JULY 20, 2017

ARTICLES OF INTEREST
JULY 14, 2017 – JULY 20, 2017

FOR SPECIFIC NEWS STORIES, SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGE NUMBERS:

NEWS ABOUT

TRUSTEE/SYSTEM INFO 2
STATE ISSUES 5
UA CAMPUS ISSUES 13
UAB CAMPUS ISSUES 14
UAH CAMPUS ISSUES 16
SPORTS 22
NATIONAL NEWS 34
The Tuscaloosa News
Tuesday, July 18, 2017

UA, credit union to swap properties

Both tracts appraised at around $2 million

By Ed Enoch
Staff Writer

The University of Alabama and Alabama Credit Union will swap contiguous lots of property along University Boulevard as part of an agreement approved Monday.

The executive committee of the UA System board of trustees approved the property swap during a conference call on Monday. The proposal was on the agenda for the board’s June meeting, but was withdrawn.

The university tract appraised at $2.2 million is around 1.59 acres and is a vacant lot at 401 University Blvd. The credit union’s tract appraised at $2.6 million is on the western side of the UA tract and is around 1.68 acres and includes two buildings, one of which is vacant and the other housing Newk’s Eatery. UA would assume the restaurant lease as part of the agreement. The owner of Newk’s could not be reached on Monday for comment on the lease.

The swap would allow the university to have a continuous piece of property along University Boulevard, said Vice President of Financial Affairs Lynda Gilbert. The deal will provide the credit union a nearby undeveloped lot for its future plans to build a new main branch building in the next five years, according to See SWAP, A10

SWAP

Continued from A8

the agreement.

After completion of its new building, the credit union will gift its current building that borders Paul W. Bryant Drive on property leased from the university to UA with an agreement that the building will not be leased to another financial institution. UA will allow an access easement behind the existing vacant building as part of the agreement.

The credit union is retaining the property where its administrative buildings are located south of Newk’s. As part of the deal, UA will receive non-exclusive use of the parking lot in front of the credit union administrative building. Should the credit union sell the remaining property behind Newk’s, UA will have first right of refusal under the deal.

Reach Ed Enoch at ed.enoch@tuscaloosanews.com or 205-722-0209.
Builder says new homes will enhance the area

By Jason Morton
Staff Writer

A proposal to construct homes in the Pinehurst historic neighborhood has stoked concerns among residents there.

But the developer behind the plan said the new homes will enhance, not detract, from the century-old community.

Developer Chase Adcox, through Pinehurst Partners LLC, plans to build four houses on currently wooded lots along the eastern edge of Pinehurst Drive.

But Adcox said Friday that he wants to start with one home in order to allay the residents' concerns and opposition to his plan.

"What I'm trying to do is show how we're going to build," Adcox said. "We're not changing any zoning or anything like that, we're just following the prevailing pattern of the street."

But those living nearby - some who have been Pinehurst residents for decades - are skeptical and believe the elimination of the wooded area will increase noise from nearby college student-oriented areas and decrease the value of their homes. Pinehurst, one of the city's designated residential historic districts, is near the Strip on University Boulevard.

"There's no reason to build on it in the first place," said Pinehurst resident Doris Blum. "And we just don't trust this guy."

The site in question was platted in the early 1900s and sits across from homes now in use by the University of Alabama System chancellor and members of the UA System board of trustees.

But the lots now owned by Adcox and his company have remained vacant. The property has become thick

See PINEHURST, A5
PINEHURST

Continued from A1

and lush with trees and vegetation within the ravine that drops off just feet from the existing roadway, and residents don’t want that to change.

“It’s the only green space left between the university and downtown,” Blum said. “Why do this?

“There are so many other places he can build.”

Blum is part of a grassroots group of neighbors that’s calling itself “Save Historic Pinehurst.”

The group has brought its concerns to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, which Adcox has petitioned for a variance to reduce the minimum setback distance for the first home he has planned.

He is scheduled to go before the board July 24.

While Adcox is seeking a variance for one lot now, his plan calls for building three more homes on the property.

John Dishuck, a Tuscaloosa physician who has lived on 17th Avenue in Pinehurst for 24 years, wants the green space to remain. He contends the land was meant to stay that way for the benefit of the residents.

He also is worried about the increase in noise from the Strip and nearby student-based housing, where residents don’t always keep family-friendly hours.

“If I lose that greenspace, I will hear them much more loudly,” Dishuck said.

Dishuck also said Adcox’s petition for a variance does not meet ZBA requirements.

The ZBA considers hardships — uncontrollable conditions that make construction difficult or, in some cases, impossible — when deciding whether to grant a variance.

But Dishuck said that Adcox was aware of the difficulties in building when he purchased the land, rendering his hardship claim unfounded.

“I consider it a self-imposed hardship,” Dishuck said.

Adcox, meanwhile, said he is trying to show the residents that their concerns are unfounded.

He has enlisted Tuscaloosa architect Jonathan McLelland, who has a history of working within the city’s historic districts.

McLelland is certified by the U.S. Green Building Council, which establishes the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) qualifications for environmentally friendly and sustainable development.

Adcox said he intends to build the homes to LEED certification — complete with solar power and geothermal heating and cooling systems — while keeping in place as many of the old-growth trees as possible.

He also said his goal is to lure new families to downtown and that he is willing to put restrictive covenants on the deeds to ensure they do not become student-based housing or become used as short-term rental properties.

“The student housing concept is out the door. We’re looking for good families who would like to have a new property in downtown,” Adcox said. “There’s a huge market for that, and I want to recruit families to live downtown and not have to go north of the river.

“I think (Pinehurst) is the most wonderful neighborhood in Tuscaloosa. We’re trying to add to it, not take away.”

Reach Jason Morton at jason.morton@tuscaloosanews.com or 722-0200.
Two drop-outs, two endorsements

Gentile endorses Brooks, McGee taps Jones

Howard Koplowitz
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Two candidates have dropped out of the U.S. Senate race, one on the Republican side and one on the Democratic side.


Gentile said he was exiting the race because his wife of nearly 30 years, Karen Gentile, was diagnosed with a rare form of breast cancer two weeks ago.

"It's time for me to spend my time by her side, fighting to help her and to help others struck by this nasty disease," Gentile said with his wife and Brooks by his side at the Alabama Republican Party Headquarters in Hoover. "It will require a fight that will consume all of my time and all of my energy. I have laced up the gloves and I'm ready to battle for her."

Gentile said it didn't take him much time to decide to support Brooks in the race.

"It's very rare to have a politician who is very smart, who is selfless and who does the right things, a good man, a family man, who's never had an ethics complaint," Gentile said.

There is only one candidate who meets my extremely high standards, and I am fully supporting and fully endorsing Mo Brooks to be your next United States senator," he said.

Another reason Gentile endorsed Brooks was because the congressman supports letting states decide whether to make medical marijuana a legal treatment option.

"Medical treatment decisions are not the federal government's right to dictate," McGee said.

McGee was one of eight candidates who qualified to run for the Democratic nomination, along with Jones, Michael Herring, Will Boyd, Vann Caldwell, Jason Fisher, Robert Kennedy, and Charles Nana.

The U.S. Senate primary is scheduled for August 15. If necessary, the primary runoffs will be held Sept. 26 with the Democratic and Republican nominees facing off in a special election on Dec. 12.
Good job governor

Slicing through commissions and setting aside lobbyists, Ivey deserves credit for undoing some of Bentley’s harm

John Archibald  jarchibald@al.com

The words do not come so easily.
Goo...  Goooooo...

Goooooooot jop.
What I'm trying to say is ... Good job governor.
Wow. It's been a long time since I needed those words. It's like making your lips say "Bill Cosby is such a role model."
The muscle memory is gone.

But I gotta say it, with only a caveat or two. Because Gov. Kay Ivey's slog toward the de-Bentlification of Alabama continued last week. She started by eliminating 18 of those task forces and commissions former Gov. Robert Bentley was so fond of creating. He set them up whenever he:
A. Had no idea what to do. Which was often.
B. Didn't want to do anything. Which was often.
C. Wanted to let lobbyists and business interests get their way, but still wanted to maintain a veneer of independence. Which was often. He stacked those folks on commissions and task forces. Like his Alabama Consumer Credit Task Force, which was loaded with shills from the payday loan industry.

Good old Robert Bentley. He used task forces to waffle on everything from groceries to drones, from health literacy to gambling. When in doubt — and he was often in doubt — appoint somebody. He had a task force on everything but doing the right thing by the people of Alabama.

Oops.

Turns out he had one of those, too. It was called the House Judiciary Committee, which was tasked with forcing his behind out of office, and would have impeached him if he hadn't pleaded guilty to misdemeanors and stumbled away.

So goo — gooooo — goooooot jop Gov. Ivey.

Let the buck stop with you. Take credit or blame for what does or doesn't get done on taxes, or payday loans, or forests, or workforce training, or Medicaid or solid waste or — whatever involves actual governing.

As good as that move was, it was Ivey's second act of the week that was really the show stopper. She declared that lobbyists will not be allowed to serve on boards and committees appointed by the executive branch.

Yeah, I know. Saying there aren't lobbyists in her office is like saying Bentley didn't have burner phones.
And she did just appoint a lawyer for Balch & Bingham — a firm that is among the state's biggest lobbyists — to a seat on the Alabama Supreme Court.

But I'm trying to look beyond all that, to a point, because it's a goo-good step. And it is a statement that needs to be made, a line that needs to be drawn. And besides, now we know where the governor stands on lobbyists. For future use.

As she pointed out in her executive order, more than 100 registered lobbyists are now sitting on Alabama boards and commissions.

