



Adopt-A-School Newsletter

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

Chamber Website | Adopters | Sustainers

March 16, 2009

State of the Schools Address

April 8, 2009
7:30 a.m.

Hotel Capstone
[Register Here](#)

Roundtable Discussion COORDINATOR MEETING

April 28, 2009
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
Central High School

Corporate Sponsor



2008-09 Board Level Sustainers



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Fourth Annual "State of the Schools" Breakfast Meeting

Given today's economic climate, now more than ever it is important for the business community to know and understand what's happening in their local systems.

That's why The Chamber of Commerce, Publix Supermarkets and Ellis Architects are co-sponsoring a "State of the Schools" breakfast meeting on April 8th at the Hotel Capstone. The meeting starts at 7:30, and there is no charge, however reservations are requested. A light continental style breakfast will be available.

Headliners for the report to the community will be the superintendents of Tuscaloosa County's two public school systems: Dr. Joyce Levey, Tuscaloosa City Schools, and Dr. Frank Costanzo, Tuscaloosa County Schools.

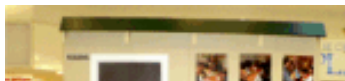
According to Loo Whitfield, Director of Education Development for The Chamber, each school leader will give a status report on their system and will take questions from the floor. "We encourage all Chamber member businesses to take advantage of this opportunity to get an update on the school systems that are preparing students for the workplace," Whitfield said.

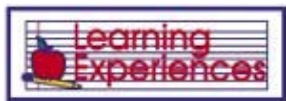
Participants can register on The Chamber's website at www.tuscaloosachamber.com or call 758-7588.

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Adopt-A-School Week 2009 ... "Partnerships: Opening Doors to the Future"

Using the theme "Partnerships: Opening Doors to the Future" creative and informative displays lined the corridors of University Mall during Adopt-A-School's recent celebration of Adopt-A-School Week. As visitors moved from one display to the





next, it was evident that the partners are indeed developing Tuscaloosa's future as they provide resources from the business community to enrich the educational process at their partner school.

The purpose of Adopt-A-School Week is two-fold: to express appreciation to all Adopt-A-School partners and to inform the community of the many projects and activities that are provided to schools through the Adopt-A-School. These aspects of the program were successfully accomplished in many ways.

While mall displays are perhaps the biggest and most visible part of Adopt-A-School Week, individual schools and adopters celebrated their own Adopt-A-School partnerships on-site at schools and places of business. Letters and cards of appreciation were sent to adopters, banners were constructed by students and hung in hallways, marques saluted Adopt-A-School partners, letters and fliers were distributed to inform parents of the many projects of their partnership, adopters were invited to schools for adopter-appreciation breakfast or lunch, students wrote personal thank you notes to adopters, adopters provided breakfast or lunch for school staff, and these are just a few examples of the week's activities.



Those who viewed the mall displays had the opportunity to vote for their favorite display in each of three categories. The winners in each category were:

- Best Theme-Related Display:** Oakdale Primary School
- Most Informative Display:** Northington Elementary School
- Most Creative Display:** Buhl Elementary School

On behalf of the Adopt-A-School Program and The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, we sincerely appreciate the commitment that the Adopt-A-School partners make toward ensuring that students in the Tuscaloosa City and County School Systems receive the best education possible.

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Mercedes-Benz Sponsors Junior Achievement at Vance Elementary

Fourth and fifth grade students at Vance Elementary are currently participating in the Junior Achievement Program sponsored by Mercedes-Benz U.S. International, Inc. The Junior Achievement program for fourth and fifth grade students is a five week program in which students participate in one hour lessons that focus on economics, budgeting, and management. All of the skills taught are life long learning skills and will help to



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prepare students for future careers. The volunteers teaching the Junior Achievement classes to Vance Elementary students are parents and Mercedes-Benz employees who have volunteered their time to further the education of our students. The Junior Achievement program is a great partnership activity that helps to “open the doors” to the future for the students at Vance Elementary School.

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Hillcrest Students Help with DCH's Annual Teddy Bear and Doll Clinic

DCH Regional Medical Center and Hillcrest High School work together on various projects throughout the year, including the Teddy Bear and Doll Clinic. DCH held its annual Teddy Bear and Doll Clinic February 24th and over 400 first grade students from Tuscaloosa area schools brought their teddy bears and dolls as “patients” to DCH.

Health Science students helped with the various stations that made up the clinic. They bandaged the “patients” brought into the clinic, took lab work and overall helped ease fears children may have of the hospital. Katy Wallace, Event



Coordinator for DCH, knows the clinic would not have been as successful without the time and energy Hillcrest students put into it. “The Teddy Bear and Doll Clinic was a huge success thanks to the wonderful help these students provided,” Wallace said. “Their energy and smiles really made the children feel welcome.”

The first graders were not the only ones to benefit from the project. Pam Crawford, Health Science teacher at Hillcrest, says the high school students have a lot to gain from this experience. “These students recognize that they play a role in setting a good example for children. Knowing that you are doing something that will bring a smile to a child’s face is very fulfilling.”

