563 or

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## **Matthews Elementary Students Recognized in Kappa Alpha Psi Guide Right Program**

On April 22<sup>nd</sup> selected Matthews Elementary School students were recognized in Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity's Guide Right Program. The theme for the program was 'Promoting Excellence in All Endeavors'. The speaker for the afternoon program was Mr. Amos Hubbard, a chapter member. The recognition program took place at Stillman College and parents were invited to see more than 100 Matthews Elementary students receive certificates acknowledging their improvement and success in the classroom.



The students from Matthews were chosen for the honors by their teachers on the basis of their academic achievements, citizenship, character and continuous improvement for the year. The Matthews Elementary Choir and the Spirit Team also performed at the recognition program. During the program, the Tuscaloosa Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity presented Matthews Elementary School with a gift of five hundred dollars.

According to David Hood, Kappa Alpha Psi coordinator for the partnership, the Guide Right Program is designed to encourage students to continue to work hard and to motivate those students who need a little extra help. The Guide Right Program, a national service program for Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, is the fraternity's social out-reach program providing role models, mentors and

financial assistance for youth in communities and schools throughout the country.

Kappa Alpha Psi has been an adopter for Matthews Elementary School since 2005. In addition to the Guide Right Program, each month Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity honors the Matthews Elementary Students of the Month. Each month selected students receive pens, pencils, rulers and a gift certificate for McDonald's Restaurant.

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## **Adopt-A-School Develops New Sustainer Program**

Adopters and Sustainers are the lifeblood of the Adopt-A-School program. Adopters give support through donated time, expertise, and financial commitments. Sustainers provide the financial support necessary for the coordination and administrative function of the entire program. In an effort to better serve and streamline the opportunities for participation in the Sustainer program additional levels of support have been added and all levels of participation have been renamed to reflect the education arena.

Businesses and organizations are now invited to participate in the Adopt-A-School program as a "Board"; "Superintendent"; "Principal"; "Teacher"; or "Mentor" Level Sponsors. While The Westervelt Company continues to serve as the corporate sponsor for the Adopt-A-School program, several businesses now support the program at the Board and Superintendent Levels. McGiffert and Associates, Ellis Architects, Learning Experiences, Planit Solutions, Tuscaloosa Toyota and NHS Management support Adopt-A-School as Board Level Sponsors and AFFLINK and Jim Myers Drug are the new Superintendent Level Sponsors. Participation at these levels not only includes sponsorship of the entire Adopt-A-School program, but also sponsorship in the annual Golf and Tennis Tournaments, participation in the kickoff breakfast and recognition in the all Adopt-A-School published information. The Principal Level (formerly the Gold Sponsor); Teacher Level (formerly Silver Sponsor) and Mentor Level (formerly Bronze Sponsor) were all renamed to align the Sustainer Program educational terms.

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## **Radiology Clinic Makes Buhl Elementary Playground Possible**

After weeks of fundraising, Buhl Elementary students still





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needed funds for their new playground equipment. However one of their adopters, The Radiology Clinic, heard of the situation and immediately came to the rescue. The Radiology Clinic generously donated funds to complete the playground renovation. Students celebrated the completion of the playground renovation at their annual Fun Day where they presented Joan Brown, Adopt-A-School coordinator for The Radiology Clinic, a token of their appreciation.

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## Oakdale, Alpha and Hunt: A Great Partnership Throughout the Year



Oakdale Primary School, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and Hunt Refining Company celebrated their great partnership with a variety of activities during the school year. Partnership activities included the "Pick Pumpkins, Not Drugs" - classroom pumpkin decoration contest; distributing food baskets to needy families during the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays; caroling with the Student Council at Estes Park Manor Nursing Home and DCH Rehabilitation Pavilion; raising money for

school projects through the Fall Festival and the Student Council's Valentine's Dance; and raising money for charities like United Way and March of Dimes.