"By definition, lobbyists are not independent and impartial," the executive order states. "They represent the interests of their clients or employers in working to influence public policy, law, and governmental decision-making on behalf of their principals ... thus the duty owed by a lobbyist is inherently at odds with the duty owed by a public servant."

Congratulations, Mr. Fox, on your appointment to the Alabama Integrated Henhouse Association.
The question here is not whether lobbyists should be barred from commissions, boards and agencies that decide what's best for the state of Alabama. The question is what idiot ever thought it was a good idea to put a person with a bought-and-paid-for opinion in that position.

Ofs.

Thank you Doctor Dr. Ex-Gov. Robert Bentley. You are the gift that keeps on giving.

And way to go Gov. Ivey. Goo-goo-good work.

Archibald writes a regular column for AL.com.
State schools struggle with teacher diversity

Editor's note: AL.com is digging into the persistent achievement gap between black and white students in Alabama schools. To tackle that issue, education reporter Trisha Powell Crain put out a call for teachers willing to dive deep in frank conversation, and more than 200 educators responded. This is one of several stories that resulted.

Trisha Powell Crain tcrain@al.com

While evidence shows a diverse teacher workforce can benefit all students, researchers are finding just how important it is for black students to have black teachers.

But that's not always easy to accomplish in Alabama.

Ten school systems in North Alabama have no black classroom teachers.

"It's essential that we diversify the workforce," said Barbara Cooper, Alabama's chief academic officer, referring to studies demonstrating the positive impact black teachers can have for black students, including reducing the likelihood of being suspended or expelled.

Though 33 percent of the state's public school students are black, only 19 percent of Alabama's teachers are black. Where 55 percent of students are white, nearly 79 percent of teachers are white.

SEE GAP, A23
Hispanic students account for 7 percent of enrollment statewide, but less than 1 percent of teachers are Hispanic.

Orletta Rush is overseeing efforts in Jefferson County Schools to satisfy a half-century-old federal desegregation order, which includes diversifying the teacher work force.

Rush said it is very important for children of all races to see teachers of all races. How can children be expected to work with people of other cultures if they've never been exposed to it, she asked.

"That's how the real world is," she said. "This is usually your first exposure, outside of your family's home, that you're exposed to real world actions."

While there has been an increase nationally in the number of teachers of color, including black and Hispanic teachers, from 1987 through 2013, there has been no increase in Alabama.

Nationally, minority teachers continue to have higher turnover, due in part to the difficult school environments where some of them teach. For example, in Alabama, more than half of the state's black teachers are working in the 25 school districts where more than 90 percent of students are in poverty.

Because those conditions are more challenging, the public may incorrectly assess black teachers as not being successful, Cooper said.

Rush said she has spent most of her teaching career in high-poverty schools with large concentrations of African-American students. Teachers in those schools are working as hard as anyone else, if not harder, Rush said, because of the challenges associated with poverty: truancy, high transiency, and working with single parent homes.

"You have so much up against you that is making you look like you're not the best teacher, when you're giving it everything you've got," Rush said.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

Of the 46,773 teachers in Alabama public schools during the 2016-2017 school year, 9,046, or 19 percent, were African-American, according to information the Alabama State Department of Education provided in response to a request from AL.com.

Even those 19 percent are not evenly spread throughout Alabama. When looking strictly at the concentration of black teachers in all of Alabama's school districts, 4,523 work in seven Alabama districts: Montgomery County, Mobile County, Jefferson County, Birmingham City, Bessemer City, Huntsville City, and Tuscaloosa City.

Every school district in Alabama employs some white teachers. In only five districts, Macon County, Greene County, Lowndes County, Sumter County, and Fairfield City, do white teachers account for less than 10 percent of the teacher population. Ten school districts employ no black teachers — in each case, districts where the vast majority of the students are also white.

In the 40 school districts where more than half the students are black, only 18 also have a majority black teacher workforce. By contrast, in the 89 school districts where more than half of the students are white, all have a majority white teacher workforce.

That means, by and large, you could guess the racial composition of a student body by looking at the teachers, something expressly problematic in the dozens of Alabama systems still under federal desegregation orders.

State data shows there are only three districts where the percentage of black teachers is greater than that of the student population. Further, historical documents show the actual number of black teachers in Alabama in 2017, 9,046, is nearly the same as it was in 1961, at 8,959, while the number of white teachers has more than doubled from 18,566 in 1961 to 36,554 in 2017.

During the same time period, the percentage of black students was nearly the same as it is today: 35 percent in 1961 and 33 percent in 2017, but the white student population has dropped by 10 percentage points, from 65 percent to 55 percent of the total student population. Alabama's Hispanic population has become a larger percentage of the student population in recent years.

For a complete look at the statistics on teacher diversity in Alabama, see the map at AL.com/education.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

It benefits all students to see intelligent people of all races as teachers, said
researcher Travis Bristol at Boston University.

"In a diverse democracy you need to have diverse representation of all people across all fields," said Bristol, who studies the recruitment, retention and support of teachers of color. However, Bristol said a diverse faculty does not solve many of the other issues at racially isolated, high-poverty schools.

"Simply saying we're going to improve black learning by giving black students a black teacher is a flawed policy," he said, "without giving black teachers the resources to do their work."

Researchers have shown that black teachers have a positive effect on the outcomes of black students in many areas, including increasing test scores, improving attendance and reducing suspensions.

Recently, researchers found a long-term effect: black students who have a black teacher at least once in grades three through five are less likely to drop out of high school and are more likely to want to attend college.

Bristol finds another positive outcome for black students: "If the goal is to continue to instill in black children the possibilities of social mobility and economic mobility, having someone stand in front of them 160 or 180 days a year, it becomes a real great marketing tool for that."

"On one level, particularly for black children," Bristol said, "you can't be what you can't see."

There is also the reverse issue, meaning how the teacher sees the students. In 2015, researchers found that in high school, black teachers have higher educational expectations for black students than white teachers do.
Specifically, the team showed that non-black, including white, teachers have significantly lower expectations for black students to complete high school and are significantly less likely to expect black students to complete college.

The effect was largest for boys, with black teachers having higher expectations of black male students than white teachers.

Yet that same research showed that black and white teachers had no difference in expectations for white students.

Teacher bias is not a new area of research, but this research is the most recent to explore expectations.

Teachers in AL.com's Tackling the Gap group are also discussing teacher bias, examining whether they have biases that impact the way they interact with students in their classrooms. Asked whether more black teachers could impact the achievement gap, there was some disagreement among them, with white teachers feeling confident they could teach their black students well, and black teachers advocating for teachers who could relate to black students better.

WHAT TO DO?

Eleven states, including Mississippi and Tennessee, are working together, supported by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), to find best practices for recruiting, retaining and supporting teachers of color. These states have committed to match their teacher demographics to their student demographics by 2040.

CCSSO Director of Educator Preparation Initiatives Saroja Warner said concerns about teacher diversity have been around for at least three decades, but that it hasn't been a priority. Research in recent years helped illuminate the impact of teachers of color on students.

Warner said a number of places have begun "grow your own" initiatives to create opportunities for people in local or regional areas within a state to become teachers. However, Warner said, "We're not going to fire teachers who don't match the demographics of the student population in order to make space for new ones."

Cooper in Alabama said some superintendents in areas with majority black student populations have begun "grow your own" programs. And other systems within Alabama, such as Huntsville City Schools, are being compelled by decades-old federal court cases to make efforts to revise hiring practices and diversify the teaching staffs.

Paraprofessionals are another pool of potential candidates, Warner said. They are typically a very diverse group of employees within a school "who already have a commitment to students and support their learning," she said. Many paraprofessionals are not teachers because of barriers that keep them from getting certified, Warner said. She suggested states might remove some of those barriers.

While no statewide initiative currently exists in Alabama, Cooper said increasing diversity in Alabama's teacher work force will be a part of Alabama's new strategic plan, called Alabama Ascending, and she anticipates Alabama's federal Every Student Succeeds Act plan will have goals for diversity as well.

Cooper said the state could examine the certification practices and work with teacher preparation programs at colleges across the state. "People are doing a great job out there [increasing diversity], but it's in pockets," she said.

Prior to working at the state department of education, Cooper worked in Huntsville City Schools, overseeing the district's effort to comply with a federal desegregation order.

Huntsville created a centralized talent management office. Applicants in Huntsville now apply to the central office and not to individual schools. That helped place new teachers in schools where they improve the racial balance.

In Jefferson County, which also operates under a federal desegregation order, Rush said the system recruits teacher candidates from many of Alabama's historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), trying to find black teacher candidates willing to relocate to the Jefferson County area. Hispanic teachers are also being actively recruited, she said, as the district's Hispanic population continues to grow.

"We're not asking you to choose someone for the color of their skin, but what we're asking you to do is look at a variety of applicants that are coming through," she said.

Cooper agrees that districts have to create a strategy, saying, "it's not something that's just going to happen by chance."
Congress ready to grow fleet, bolstering Gulf shipyards

**John Sharp**  jsharp@al.com

Congressional Republicans are pushing an ambitious U.S. Navy expansion plan that would grow the fleet to its highest level in at least 13 years.

Strongly supported by Gulf state lawmakers in Alabama and Mississippi, the plan would likely spur a rapid ramping-up at major shipbuilders such as Austal USA in Mobile and Ingalls in Pascagoula. Many congressional Democrats are on board, also. After all, shipbuilding occurs in both

SEE NAVY, A9
NAVY
FROM A1

Given the wide range of challenges we face today, we must live up to the Navy's state requirement of a 355-ship fleet," said U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, R-Fairhope, who represents coastal Alabama, home to Austal's 4,000-worker Mobile yard.