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Westlawn Middle School Hosts Literacy Night

Adopt-A-School partners, parents, students, teachers, and members of the community enjoyed an evening of learning activities, great fun, food, and prizes while getting their “Read On” at Westlawn Middle School’s Family Literacy and Black History Night. The evening’s activities opened with entertainment provided by the WMS Choir and a brief PTA meeting. The literacy part of the evening began with recognition for the winners of the essay and poster contests sponsored by specialty partner, Alpha Phi



Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Literacy presentations were held at various locations throughout the school and included book mark making, storytelling, illustrative art from Eric Carle, presentation of an African American history timeline, the reader's theater and a poetry café. A representative from the Tuscaloosa Public Library provided hand-outs and information about Library services and school counselors presented information on understanding test scores.

WMS adopters, Geological Survey of Alabama, Phifer, Inc., and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority awarded gift certificates to Ms. Lucille Prewitt and Ms. Ruby Simon, teachers at WMS, for their Door and Wall Decorations representing the national theme for Black History Month, "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas". The evening was topped off with drawings for door prizes and a chili supper.



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Vulcan Materials Celebrates Job Shadow and Read Across America Day with Vance Elementary

Vulcan Materials Company recently hosted its annual Job Shadow activity for Vance Elementary students. Two fifth grade students from Vance Elementary were given the opportunity to work as Vulcan Materials employees for the day on



February 5, 2009. The students dressed for the job with hardhats and Brian Jennings, plant supervisor led the students on a tour of the facility. They watched as trucks were loaded and weighed and also worked in the office. They met several employees, including Mr. Jim Lawley, Adopt-A-School coordinator for Vulcan Materials. The students were treated to pizza for lunch. It was a great learning experience for the

students and when asked, they both said they had a great time and learned a lot about their Adopt-A-School partner.

On March 2nd, several Vulcan employees visited Vance Elementary and read to the students. Marty Tubbs and Stacy Whittington read Dr. Seuss books to the students in recognition of the author's birthday. Reading to the students is a traditional Adopt-A-School activity that the Vulcan employees look forward to each year!

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Morgan Keegan awards Spa Package to FVES Teacher

The fourth grade students at Faucett-Vestavia Elementary participated in an essay contest sponsored by their Adopt-A-School partner Morgan Keegan during the month of February. The students wrote essays about the most memorable and

inspiring teacher that they have had. Employees of Morgan Keegan read and judged the essays and selected a winning teacher based on the children's writings. The winning teacher was Mrs. Vicke Smith. She received a Valentine's spa package courtesy of Morgan Keegan. The author of the winning essay was Brooklyn Marable. In her essay, Brooklyn said that Mrs. Smith was deserving of this honor because she is "hard-working, fun, and cares about how we learn." Brooklyn also said she chose to write about Mrs. Smith because "she loves people." Faucett-Vestavia would like to thank Morgan Keegan for its continuous support of our students, teachers, and school.

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Arcadia Elementary Students Visit VA Medical Center

On February 13, the Arcadia Elementary School Student Choir and Student Council visited their Adopt-A-School partner VA Medical Center to perform for the Community Living Center residents, visit with them awhile, and present them with Valentine's Day cards and gifts in conjunction with the annual VA National Salute to Veterans celebration. Many residents gathered to toe-tap and sing along to the patriotic and traditional music medley presented by the students. The audience particularly enjoyed the closing valentine song set to a rousing Latin American beat. That particular selection really had residents and staff alike moving and swaying with the choir and brought smiles to all. One student who could not attend sent her valentine with a note attached requesting it be presented to her grandfather, a Community Living Center resident. The request was honored and her grandpa cried many tears of joy at being remembered by his granddaughter.



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Brookwood Middle School Eighth Graders Enjoy Job Shadowing Day

Twenty-eight Brookwood Middle School eighth graders participated in Job Shadowing Day at Mercedes-Benz U.S. International, Inc. and Alabama Adventure. The students began by filling out a job application for the job shadowing experience. The selected students were then assigned to specific



departments such as service and parts, communications, and safety and security.

On February 26, the selected students met at Mercedes-Benz for a brief safety introduction and then were assigned to their departments. Some students remained at Mercedes-Benz while others went to Alabama Adventure. The students gained valuable knowledge about their

assigned departments and about the working environment. After a morning of hard work, the students met back at Mercedes-Benz for lunch followed by a tour of the museum. While at the museum, the students shared with the group about

their experiences.

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Save the Date - September 24, 2009

For the nineteenth consecutive year, golfers will rally in September in support of the Adopt-A-School Program. Mark your calendars and plan to participate in the Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa Adopt-A-School Golf Tournament on Thursday, September 24th. The four man scramble golf tournament will be held at Tuscaloosa Country Club. Both 8:00AM and 1:00 PM shotgun starts will be available. Additional information concerning registration and sponsorship opportunities will be forthcoming.



For additional information, contact Loo Whitfield, loo@tuscaloosachamber.com or 391-0563.

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PLEASE REMEMBER...

We Have the Best Community Calendar Around

Please do check out our online calendar at www.tuscaloosachamber.com to see what's going on in the area and remember to utilize the interactive feature to add your own listing.

Hit Your "Forward" Button to Share Chamber News

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