Ongoing student recognition activities such as Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity's monthly student birthday celebration and Hunt Refining Company's "I CARE Wall of Character" recognition continued to promote the partnership. Two of the most engaging partnership activities occurred during the last two months of the school year. First, in April during the Earth Day Celebration members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, students and teachers at Oakdale participated in



campus clean-up activities, read books, and watched videos about our planet and how to take care of it. In May, Oakdale students learned firsthand from the adopters and many other Career Day presenters about career opportunities, traditional and non-traditional careers for men and women, and information about the education and training needed to achieve career goals. The partnership activities

benefit the Oakdale Primary Students and their adopters and all are looking forward to many additional great activities

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## Westlawn Middle School Eighth Students Enjoy Phifer PRIDE Event

Ten eighth grade students from Westlawn Middle School spent the day at Phifer Incorporated on May 11, 2007. Each student shadowed a Phifer employee and learned about a specific job, as well as about the educational training and requirements need for that job. The students toured the plant offices and were able to see the vast manufacturing processes in action as they toured the plant. The job shadow event culminated with a pizza lunch. This Phifer



PRIDE event allowed the students to see the day to day processes involved in the international manufacturing plant.

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## **Westwood Elementary Music and Visual Arts Featured at the Bama Theatre**



The talented students of Westwood Elementary, the Arts Council's Adopt-a-School partner, were featured in a choral concert at the Bama Theatre and an art exhibit in the theatre's Greensboro Room during the month of May. The art exhibit featured works created by Westwood students in grades K-5 and was on display through May 15th. Winning pieces were chosen from each grade level. An annual event, the display included traditional media such as pencil, watercolor, photography, and collage. The students were honored in a reception on May 2nd in the Greensboro Room. Attending the receptions along with students and parents were Westwood principal, Ms. Debbie Benson and Dr. Kevin

Ledgewood and Ms. Sandy Wolfe of the Arts and Humanities Council of Tuscaloosa.

The Westwood Singers presented "Go West! A Musical Celebration of America's Westward Expansion" by John Jacobson and Robert Emerson on May 3rd in the Bama Theatre. Also featured in the performance were The Westwood Bell Chimes, The Ensemble, and Westwood Singers II. The exhibit and the musical were both a huge success, showcasing the dedication to the arts that is prominent at Westwood Elementary.

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## **Brookwood High School and Jim Walter Resources Lend a Helping Hand**

Brookwood High School students and their Adopt-A-School partner, Jim Walter Resources, stepped up to the plate to help students and staff of the Enterprise School System. The staff and students at BHS organized the joint effort to collect and deliver the much needed supplies after the devastation of the March 1<sup>st</sup> tornado. The combined efforts of the Brookwood students and Jim Walter Resources resulted in the collection of a truck load of supplies for the Enterprise School System. Brookwood High School teacher, Shelia Hocutt-Remington and several Brookwood students delivered the supplies to Enterprise.

In a letter to the employees of Jim Walter Resources, Michele Mathis, President of the Enterprise Education Association thanked the students and Jim Walter Resources for their contributions. In her letter she stated, "On March 1st, the lives of our education community changed. We can never go back to what we were before, but hope that we will continue to rise up out of the devastation. The support from friends all over the country has given us the encouragement that we needed to continue with our mission. Thank you for being there for us. You will never be forgotten."

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## **Bank of Tuscaloosa Participates in Graduation and Read Across America at Verner**

Adopt-A-School partners, The Bank of Tuscaloosa and Comcast Cable, were pleased to honor the graduating fifth grade class at Verner Elementary again this year. Fifth grade students, Julie Potts and Parker Evans received the Good Citizenship Award. This award is sponsored by The Bank of Tuscaloosa and Comcast Cable and the recipients are chosen by the fifth grade teachers. The Good Citizenship Award recognizes students who have demonstrated good citizenship and character throughout the year.

The Bank of Tuscaloosa also participated in Read Across America Day. Several employees volunteered to read to students. Reading to students on Read



Across America Day is a tradition for the volunteers from The Bank of Tuscaloosa. Most of the readers were repeats from past years who enjoy reading and interacting with the Verner students. The volunteer's read books authored by Dr. Seuss and grades K-5<sup>th</sup> were involved in the fun.