Added Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire: "A strong investment in the Navy is not only an investment in our national defense, but also our national economy.

NATIONAL PROJECT

The recent push has been publicly led by Senate Republicans, who are backing the "Securing the Homeland by Increasing our Power on the Seas" Act, better known by the acronym: SHIPS.

SHIPS would establish a 355-ship benchmark for the fleet, significantly exceeding a 308-ship goal released by the Navy in 2015. The Navy's present fleet stands at 274.

The 355-ship fleet — built out over two decades — would serve as the Navy's response to, among other things, China's naval modernization and resurgent activity by Russia.

Among the co-sponsors is Republican Alabama Sen. Luther Strange, who said in a news release Saturday that a 355-ship goal is possible through "prudent planning and sufficient resources."

Lawmakers don't have a cost estimate on building and operating such a fleet. But the Congressional Budget Office pegs the price tag at $26.6 billion a year, on average, over the next 30 years. That's 60 percent more than what the Navy has spent, on average, over the past 30 years.

The increase would also lead to demand for new recruits. At least one report indicates that the Navy seeks a force of 350,000 sailors, a 10 percent jump from today's 322,000.

Ronald O'Rourke, an analyst with the Congressional Research Service, noted in a May report that boosting the fleet could require reducing funding levels for other Defense Department initiatives.

But for lawmakers like Strange, the SHIPS Act establishes a "goal" for the Navy and lawmakers to focus on. He said, "Building up our fleet is a national project and should be a source of national pride.

Rep. Rob Whitman of Virginia and Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, both Republicans, are the main sponsors of the SHIPS Act. They are the chairmen of the House and Senate subcommittees that oversee the Navy and Marine Corps.

In Wicker's home state, Ingalls is the largest private employer, with about 11,500 workers. Among them are more than 2,100 Alabama residents.

"We have a serious threat that we haven't faced in the previous decades," Wicker said in an interview. "We're not doing this to be fanciful. We're doing this to meet and expanding threat — a situation we didn't see a few years ago."

EVOLVING ROLE

A benchmark for a 355-ship fleet would be the highest since 2002-04, following 9/11, according to O'Rourke's report. It's also on target with President Donald Trump's campaign pledge to bring up the fleet size to 350.

But Trump's budget, introduced earlier this year, added only nine new ships, one being a littoral combat ship — the vessel that is constructed in Mobile's Austal shipyard. By contrast, Congress approved the building of three ships in the final budget under former President Barack Obama.

In addition, Trump's proposed budget halts a $500 million contract for a new 400-foot cutter built at Ingalls.

The GOP-led House, through its Armed Services Committee, proposed this month adding $6 billion more for naval shipbuilding that would, in part, pay for more LCS construction. The extra Navy funds are part of a larger $640 billion defense budget backed by House lawmakers — a $37 billion increase over the Trump budget.

Navy ship-building yards, repair yards and their suppliers are mostly located in the following states: Alabama, California, Florida, Hawaii, Maine, Mississippi, Virginia, Wisconsin and Washington.

Byrne said that for the 355-ship goal to be attained, Austal must remain a busy shipyard for years to come. And he described Austal's LCS warship as "critical to our evolving role in the Pacific and around the globe."

Austal recently announced that it secured a government contract to build its 14th LCS. Austal said the LCS 28 contract is worth "up to $584 million."

"This demonstrates the Navy's confidence in Austal being a key component in building their 355-ship fleet, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our incredible employees," said Craig Perciavalle, the president of Austal USA.

Austal delivered two LCS ships in 2016, and is set to deliver two more this year.
Florida attorney, author wins 2017 Harper Lee Prize

A south Florida attorney and author of "Gone Again" has won the 2017 Harper Lee Prize for Legal Fiction given by the University of Alabama School of Law and the American Bar Association Journal.

"I don't know who's happier, James Grippando the writer or James Grippando the lawyer," Grippando said in comments released by the university. "Winning the 2017 Harper Lee Prize for Legal Fiction is easily the proudest moment of my dual career."

The 2017 prize will be presented at the UA School of Law on Sept. 14. Grippando will be honored with a signed special edition of "To Kill a Mockingbird" and an article in the ABA Journal.

After the award presentation, there will be a panel discussion of Grippando's "Gone Again" in relationship to Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird."

The prize, created to honor Lee, is given annually by the UA School of Law and the ABA Journal to a book-length work of fiction that features the role of lawyers in society and their power to effect change. The winner is chosen based on a panel of judges and online voting by the public.

"Grippando's book does a masterful, entertaining job exploring the important topic of the death penalty and actual innocence," said Molly McDonough, editor and publisher of the ABA Journal. "In 'Gone Again,' attorney Jack Swyteck focuses on finding the truth while navigating the complexities of habeas petitions for a despicable client."

The other finalists were "Small Great Things" by Jodi Picoult and "The Last Days of Night" by Graham Moore.

The judges were Deborah Johnson, winner of the 2015 prize; Cassandra King, author of "The Same Sweet Girls Guide to Life;" Don Noble, host of Alabama Public Radio's book review series; and Han Nolan, author of "Dancing on the Edge."

The 2017 prize will be awarded at UA for the first time. Previously, the award has been presented in Washington, D.C., at the Library of Congress in conjunction with the National Book Festival.

"Grippando's book does a masterful, entertaining job exploring the important topic of the death penalty and actual innocence."

Molly McDonough, ABA Journal
GOP health care law could cost UAB $154 million a year

By: Amy Yurkanin

The latest version of the Senate health care bill could cost Alabama's largest hospital more than $150 million a year, according to Will Femiany, CEO of UAB Health System.

"There's no better deal for Alabama than Medicaid," Femiany said. "Which is exactly why the federal government wants to cut it. We would all be rich people if we could put up 30 cents and get 70 back."

The latest version of the GOP health care bill keeps proposed caps on Medicaid spending introduced in earlier legislation. Capping federal payments would shift costs to the states, Femiany said. The federal government currently funds about two-thirds of Alabama's Medicaid program.

Alabama would have to come up with $826 million a year to make up for the cuts that would result from changes to federal funding, Femiany said.

If state lawmakers don't raise taxes to cover those losses, the Alabama Medicaid Agency could be forced to reduce payments to hospitals and doctors, hurting hospitals across the state.

"If you add all the effects of the [GOP bill] together, it could be up to $154 million a year at UAB," Femiany said.

The cuts are serious enough that Femiany is reaching out to employees and encouraging them to contact their senators. He said it's only the second time in nine years at the helm of the healthcare system that he's felt compelled to make a political statement.

The U.S. Senate could vote soon on the replacement bill for Obamacare. Femiany said the Medicaid cuts included in the bill would hurt Alabama in part because the state spends so little on the program.

"It locks us into a very low Medicaid program, Femiany said. "We have one of the lowest Medicaid programs as far as benefits in the country."

Other changes could hurt older people and low-income customers who buy insurance on the federal exchange.

Still, Femiany said that Obamacare did not solve the state's healthcare woes.
"Most people can agree the American health care system is broken," Ferniany said. "They may disagree about what's broken about it, but they can agree that it's broken. The Affordable Care Act didn't fix that. It was built on a broken healthcare system."

The GOP replacement bill is even worse, he said.

"The American Healthcare Act that the House passed, it's not repeal and replace," Ferniany said. "It took the Affordable Care Act and made it worse. And then the BCRA, it just took the made-worse affordable care act and it's not repeal and replace either."

Ferniany doesn't support going back to policies that existed before the Affordable Care Act, which left many uninsured. Bad debt at UAB dropped by about 2 percent after the ACA went in affect, he said.

"If [bad debt] went back up one percent, that's a $67 million hit to this hospital," Ferniany said. "Those are big numbers."

Ferniany said cuts to Medicaid would be difficult to absorb. The hospital would be forced to layoff staff and possible cut some services only offered at UAB. Some patients might have to leave the state for care, he said.

"To me, I have a responsibility to this hospital to do what's best for this hospital," Ferniany said What's best for this hospital is to not pass this act."
Decatur ELL students showing progress on state test

By: Deangelo McDaniel

English Language Learners in Decatur City Schools have made progress, but significant challenges remain — and this is why administrators spent the second day of their administrative retreat Tuesday receiving training.

For almost 90 minutes, a group from the University of Alabama Huntsville’s College of Education talked with school officials about simplifying messages and using fewer words to deliver the same message.

Eudoxia Tsimika Chronis opened the retreat at Burritt on the Mountain talking to administrators in Greek. The point: She wanted principals to know what ELL students may be experiencing on the first day of school.

The result: “We got the message,” Brookhaven Middle School Principal Anita Clarke said. “We get at least one student to enroll each week that speaks no English. The student and parent just stand there and stare.”

Decatur has been aware of issues ELL students face, and last year the school system opened the EXCEL Center at Austin High. The site serves students who are not proficient in English and helps immigrant students who speak no English transition to their new schools, administrator Ressa Chittam said.

The center served about 170 students, and Chittam said 87 percent of the high school students had gains on the ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) test, while 84 percent of middle school students had gains.

ACCESS is a proficiency test designed to measure ELL students' social academic proficiency and to monitor their progress in mastering the English language.

While public attention has been directed toward Decatur’s Hispanic student population because it increased from 1 percent in 1996 to about 25 percent last year, school leaders said the center is helping students from seven countries who speak various levels of English.

Spanish-speaking students receive the majority of the help, but the center has students from Japan, Vietnam, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Honduras and Yemen.

DCS testing coordinator Wanda Davis said students who have not reached proficiency on ACCESS have problems reaching proficiency on standardized state tests.

“It’s not that they can't do; we just have the language issues,” she said.
Regardless of the language barriers, students who are not proficient in English are exempt for only one year from taking the state’s standardized test, which is why DCS, instead of having ELL teachers in every school, opened the EXCEL Center, Chittam said.

UAH professor Andrea Word said ELL students may not have access to academic content because of gaps in language. She told DCS administrators that they and teachers can use simple language without losing the message.

When Chronis was speaking in Greek, for example, she said: “Good morning everyone. Welcome to our presentation.”

Word said a simpler way to deliver the same message is to say: “Good morning. Welcome.”

ELL challenges for Decatur, however, go beyond the classroom, said DCS Director of Operations and Safety Dwight Satterfield. This is why the district went to centralized enrollment last year.

Satterfield said it was impossible for the school system to put interpreters in each school, so they send students to the central office to enroll if they come after school starts. Before school starts, students either enroll online or at the Central for Alternative Programs near Banks-Caddell Elementary.

If students check that they speak any language other than English, Satterfield said, the district does a “home-language survey” to determine which language is spoken in the home. Once the district knows this, he said, material is sent home in the native language.
Why UAH can claim credit for today's unmanned aircraft systems.

By: Steve Johnson

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. -- We've all seen them buzzing overhead. We're certainly admired the great aerial video they make possible. Some of us own them. We call them drones, while the military has a fancier name, Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

All of them owe a debt to the flying Bassett, a prototype unmanned aircraft developed more than 15 years ago. "We got into it after 9/11, because everyone was looking at security and how to protect infrastructure throughout the nation, and our military infrastructure," said Gary Maddux, the Director of the UAH Systems Management and Production Center.

Bassett stands for "Base Airborne Surveillance and Sensing for Emerging Threat Tracking." The aircraft itself was a noisy, four-foot long, gas fueled model helicopter that became a tool for research and learning.

"This was new territory, that you were going to put something airborne and put sensor packages. What were sensor packages? There was no definition," said Jim Lawrence a Research Scientist at UAH.

Someone did have to figure out how to use unmanned aircraft, and that's exactly what the scientists, teachers and students did at UAH. There was one unavoidable problem. "We had ideas that far exceeded the technology of the time," says Jim Lawrence.

That early research that was dependent on technology of the time did start the ball rolling to now. "Every kid six years old got a drone for Christmas, so that the technology, the cameras and everything, everything is miniaturized now," said Norven Goddard, a Research Scientists at the Systems Management and Production Center.

Like all the other men and women in the Department, Goddard is thinking about what's next for unmanned aircraft. One thing that's certain, the process of 3-D printing is opening up new ways to manufacture drones. Also, they're getting smaller and smaller.

At UAH one project in the works is developing technology to make a flying drone invisible from the ground. All the new developments are pretty spectacular, but they came from a much more humble beginning. "All those things that people are using now and think are commonplace were not commonplace. We planted the seed," said Jim Lawrence.

All the researchers at the Systems Management and Production Center believe they made, and are continuing to make a contribution to the world of unmanned aircraft that we have today.
Alabama gets ready for the new space race

By: Lee Roop

President Trump re-launched the National Space Council Friday to coordinate America's military and commercial space efforts. The panel's first challenge will be getting a handle on everything that's going on - and changing - in what's becoming a new American space race.

Multiple states including Alabama, along with counties, cities, companies and universities are pouncing on space opportunities that didn't exist a decade ago. Other states, including New Mexico, are trying to come back from space bets made before the Great Recession that haven't worked out.

New in Alabama

In May, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey signed a new law creating an Alabama Space Authority to seek space business opportunities. The law was designed to leverage what's already happening in the state.

The same month, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal signed a law limiting liability for companies that launch tourists into space. That law was passed to boost the prospects for a new spaceport Camden County is trying to develop on the Atlantic coast south of Savannah.

Both states have been in the space business before this year. Alabama is home to NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, a key education center in the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and a supplier base NASA wants to expand to all of the state's 67 counties. Georgia claims 500 companies involved in space now, and Georgia Tech also funnels engineers into aerospace every year.

Nearby, Florida's Space Coast has transitioned from the NASA launch slowdown to growth as a commercial and military launch facility, California and Virginia are also launching payloads at government facilities, and Texas is testing rocket engines for Blue Origin and preparing to host a SpaceX launch site.

And that's just the marquee players.

A global market

"There's a global market," says Trevor Daniels of the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville. "People are doing research around the world. Everybody needs space for something."

Daniels works in government relations for space & rocket center Executive Director Dr. Deborah Barnhart, who was on a statewide committee that helped decide what Alabama's space authority could try to accomplish.

Huntsville has already taken its next steps. In addition to recruiting new space hardware companies like rocket manufacturer Blue Origin, the city is trying to certify its jetport as a landing spot for Sierra Nevada's mini-space shuttle Dream Chaser.
Huntsville doesn't want to be a spaceport. It wants to leverage its connections to Marshall to become a payload operations center.

"I think the big difference between building a spaceport and what we're doing with Dream Chaser is that we are leveraging existing assets, not building new ones," Huntsville-Madison County Chamber of Commerce Senior Vice President Lucia Cape said recently. "The feasibility study that was conducted and the permitting that is being pursued do require an investment on the front end, but they position us to tap into new markets for our payload development, integration, operations and processing expertise."

The space authority act passed by Alabama lawmakers this year reflects the evolving view. When it was first proposed several years ago, the bill was the Alabama Spaceport Authority Act. It didn't become law. The bill that passed doesn't have "port" in its title or plan.

*Important distinction*

"That was an extremely important distinction for us to make to all the stakeholders," Daniels said. "A spaceport is not the end game. Space is the end game. Space means a lot more than launching rockets and having a landing facility. Space is the immense capabilities we already have in Alabama."

The state's motivation is mostly economic, and that may be the key to looping in all of Alabama's space players. In addition to the big NASA center, Daniels cites Alabama's research universities and the technologies they can develop and spin off into Alabama companies. Also in the mix now is Airbus in Mobile. "Our cup runneth over in expertise and workforce," Daniels said.

Daniels points out that the state's space council faces some of the same challenges that Trump's council will face: deciding which technologies to support with investments, bringing instruments and services to market quickly (and safely) to make an impact and training a new generation of aerospace workers.

What's generating the excitement? First, cubesats have become a key segment of the space economy. These small satellites, launched into orbit by small rockets and from the International Space Station, give entrepreneurs, small companies and college students the opportunity to fly their own scientific and communications satellites. New companies like Vector Space Systems are emerging to build the smaller rockets that will launch these mini-satellites.

*New Mexico's story*

It's a different market than the one New Mexico saw when it opened America's first commercial spaceport 10 years ago. The vision then was regular flights into space for scientists and tourists.

Today, New Mexico's "Spaceport America" is a $220 million facility trying to pivot to the new space economy. It needs millions more in investment to make that change, and some in the state are reluctant to make another bet.

*See next page*
In a June 21 story headlined "Waiting for Liftoff," the Santa Fe New Mexican newspaper quoted a scientist at Arizona State University saying, "When the spaceport first opened, tourism was the focus. The whole commercial space sector has really changed."

Dan Hicks, the facility's new executive director, summed up New Mexico's challenge now. "What I'm concerned about is 10 years have gone by and these other states are starting to catch up," Hicks told the newspaper.

New Mexico also had bad luck, and that's something that can reach out and grab any space project. The spaceport opened on the cusp of a national recession. Major client Virgin Galactic lost a test pilot in a crash that set its plan to fly space tourists. But Virgin Galactic says it will bounce back soon.

Other states, universities and companies were placing new bets while New Mexico's spaceport stalled. Being behind turned out the place to be. Now, those states say they're more than catching up. They say they're ready to move ahead.
UA baseball names new director of operations

By Ben Jones
Sports writer

The University of Alabama baseball program named Jack Hoehl as its director of baseball operations on Monday morning.

Hoehl spent the last four years working as Kentucky’s director of baseball operations. He was on staff with Alabama head coach Brad Bohannon when Bohannon was an assistant at Kentucky in 2014 and 2015.

Hoehl worked as a student manager at Auburn for four years, graduating in 2012. He became head student manager, overseeing field preparation, training, game day coordination and other duties. Hoehl also operated Auburn’s video analysis system and assisted the Tigers’ recruiting coordinator. He served as an event management assistant for the Tigers in 2012-13, working with several sports.

Alabama had previously announced that Jerry Zulli and Jason Jackson would be the two full-time assistant coaches for the baseball team. The program has not announced a volunteer assistant to the staff.
Media Days can go, but don’t touch baseball

Kevin Scarbinsky  
kscarbinsky@al.com

It’s a sad fact of life for the Magic City. You can measure the growth of the Southeastern Conference by the different ways it’s outgrown Birmingham.

The men’s basketball tournament, which came back to life here in 1979 after a long hiatus, left after the 1992 edition and hasn’t returned. The event grew. The BJCC, our primary arena, remains stuck in time 25 years later.

The football championship game was born here in 1992, stayed for two years and couldn’t wait to get to Atlanta where it would stay warm and dry. The event grew. Legion Field couldn’t compete with the Georgia Dome then, and the dome can’t compete with Mercedes-Benz Stadium now.

The Gray Lady on Graymont still stands as a monument to our maddening aversion to progress.

So it should come as no surprise to anyone that Commissioner Greg Sankey is openly talking about packing up the circus

See next page
that is SEC Media Days and taking it on the road. It's going to happen, perhaps as soon as next year, the only variables time and place. Truth is, if the construction schedule for Mercedes-Benz Stadium had been different, Hugh Freeze might have preached Thursday in Atlanta rather than Hoover.

The conference discussed that possibility a year ago, and it's a good bet that next year at this time, Jim McElwain will unhappily depart his Montana cabin for Nashville or Dallas or another progressive metropolis within the expanded SEC footprint.