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### **CHOICES Program Presented to Middle School Students**

CHOICES is a nation-wide initiative to help middle to high school students understand how their school efforts affect career and life choices that they will have the opportunity to make in the future. The program covers a wide range of topics that produce thought-provoking ideas for discussion and follow-up assignments for the students in the classes. The main message of CHOICES centers on the correlation between education and quality of life issues for individuals.



The 2006-07 CHOICES program was sponsored by seven businesses and organizations that partnered with The Chamber to provide financial support necessary for materials and licensing fees to include both public school systems. AFFLINK, The Bank of Tuscaloosa, Junior League of Tuscaloosa, Reese Phifer, Jr. Memorial Foundation, Regions Bank, Sam's Club and Security Bank provided the funding for this year's program.

At the core of the CHOICES program are the dedicated seminar leaders who donate their time to conduct the seminar with eighth-grade students. This year 33 trained business people presented the program to 80 eighth-grade social studies classrooms in ten middle schools. These volunteers received three hours of training, then committed at least 2 hours of time to leading middle school students through interactive classroom

exercises on time and money management, careers, decision-making and life consequences.

The seminars reached approximately 2110 eight grade students in our Tuscaloosa City and County public schools: Tuscaloosa Middle, Eastwood Middle, Westlawn Middle, Brookwood Middle, Collins-Riverside Middle, Echols Middle, Davis-Emerson Middle, Hillcrest Middle, Northside Middle, and Lloyd Wood Middle.

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### **Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa and Holt High School Plan 5K Run/Walk**

Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa and Holt High School plan to start their Adopt-A-School partnership activities with a 5K Run/Walk designed not only to promote wellness, but to also support the Adopt-A-School program. Proceeds from the event, scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>, will benefit both Holt High School and the Adopt-A-School program.

In conjunction with the employee wellness program at Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa the 5K Run/Walk is planned to encourage wellness activities among the Nucor employees, their Adopt-A-School partners at Holt High School and the entire community. Dr. Amber Sapp, safety technician at Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa and Adopt-A-School coordinator is organizing the event and additional partnership activities designed to promote wellness will be planned throughout the year.

The 5K is open to everyone and the race begins at 7:30AM on Saturday, August 18, at Holt High School. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three runners and age category winners will also receive prizes. Walkers will predict the length of time needed to complete the 5K and the walkers who most accurately predict their walking time will receive cash prizes. Pre-registration fees are \$10 and registration on the day of the event is \$15. Sponsorships are encouraged for high school participants. All participants will receive a t-shirt. Registration forms are available at The Chamber Office or contact Amber Sapp, 205-562-1167 [asapp@nucortusk.com](mailto:asapp@nucortusk.com)

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### **Sam's Club and Wal-Mart Honor Local Educators With Award**

Two local teachers recently received "Teacher of the Year" Award grants. Andrea Hamner, a teacher at Walker Elementary received the award from Sam's Club and Wes Chapman, a teacher at Cottdale Elementary received the award from Wal-Mart Supercenter #715. The awards, which were given as part of Wal-Mart's 12<sup>th</sup> annual Teacher of the year program, were given in honor of national Teacher's Day on May 8. Both winners received a \$1,000 grant for their school and a \$100 gift card to buy supplies for their classroom, a Teacher of the Year polo shirt and a personalized certificate.

One area teacher is selected as a "local winner" by each Wal-Mart store and Sam's Club. Teachers were nominated by members of the community during February and selected by a committee of store or club associates. The Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year recognition is part of a three-tiered program. Local winning teachers have the opportunity to apply for state Teacher of the Year honors to receive a \$10,000 grant for their school. Each state winner is automatically entered into the national competition and one national winner will receive an additional \$25,000 education grant.



Director of Adopt-A-School Loo Whitfield extended congratulations to the teachers and expressed appreciation to Wal-Mart #715 and Sam's Club. "This is just another example of the tremendous support we receive from our local Sam's Club and Wal-Mart #715. Not only are Sam's Club and Wal-Mart adopters for Holt Elementary School, but they also support the Adopt-A-School through our Sustainer program and our golf and tennis tournaments."

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