Sometime very soon, Sankey will make the final call on the location for SEC Media Days 2018 — and perhaps 2019 and 2020 as well — and the wealth of hot air could be spread among multiple sites.

Hoover still could be one of them because there's nothing wrong with the city or the headquarters, the Hyatt Regency Birmingham Wynfrey Hotel. It's been a terrific host.

It's just that Media Days has ballooned into a four-day infomercial for SEC football, a nationally televised vehicle to get as many people as possible talking about the league and the sport right after the last Fourth of July fireworks flame out.

Given that coaches can tap dance around serious questions and roll their eyes at absurd ones just about anywhere, the specific location is almost irrelevant. If that sounds like sour grapes as another SEC event prepares to spread its wings and fly, hey, that's a staple of our diet.

In this instance, our passion works against us. People around here don't need an overhyped non-event to roll into town to spark a conversation about SEC football in the middle of the summer, but there are places where the local population's attention doesn't hang on Nick Saban's every word.

Why not obligate the local media elsewhere to spend four days acting as if something of vital importance is happening in their town during a sleepy week on the calendar?


Why not give the fans of Tennessee, Georgia, LSU or Texas A&M a chance to put on a funny hat, paint their dog in school colors and loiter in a hotel lobby hoping their favorite coach or player might stop by and say howdy?

Funny thing about that. Alabama supporters being the force of nature they are have turned Media Days into a miniature Fan Fest, but that's not the purpose of the event. The real purpose is to expand the brand, to reinforce the message that the SEC is a big tent that stretches far beyond its headquarters.

Next March, Avery Johnson and Bruce Pearl will be coaching in the SEC Basketball Tournament in St. Louis, of all places.

But that's OK. The SEC brand is part of the DNA of Hoover, Birmingham and the rest of the state of Alabama. Wherever the league goes, wherever it might take Media Days next year or even its office down the road, we'll be right here.

As long as they leave the baseball tournament at the Hoover Met where it belongs, we're good.
Wilder's next fight could be this fall

By Aaron Suttles
Sports Writer

World Boxing Council heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder is expected to return to the ring to defend his title by early November and possibly as early at mid-October, The Tuscaloosa News has learned.

Wilder (38-0 with 37 knockout victories) has patiently awaited another challenger since defeating his last opponent, Gerald Washington, on Feb. 25 in Birmingham's Legacy Arena.

The layoff of nearly six months is already the third-longest Wilder has gone without a fight, and one of those instances came when Wilder was recovering from a torn right biceps muscle and a broken right hand. By the time his next fight is scheduled, it will be the longest period between fights in Wilder's professional career.

Wilder's promoter, Lou DiBella, has a hold on the Barclays Center in Brooklyn for the dates Saturday, Oct. 14, and Saturday, Nov. 4. The search and negotiation for an opponent remains ongoing.

Two names at the top of the list are Luis Ortiz, a Cuban-born 38-year-old, and Bermane Stiverne, who Wilder defeated in January 2015 to obtain the WBC heavyweight championship.

Of those two, Ortiz is the more desirable fights, both monetarily and from a fan-interest perspective.

Wilder battered Stiverne in a resounding 12-round unanimous decision, a fight boxing experts still point to as Wilder's most complete performance. Then there is the fact that Stiverne has fought just once since his defeat at the hands of Wilder, a span of

See BOXING, B9
Continued from B6

30 months. He last fought in November of 2015.

The WBC had previously mandated that Wilder fight Stiverne, who is the organization's No. 1-ranked contender, and Stiverne has remained adamant that he won't take step-aside money to allow Wilder to fight another opponent.

There is also the issue of Stiverne missing a drug test this year, which the WBC revealed Monday when it issued an update on its Clean Boxing Program. The Voluntary Anti-Doping Agency (VADA), which oversees the WBC testing program, counts a missed test as a failed drug test.

The WBC hasn't clarified Stiverne's status as a mandatory contender since revealing that he had missed a test.

“I don't know the details, but it's definitely something to be concerned about,” Wilder co-manager and trainer Jay Deas said. “Deontay has tested clean dating back to the Olympics (2008). We want a level playing field and we want everybody we get in the ring with to be clean as well.

“That should be a given, but unfortunately that's not always the case.”

Ortiz is more of a mystery, although he considered one of the most dangerous and avoided heavyweights in the world.

The first curiosity is his age. He claims to be 38, but boxing analysts have long suspected that may be older. Ortiz fought more than 350 amateur fights during his days on the Cuban national team.

Ortiz has also run afoul of drug testing, previously serving a year-long suspension. Ortiz, a former WBA heavyweight champion, Ortiz last fought December 2016. He is advised by Al Haymon, who also has a contract with Wilder and serves on the management team for Floyd “Money” Mayweather.

“If we were to fight Ortiz, we would certainly insist that he's tested like we're tested,” Deas said.

Deas has insisted for more than a year that Wilder wanted the biggest fight possible. Ortiz would certainly fit that bill, though a large step up in competition. That doesn't bother his co-manager.

“(No concerns) whatsoever,” Deas said. “We're in this business to be the best and to be the best you have to fight the best. That's what we're trying to do.

“A lot of people make excuses not to fight Deontay, and people make a lot of excuses not to fight Ortiz. They are the most avoided heavyweights in the world today. It makes sense for these two guys to fight. It would be a huge fight for the sport of boxing.”

Another name that is tangentially mentioned in regards to Wilder's next opponent is Dominic Breazeale, who fought on the undercard of Wilder's last fight and defeated Izuagbe Ugonoh by knockout in the fifth round.

Breazeale and Wilder reportedly had a confrontation at a Birmingham hotel following the night's fights, and Breazeale subsequently filed a civil suit against Wilder. That matter remains ongoing.

Due to the legal action, that pairing would be a long shot at the moment.

“I haven't heard his name much,” Deas said. “I haven't heard he's in the mix for this. If the fight was to come about, we would expect negotiations to begin once the suit is dropped. We're not going to fight a guy and give him a shot at the heavyweight championship that's suing us. That's not how the world works.”

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For some, Alabama vs. Florida State will settle debate of which is the better conference, SEC or ACC

By Aaron Suttles
Sports Writer

It's talking season. That's not the official name of the various media days taking place all over the country the last two weeks, but it might as well be.

Talking season is just that: talk. Soon it will be playing season though, and all the talk goes out the window.

But talking season did reveal a narrative that is likely to get under the skin of any hardened SEC fan. The two premier ACC coaches, who interestingly enough took the stage on the last day of SEC Media Days, publicly proclaimed that the ACC is currently college football's best conference.

Jumbo Fisher: "I think we've established ourselves as I think the premier conference in college football."

Dabo Swinney: "The ACC is the best league in college football, and you can get beat each and every day, so you've really got to be on it because you never know."

Swinney's and Fisher's pride is understandable given the past decade of SEC dominance. It's also an issue with which Alabama fans might take interest. It just so happens Alabama finished last season with a last-second loss to Swinney's Clemson Tigers and opens the upcoming season with Fisher's Florida State Seminoles.

Given that fact, some might view the Sept. 2 Alabama-Florida State game as a referendum on which conference is better. While that's certainly a narrow prism from which to view the issue, there is no doubting Alabama and Florida State are viewed as the top teams in their respective conference, as proven by both being projected to win their leagues during the SEC and ACC media days.

"I think to some extent it will be," espn.com ACC
FOOTBALL

Continued from C1

writer David Hale said. "If Alabama wins, I think it becomes a little bit of, 'Well, our best is better than your best.' If Florida State wins, it's the same thing."

"I think the necessity of a win still feels like it's more on the ACC's need list. I feel like Alabama doesn't really have a lot to lose except for the fact that it will have lost two straight ACC games, and that certainly doesn't look good. If Alabama loses this game, I don't think anybody walks away and says, 'Well, the SEC's terrible. Alabama's terrible.' The ACC has been able to thump its chest this offseason, but if Florida State goes out and loses this game...that luster wears off quickly."

"It comes down to the SEC has a decade of dominance to back up whereas the ACC has one really good season and is still sort of the outlier among a long history of sort of being an also ran."

The high-profile nature of the Alabama-Florida State game will garner the most attention, but there are other early SEC-ACC games that will write the story, too. South Carolina plays N.C. State on opening weekend. Tennessee squares off against the option attack of Georgia Tech and Auburn goes to Clemson on Sept. 9.

All eyes, though, will be pointed toward Atlanta for the Crimson Tide-Seminoles contest."

"(It's) getting a lot of attention. A lot of questions about that," Florida State quarterback Deondre Francois said. "His coach isn't exactly shying away from it either. "Well, I scheduled it, so I'd better be ready for it." Fisher joked last week. "I think it's a great opportunity. I think it's what college football is about. You get to walk in that atmosphere and environment, the two-winningest teams in college football in the last seven years. I think it's great for our league, I think it's great for college football. As you know Nick is one of the great football coaches in this country and one of the greatest of all time. I believe that. They have a tremendous program, tremendous players, well-prepared, how they're built from big physical guys to fast dynamic guys."

Fisher then went on to gush about his opponent. "The depth of Alabama's roster, the size, the speed and the skill. "They've got everything, so we're going to have to really have our 'A' game and be ready to play..." Fisher said. "...we have our work cut out for us, but if you're a competitor and you like those things, those are great opportunities." Likewise, Saban talked up the Seminoles during his turn at SEC Media Days last week, "I think that Florida State has been one of their biggest challenges in their league and probably have as many good players returning as anybody in college football," Saban said. "So we have a tremendous amount of respect for the league. And we played the two top teams in that league, or will play, have played, and will play, and that's very challenging. "Florida State, especially, is built like an SEC team, you know, like our teams. You think of Florida State, you think of fast, explosive players which they have a lot of, but they are also a big, physical, play great defense, tough, you know, team. And I think it's probably Jimbo's experience in this league that sort of why he built his team that way. And that's certainly the kind of team that they have this year."

Fisher and Saban haven't been shy of late about discussing the matchup, particularly because it's the first game on the schedule. The game is a win for college football fans, who get to watch perhaps the No. 1 and No. 2 team in the country play it out on opening weekend. There's been some talk that a loss, with exception of a blowout loss, won't necessarily hurt the losing team's long-term goals. While it's true a competitive loss won't derail a team's season, it does leave zero room for hiccups the rest of the way. "I think people are putting a little too much stock in that," Hale said. "We're not going to see a lot of two-loss teams in the playoff. It's not that this game eliminates anyone, but it means you've got 11 games after that where you've got zero margin for error. That's not an easy path."

That said, Hale does think it might mean more for Florida State than Alabama. "It's probably the biggest week one game in the history of college football," he said. "It's certainly the most hyped regular season game involving an ACC team as I can remember. "Alabama's sort of the benchmark for everybody. Alabama's the benchmark and if Florida State wants to be recognized as a potential national champion this year they need to be able to show they can play with the benchmark."

Reach Aaron Suttles at aaron@tidesports.com or at 205-722-0229.

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Hurts, Saban on preseason award watch lists

Staff reports

Alabama sophomore quarterback Jalen Hurts has been named to the Davey O'Brien Award watch list by the Davey O'Brien Foundation.

The Crimson Tide quarterback is one of 30 players from around the country named to the preseason list and one of an FBS-best six Southeastern Conference quarterbacks selected. Hurts was a semifinalist for the award as a freshman in 2016.

Also, Crimson Tide head coach Nick Saban was named to the Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year preseason watch list announced today by the Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year Foundation and the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl.

Hurts was selected as a Freshman All-American by USA Today and ESPN and earned SEC Offensive Player of the Year accolades from the conference coaches and The Associated Press. He also garnered SEC Freshman of the Year (coaches) and SEC Newcomer of the Year (Associated Press) accolades. Hurts threw for 2,780 yards and 23 touchdowns and completed 62.8 percent of his passes with a 139.1 quarterback rating. He also set school records for touchdown responsibility (36) and quarterback rushing yards (954).

Saban is among 19 coaches – and one of five former Dodd Trophy winners – on this year’s list. He is entering his 11th season with the Crimson Tide with a record of 119-19 (.862) in Tuscaloosa and a career collegiate record of 210-61-1 (.774). Alabama captured four championships and five SEC crowns – including four of the last five – under his leadership. A seven-time national coach of the Year, Saban joined Bear Bryant as the only coaches to win five national titles in the modern era when Alabama defeated Clemson, 45-40, in the 2016 College Football Playoff Championship Game.
UA players named to watch lists

Three athletes included on Hornung, Butkus preseason lists

By Aaron Suttles
Sports writer

Three more University of Alabama football players were named to preseason award watch lists Monday morning, joining a bevy of Crimson Tide players named last week.

Minkah Fitzpatrick saw his list of preseason accolades grow when he was named to the Paul Hornung watch list. Fitzpatrick is widely considered one of the best defensive backs in the nation. With Monday’s news, Fitzpatrick has been named to six preseason watch lists for the 2017 season. He was previously named to the Maxwell, Bednarik and Thorpe awards, and the Lott IMPACT and Nagurki trophies. In addition, he’s also a nominee for the American Football Coaches Associations’ Good Works Team.

Shaun Dion Hamilton and Rashaan Evans, both senior linebackers, were named to the Butkus Award watch lists. Former Alabama players Derrick Thomas, Rolando McClain, C.J. Mosley and Reuben Foster have previously won the award, given annually to college football’s top linebacker.

Reach Aaron Suttles at aaron@tidesports.com or at 205-722-0229.
Bozeman is the only senior starter returning to offense

By Kyle Weber  
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

HOOVER — Being the only senior starter returning to an offense is no light burden, but Bradley Bozeman knows the important role he needs to play for Alabama to reach its full potential.

“We have to stay strong in our leadership,” Bozeman said last week at SEC Media Days. “Our leadership cannot waver. We have to stay the course.”

With early departures of Cam Robinson and ArDarius Stewart to the National Football League, Bozeman is left as the only senior who was in the starting lineup on offense last season.

A redshirt senior, Bozeman knows the importance of not taking any game lightly and never looking ahead. He has seen players get complacent, and he is not going to allow that to happen to this team.

“Every game has our attention,” Bozeman said. “It’s not about the last game or the next game. It doesn’t matter who we are playing. We push every day to be 1-0 at the end of every week.”

Bozeman surprised many last year when he turned the center position into a team strength over the course of one season, as he emerged as one of the best centers in the country.

Bozeman was a help to true freshman quarterback Jalen Hurts. However, with Hurts now a sophomore, Bozeman knows he’s going to be responsible for making sure everyone on the offensive line is in the correct position and has the correct assignment.

“Our offense has come out clicking,” Bozeman said. “It’s not just about the quarterback or just the running back or just the line. It’s about the whole machine. If one part isn’t running right, the whole thing’s not running. It’s not just one aspect.”

Alabama offensive lineman Bradley Bozeman

BOZEMAN

Continued from C1

running back or just the line. It’s about the whole machine. If one part isn’t running right, the whole thing’s not running. It’s not just one aspect.”

The Alabama offense is like a high-octane sports car, and Bozeman is the driver. Being the senior center, Bozeman leads the blocking unit and confirms that all the parts are running properly.

“We just have to push our group,” Bozeman said. “We have to become more vocal. Whenever you feel uncomfortable you’ve got to make yourself feel comfortable. Pushing our guys and be fair.”
Alabama picked to win SEC title; 10 players voted preseason first-team All-SEC by media

By Tommy Deas
Executive Sports Editor

Three-time defending champion Alabama is the pick to win the SEC football title again, according to a vote by those in attendance at SEC Media Days.

The Crimson Tide placed a record 10 players on the preseason All-SEC first team, also voted by the media in Hoover, and had 16 overall selections. The predicted order of finish and preseason honors were announced Friday.

Alabama received 225 of a possible 243 votes to win the SEC Western Division. Auburn finished a distant second in voting in the division, followed by LSU and Arkansas. Texas A&M was picked to finish fifth, with Mississippi State and Ole Miss selected to place sixth and seventh, respectively.

Georgia received 138 first-place votes in SEC Eastern Division balloting to edge two-time defending division champion Florida as the pick to win that division. Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina, Vanderbilt and Missouri round out the predicted order of finish in the SEC East.

UA received an overwhelming 217 votes to finish first in the league, followed by Auburn (11 votes) and Georgia (6). LSU and Florida received three votes apiece, with South Carolina, Vanderbilt and Arkansas each receiving one vote.

The media has correctly predicted the winner of the SEC Championship Game just six times since the title game was established in 1992, but has correctly predicted the eventual champion in two of the last three seasons.

Alabama placed quarterback Jalen Hurts, wideout Calvin Ridley and linemen Jonah Williams and Ross Pierschbacher on the first-team offense. Running back Bo Scarbrough and center Bradley Bozeman were second-team selections, with lineman Lester Cotton making the third team.

Defensive linemen Da’Ron Payne and Da’Shawn Hand were first-team selections on the other side of the ball, along with linebacker Rashaan Evans and defensive backs Minkah Fitzpatrick and Ronnie Harrison. Linebacker Shaun Dion Hamilton was named to the second team, with defensive backs Anthony Averett and

See SEC, C2
SEC

Continued from Cl

Tony Brown selected to the third team.

Punter JK Scott was a first-team specialist selection.

SEC ORDER OF FINISH
(First-place votes in parenthesis)

EASTERN DIVISION
School Points
Georgia (138) 1,572
Florida (96) 1,526
Tennessee (3) 1,516
South Carolina (5) 897
Kentucky 869
Vanderbilt 554
Missouri 388

WESTERN DIVISION
School Points
Alabama (225) 1,683
Auburn (13) 1,329
LSU (4) 1,262
Arkansas (1) 796
Texas A&M (2) 633
Mississippi State 379

SEC CHAMPION
School Points
Alabama 217
Auburn 11
Georgia 6
LSU 3
Florida 3
South Carolina 1
Vanderbilt 1
Arkansas 1

Fitzpatrick, Ridley and LSU running back Derrius Guice were the top vote-getters.

Also Friday, Fitzpatrick and Harrison were named to the Jim Thorpe Award watch list. They were among 45 defensive backs named. Antonio Langham in 1993 is Alabama's only winner of the award. Payne, Fitzpatrick, Harrison and Evans were named to the Bronko Nagurski Award watch list. They were among 103 players named to the list of candidates for the national defensive player of the year award, which was won last year by Alabama's Jonathan Allen. Williams, Bozeman and Payne were among 81 interior linemen named to the Outland Trophy watch list. UA's Cam Robinson won the honor last season, joining past Crimson Tide winners Chris Samuels (1999), Andre Smith (2008) and Barrett Jones (2011).

PRESEASON MEDIA DAYS ALL-SEC TEAM
(Total points earned in parenthesis)

OFFENSE
First Team
QB Jalen Hurts, Alabama (196)
RB Derrius Guice, LSU (223)
WR Calvin Ridley, Georgia (211)
WR Christian Kirk, Texas A&M (197)
TE Nick cohorts, Georgia (134)
OL Brannon Smith, Auburn (201)
OL Martez Ivey, Florida (198)
OL Jonathon Williams, Alabama (187)
OL Ross Pierschbacher, Alabama (174)
C Frank Ragone, Arkansas (174)

Second Team
QB Nick Fitzgerald, Mississippi State (121)
RB Bo Scarbrough, Alabama (151)
RB Kamryn Pettway, Auburn (141)
WR Antonio Callaway, Florida (152)
WR J'Mon Moore, Missouri (91)
TE Hayden Hurst, South Carolina (115)
OL Isaiah Wynn, Georgia (116)
OL Jashon Robertson, Tennessee (108)
OL K.J. Malone, LSU (101)
OL Martiss Roe, Mississippi State (101)
C Bradley Bozeman, Alabama (132)

Third Team
QB Austin Allen, Arkansas (102)
RB Reich Wedb, Vanderbilt (105)
RB Sony Michel, Georgia (106)
WR Deveon Samuel, South Carolina (64)
WR Jesse Jennings, Tennessee (42)
TE DeAndre Goolsby, Florida (76)
OL Lester Cotton, Alabama (96)
OL Greg Little, Ole Miss (94)
OL Awo Patterson, Ole Miss (87)
OL Koda Martin, Texas A&M (89)
C Will Chipp, LSU (56)

DEFENSE
First Team
DL Da'Shawn Hand, Alabama (180)
DL Trent Thompson, Georgia (172)
DL Marquis Haynes, Ole Miss (159)
LB Arden Key, LSU (153)
LB Rashaan Evans, Alabama (180)
LB Royquan Smith, Georgia (157)
DL Mikhail Fitzpatrick, Alabama (132)
DL Ronnie Harrison, Alabama (156)
DL Armani Watts, Texas A&M (137)
DB Dake Dawson, Florida (137)

Second Team
DL Cece Jefferson, Florida (151)
DL Marlon Davidson, Auburn (129)
DL Christian LaCouture, LSU (117)
DL Denzel Ware, Kentucky (78)
LB Shaun Dion Hamilton, Alabama (150)
LB Skil Moore, South Carolina (128)
LB' Williams, Auburn (103)
DB Tray Matthews, Auburn (128)
DB Dante Jackson, LSU (123)
DB Carlton Davis, Auburn (199)

Third Team
DL Cece Jefferson, Florida (151)
DL Marlon Davidson, Auburn (129)
DL Christian LaCouture, LSU (117)
DL Denzel Ware, Kentucky (78)
LB Shaun Dion Hamilton, Alabama (150)
LB Skil Moore, South Carolina (128)
LB' Williams, Auburn (103)
DB Tray Matthews, Auburn (128)
DB Dante Jackson, LSU (123)
DB Carlton Davis, Auburn (199)

Specialists
First Team
PK Daniel Carlson, Auburn (218)
AP Christian Kirk, Texas A&M (176)

Second Team
PK Eddy Pielam, Florida (106)
RS Evan Berry, Tennessee (177)
AP Deveon Samuel, South Carolina (64)

Third Team
PK Gary Wunderlich, Ole Miss (94)
RS Antonio Callaway, Florida (84)
AP Kellery Johnson, Auburn (66)
Black Colleges Struggle With Debt

As federal loans to schools hit nearly $2 billion, some lobby for relief from payments

BY MELISSA KORN

The federal government has lent out nearly $2 billion over the past two decades to help dozens of historically black colleges and universities upgrade their campuses or refinance debt.

But only a fraction of the money has been repaid, oversight is limited and the lifeline promised to the schools, which have played a key role in educating African-Americans since the Civil War, has become more of an albatross for some.

Officials at Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Ala., are lobbying the Education Department to have their $40 million loan modified or forgiven, arguing that the funds it got through the Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program in 2012 were secured with overly optimistic enrollment projections. Barber-Scotia College in Concord, N.C., defaulted on its loan in 2005 after it lost its accreditation.

And four schools ravaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which in 2007 took out a combined $361 million in loans capped at 1% interest over 30 years, have paid back just roughly $12.4 million of it in the past decade and were granted a five-year forbearance period in 2013 when enrollment didn't rebound quickly.

“We’ve got to have much stricter underwriting requirements” to ensure that schools can handle the new debt, said Johnny C. Taylor Jr., president and chief executive of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, which represents publicly supported HBCUs, and a member of the loan program’s federal advisory board.

The program has long faced high delinquency rates.

The Education Department’s fiscal 2017 budget request shows that the program had a target delinquency rate of 14%. Its actual delinquency rate—reflecting payments that were between 11 and 59 days late—was 19% in fiscal 2012, and 36% in fiscal 2013. The budget paper doesn’t include more recent figures for that performance metric.

Donald Watson, director of the federal loan program for 10 years, said at a May 2015 advisory board meeting that there were schools on his “watch list” because of concerns about impending financial trouble, and others that he described as “habitual late payers.” The board hasn’t met since then.

“A lot of this has been left without the oversight that we’ve needed,” said Rep. Alma Adams (D., N.C.), who co-spon-
Debt on the Rise
Cumulative value of loans approved for historically black colleges and universities under a federal capital financing program since the first loan was issued in 1996

$2.00 billion
1.75
1.50
1.25
1.00
0.75
0.50
0.25
3.5 million

0 1996 2000 05 10 15

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Schools On Hook For Each Other

Many of the schools have used the funds to build or refurbish student housing and dining facilities, and they generated enough revenue to pay off the loan if enrollments remained stable or rose.

LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, Tenn., took out a $13.5 million loan in 2012 to finance a 336-bed dorm, doubling its capacity for residential students. The dorm opened in fall 2013 and had an 86% occupancy rate this past fiscal year, said spokeswoman Daphne Thomas. She said the school is “current and in good standing” with its loan, though she declined to provide specifics about how much remains outstanding.

But enrollment hasn’t been growing at many of the schools in recent years, partly because the Education Department tightened borrowing requirements for a parent-loan program popular at HBCUs. Historically black colleges enrolled 294,316 students in fall 2014, down from a peak of 326,614 in 2010.

Melissa Korn

Sponsored a bill this year requiring more reporting by the board and allowing the Education Department to provide financial counseling to schools that don’t meet the loan program’s requirements. “The schools that participate should be constantly assessed to determine whether they’re on track for repayment.”

Stillman hadn’t been making regular payments for at least a year and a half before President Cynthia Warrick took the helm on an interim basis in January.

Stillman used its loan funds in part to refinance a loan that was used to build a new football stadium; it gave up the sport in late 2015, eliminating ticket-sales revenue that could have helped cover debt payments.

A fundraising appeal this spring allowed Stillman to make its April loan payment, but Dr. Warrick said it would need to increase enrollment to at least 800, from its current 570, to afford another installment.

Dr. Warrick said she has been in regular contact with Education Department officials and is hopeful that the repayment plan will be adjusted.

“It’s in the nation’s best interest to either give us a deferral or, if they evaluate the entire program and all of these schools and what we do for the nation, that we should get a bailout just like the automobile industry and the banking industry,” she said.

Education Department spokeswoman Liz Hill said the department doesn’t go into details about specific schools’ finances, but noted that penalties are laid out in loan agreements and failure to repay can affect schools’ accreditation and ability to borrow in the future. Ms. Hill said schools “must be creditworthy to access this program,” and not every school that applies is approved.

Morehouse College and Texas Southern University were rated as investment-grade by Moody’s Investors Service at the time they got loans, but others were speculative bets.

“The federal government needs to be a little more particular in their lending,” said Marybeth Gasman, professor of higher education and director of the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions at the University of Pennsylvania. “You should not be able to borrow anything unless you have a plan to pay it back.”
Long After Protests, Students Shun the University of Missouri

By: Anemona Hartocoll

COLUMBIA, Mo. — In the fall of 2015, a grassy quadrangle at the center of the University of Missouri became known nationwide as the command center of an escalating protest.

Students complaining of official inaction in the face of racial bigotry joined forces with a graduate student on a hunger strike. Within weeks, with the aid of the football team, they had forced the university system president and the campus chancellor to resign.

It was a moment of triumph for the protesting students. But it has been a disaster for the university.

Freshman enrollment at the Columbia campus, the system’s flagship, has fallen by more than 35 percent in the two years since.

The university administration acknowledges that the main reason is a backlash from the events of 2015, as the campus has been shunned by students and families put off by, depending on their viewpoint, a culture of racism or one where protesters run amok. Before the protests, the university, fondly known as Mizzou, was experiencing steady growth and building new dormitories. Now, with budget cuts due to lost tuition and a decline in state funding, the university is temporarily closing seven dormitories and cutting more than 400 positions, including those of some nontenured faculty members, through layoffs and by leaving open jobs unfilled.

Few areas have been spared: The library is even begging for books.

“The general consensus was that it was because of the aftermath of what happened in November 2015,” said Mun Choi, the new system president, referring to the climax of the demonstrations. “There were students from both in state and out of state that just did not apply, or those who did apply but decided not to attend.”

The protests inspired movements at other colleges. Since then fights over overt and subconscious racial slights, as well as battles over free speech, have broken out at Middlebury College in Vermont, the University of California, Berkeley, and The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash. Missouri’s experience shows how a conflict, if not deftly handled, can stain a college’s reputation long after the conflict has died down.

Students of all races have shunned Missouri, but the drop in freshman enrollment last fall was strikingly higher among blacks, at 42 percent, than among whites, at 21 percent. (A racial breakdown was not yet available for this fall’s freshman class.)

Black students were already a small minority. They made up 10 percent of the freshman class in 2012, a proportion that fell to just 6 percent last fall.

See next page
Whitney Matewe, a black student from McKinney, Tex., who will be a senior in the fall, said that after the protests, her parents asked if she wanted to transfer, but she decided to stay because she is in Missouri’s prestigious journalism school.

But, she said, she understands why black students might not apply to a campus where they are all but invisible. A friend’s boyfriend obliviously told her she looked like Aunt Jemima, and she was dismayed that her friend did not object.

“Being ‘the other’ in every classroom and every situation is exhausting,” she said.

By sheer numbers, the drop in white students has caused the greatest damage, since they make up a majority of those on campus.

Tyler Morris, a white student from St. Louis, said he was afraid of being stereotyped as a bigot if he went to Missouri. So he decided to go to Missouri Valley College, “just down the road” in Marshall.

“The discrimination wasn’t against white people, but I didn’t want to be that person who I guess was stereotyped because I was white,” he said.

College counselors said that Missouri might have a hard time recovering from protests because its reputation was largely regional. “Why would a student from New Jersey go to the University of Missouri instead of Rutgers or Penn State?” said Steven Roy Goodman, an independent college admissions counselor in Washington.

Even in-state students for whom Mizzou is a family tradition are choosing to go elsewhere, including public universities in neighboring states, like Illinois and Arkansas, which offer preferential tuition or scholarships to Missouri students.

Aly Zuhler’s mother and cousins went to Missouri, and her mother would have liked for her to go there as well, she said. But Ms. Zuhler, who is Jewish and grew up in suburban St. Louis, said she could not stomach going to a place where blacks and Jews might feel unwelcome.

When she heard that a swastika had been smeared in feces on a dormitory bathroom at Missouri, she decided not to apply. She enrolled instead at Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., where she will be a sophomore this coming year. “Looking for colleges is intimidating just by itself,” she said. “Adding anti-Semitism on top of that was just too much.”

A plant sciences professor, Craig Roberts, said that Missouri was suffering not because it was more racist than other places, but because the rage that had been repressed on other campuses burst into the open.

“It was sparked at Mizzou by Ferguson,” Mr. Roberts said.

Ferguson, Mo., of course, is where the killing of an unarmed young black man, Michael Brown, by a police officer in 2014 became a national symbol of tension between the police and minority communities. Ferguson, just a two-hour drive away, was still a fresh memory in September 2015,
when Payton Head, the student association president, posted on Facebook that people riding in
the back of a pickup truck had continuously screamed racial slurs at him.

The post went viral and the outcry escalated through what has become known in the protest
world as “intersectionality,” grievances that gain potency by being bundled together. There were
demonstrations against racism, and to support Planned Parenthood, which was under attack by
state lawmakers.

Days later a drunken white student jumped onstage during a rehearsal by an African-American
group and used a racial slur.

This was followed by the failure of the university president, Timothy M. Wolfe, to get out of his
car to speak with demonstrators during the homecoming parade in October, drawing accusations
of indifference. Then the swastika appeared.

A movement, Concerned Student 1950, commemorating the year the first black student was
admitted to the university, grew out of the protests and set up a tent city. On Nov. 2, a graduate
student, Jonathan Butler, began a hunger strike, spurred by the complaints of racial animosity
and official inaction, as well as a cut in graduate student health care funding.

Over the weekend of Nov. 7, the football team, led by its black players, said it would not practice
or play unless Mr. Wolfe resigned. It was the last straw. On Nov. 9, Mr. Wolfe resigned as
system president, and the chancellor of the Columbia campus, R. Bowen Loftin, also announced
he was stepping down. Mr. Butler ended his hunger strike.

As the protests continued to boil, demonstrators tried to block the news media from the
encampment, and Melissa Click, a communications professor, called for “some muscle” to oust a
student taking a video of the confrontation.

In the minds of many, her outburst and the resignations became symbols of a hair-trigger protest
culture lacking any adult control.

The university received a barrage of emails from alumni and families, some of which were
published by National Review and Heat Street, a conservative news site.

In one, the parents of a junior wrote that while they did not underestimate the extent of bigotry in
the world, “the way to effect change is NOT by resorting to the type of mob rule that’s become
apparent over the past few days.”

The university, they added, had shown a “complete lack of leadership,” and their two younger
children had “all but eliminated Mizzou from their college list.”

The email was forwarded to Ellen de Graffenreid, vice chancellor for marketing and
communications, with a brief note saying, “I’m sure you already know this but you have a P.R.
nightmare on your hands.” Ms. de Graffenreid, in turn, forwarded it to other administrators with
a note saying, “This is pretty representative of the middle of the road people we are losing.”

See next page
While freshman enrollment has plummeted, students already at Missouri have not transferred out in large numbers — a sign, administrators said, that the protests looked worse from the outside. Christian Basi, a spokesman, said the university was formulating a marketing campaign to correct what he called “misperceptions” about the extent of the unrest.

Missouri also has appointed a chief diversity officer; promised to double the percentage of minority faculty members by 2020 and recruit more minority postdoctoral fellows; and is requiring diversity training for faculty and staff members and incoming students.

The tent city has been restored to a well-manicured emerald field of grass, but all around campus, signs of the university’s suffering are evident.

The library is asking for donations to buy 400 books that it wants, including a $5,250 copy of “Complete and Truly Outstanding Works by Homer.”

To soften the financial blow, some vacant dorm rooms — spartan suites of two rooms of two single beds, sharing a bathroom and with no TV, are being rented for $120 a night for events like homecoming, the fall family visit and the football game against Auburn University, a Southern rival.

For the Aug. 21 solar eclipse, Columbia is lucky to be one of the prime viewing locations where the sun will be completely obscured by the moon. As of early July, 35 rooms were still available for the event.

Some faculty members are still hoping that the situation can be turned around.

“I think we squandered a rare opportunity that we had to be a local, regional, national, global leader in terms of showing how a university can deal with its problems, including related to race relations,” Berkley Hudson, a journalism professor, said.

The protests could have been turned into an asset — a chance to celebrate diversity. “We still can,” he said.
Measuring the outcome of college

Some 20 years ago, I spent my summer in Washington, D.C., as an intern for the U.S. News & World Report college rankings. Part of my job was to call colleges to get missing data that was used to compile the rankings or confirm the data that the magazine already had from the school. Princeton University ended up No. 1 in the rankings that year. Last year, Princeton was No. 1. In other words, not much has changed in two decades. The top of the list has remained relatively consistent for quite some time.

But the universities at the top of the U.S. News list represent a tiny fraction of American higher education. There is no doubt that Princeton is a good school and most of its graduates get good jobs and have solid and rewarding careers. What parents and students really want to know, however, is how to differentiate the outcomes of the thousands of other colleges that are not among the top schools in the U.S. News rankings.

A spate of new rankings and other studies have emerged in recent years attempting to answer that question by looking more closely at the employment and earnings record of college graduates and weighing that against the cost of attending college and chances of graduating on time. These rankings, from the Wall Street Journal, the Economist and Gallup, among others, are based largely on new data sources about recent college graduates.

Money magazine was one of the first to use data on the employment outcomes of graduates, and its rankings remain among the best for students and parents to consider (but certainly not the end-all and be-all of the college search process). The latest edition of the Money rankings was released on Monday. Like other rankers, Money tweaks its formula every year - partly in response to complaints from colleges and because it wants to sell a new set of rankings to a new crop of prospective students. From a business perspective, rankings need to change slightly every year, but also include enough familiar names and a few surprises.

This year, Money added a data set to its methodology known in higher ed circles as the “Chetty data.” That refers to Raj Chetty, a Stanford professor, who has led a team of economists that has received access to millions of anonymous tax records that span generations. The group has published several headline-grabbing studies recently based on the data. In findings published in January, the group tracked students from nearly every college in the country and measured their earnings more than a decade after they left campus, whether they graduated or not.

The results were grim for a higher education system that claims to be a ladder to upward mobility. The data showed, for example, that the City University of New York propelled almost six times as many low-income students into the middle class and beyond as all eight Ivy League campuses, plus Duke, M.I.T., Stanford and Chicago, combined. The California State University system advanced three times as many.

Money magazine included the Chetty data as part of 27 measures that it uses to rank schools in an effort to illustrate the track record of a campus in moving less-affluent students into the upper middle class.

Several schools perform well on the measure of economic mobility, and it clearly helped them in the final Money rankings. The magazine’s editors let me look at the rankings with the Chetty data included and without. The City University of New York’s Baruch College ended up No. 2 overall in the rankings, behind Princeton.

See COLLEGE, A7

See next page
(of course). Without the economic mobility data included, Baruch would have ranked No. 30.

Other campuses that performed better as a result of the economic mobility data included the College of New Jersey, the University of California at Riverside, and the University of Florida. One downside of using the Chetty data in rankings like this is that it's dated. It includes students who enrolled in college in the late 1990s and are now in their 30s. So the data, and thus the rankings, don't capture the recent strides some colleges have made in enrolling more low-income and middle-income students.

But the Chetty data and how Money magazine used the numbers this year is a good start in helping families differentiate between the outcomes of thousands of colleges. It comes as there is concern that the U.S. Education Department under the Trump administration might abandon consumer tools started under the Obama administration, like the College Scorecard. Last month, Inside Higher Ed reported that the Education Department appears to be planning to keep the scorecard at least for another year.

It's not clear, however, that the federal government needs to construct data tools like the College Scorecard. It just needs to collect and disseminate the data. The proliferation of rankings and other studies in recent years shows that there are plenty of outside groups — both nonprofit organizations and profit-making magazines — willing to build the necessary tools that get us closer to a future of better consumer information about one of the biggest purchases we'll make in our lifetimes.

— Jeffrey J. Selingo is the author of "There Is Life After College" and former editor of the Chronicle of Higher Education. He wrote this for The Washington Post.