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After two years, state approves new education plan to meet federal law

Teisha Powell Crain

After two years of stops and starts, the Alabama State Board of Education on Thursday approved the state’s education plan under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act at its Oct. 12 meeting.

The plan is a roadmap of sorts, “designed to close achievement gaps, increase equity of instruction and increase outcomes for all students,” according to the Alabama State Department of Education website page devoted to ESSA, as the law is called.

ESSA replaced the much-criticized No Child Left Behind Act in December 2015. It passed with strong bipartisan support in what former President Barack Obama called “a Christmas miracle.”

Since its passage, education advocates have praised the law’s goal of returning control over education to the states.

“This is an opportunity for states to really lead because there’s much more flexibility,” said Anne Wicks, Director of Education Reform at the George W. Bush Institute in Dallas.

Wicks is a member of the peer review panel for the Collaborative for Student Success, which, according to Wicks, “is working together to try to decipher what states are doing to articulate their vision for education.”

Wicks said, “ESSA is really a chance for states to say here’s what matters and why, and how we plan to get there.”

ESSA requires states to set a vision for education for their state and to lay out plans for measuring outcomes, setting goals, and showing how they plan to achieve those goals. States set their own course for how to intervene when schools are struggling.

That’s different than under No Child Left Behind, when the federal government set the goals for outcomes and dictated strategies for schools that didn’t meet those outcomes.

Under ESSA, states set their own time frame for long-term goals. Alabama chose 2030, using the logic that a child entering kindergarten in the fall of 2017 should graduate from high school in 2030.

Many of the same mechanisms under NCLB stay in place, including requirements for testing.

States must test students annually in grades 3 through 8 in math and English/language arts again in high school. Students must be tested once in science in each of these three grades spans grades 3 to 5, grades 6 to 9, and grades 10-12.

Alabama is currently looking for a state assessment to use. In June, the State Board of Education voted to seek the contract with ACT Aspire, in use since 2014. Schools will use Ecastron Performance series for spring 2018 testing. Interim state superintendent Dr. Jill Richardson is assembling a task force to determine how test will be used to measure achievement in 2019 and beyond.

Measures will be used in ways like they were under NCLB. To identify schools needing support and intervention and by public report student progress.

ESSA does not require any punitive measures comparable to the “adequate yearly progress” measures under NCLB. Schools identified as needing support and intervention will be publicly reported, according to the plan, but no “failing” label will be attached.

According to Alabama’s plan, academic indicators used to identify schools that need support and intervention include proficiency on math and English/language arts tests, student growth in proficiency, progress for English language learners, and a measure of classroom absenteeism.

Alabama’s plan defines chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students having 15 or more absences in a school year. The plan shows 17 percent of students were chronically absent during the 2015-2016 school year. Alabama’s goal is to reduce that number to 5 percent by 2019.

Schools with a twelfth grade who also used high school graduation rates (both four- and five-year) and measures of college and career readiness as a part of their academic indicators. Those indicators will be weighted to create a summative rating for each school, district, and the state based on a 100-point scale.

In addition to using academic indicators to determine levels of needed support, schools and districts will be required to publicly report many facets of school performance, including school spending per student.

Test scores, disaggregated by subgroup, are prominently mentioned plus those for homeless students, students in foster care, and children in military families, must be publicly reported.

Because the reporting requirements are part of the actual law, states do not have to include additional information about reporting in their plans.

ESSA does not mandate how states must evaluate teachers, but does require states to ensure that high-need schools are staffed in disproportionate rates by out-of-field, inexperienced, and ineffective teachers. The number of out-of-field teachers will be publicly reported, according to the plan.

Improving access of high-need students to effective teachers is a key focus of ESSA, and Alabama’s plan describes a number of strategies to recruit and retain teachers in high-need areas and to improve teacher preparation in colleges and universities in Alabama.

Alabama’s plan includes a number of programs to improve school culture and climate, including reducing bullying, reducing the number of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, and provide support for students at risk of not graduating.

The latest plan, dated Oct. 4, is currently posted on the state’s web site. The board of education was presented with a plan dated Sept. 27 at their most recent board meeting.

After initially stating there would be no additional public input period, state department officials posted a comment form online on Oct. 5, giving the public until Oct. 12 to submit comments on the latest plan.

Richardson said he expects the 120-day review process to allow for changes to be made even after the plan is approved by the board of education and submitted on Oct. 15. Thirty-two states submitted their plans in September. Alabama and South Carolina are the only two states who have not yet submitted their plans. Both states are given extensions due to recent hurricanes.
Foundation paid Moore $180K a year

Undisclosed deal compensated him more than $1 million for part-time work from 2007-12

Shawn Boburg and Robert O’Harrow Jr. Washington Post

Former Judge Roy Moore, the Republican candidate for U.S. Senate, once said publicly that he did not take a “regular salary” from the small charity he founded to promote Christian values because he did not want to be a financial burden.

But privately, Moore had arranged to receive a salary of $180,000 a year for part-time work at the Foundation for Moral Law, internal charity documents show. He collected more than $1 million as president from 2007 to 2012, compensation that far surpassed what the group disclosed in its public tax filings most of those years.

When the charity couldn’t afford the full amount, Moore in 2012 was given a promissory note for backpay eventually worth $400,000 or an equal stake of the charity’s most valuable asset, a historic building in Montgomery, Alabama, mortgage records show. He holds that note even now, a charity official said.

A Washington Post review of public and internal charity documents found that errors and gaps in the group’s federal tax filings obscured until now the compensation paid to Moore, the front-runner in the race to fill the seat vacated by Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

The charity helped Moore thrive — financially and otherwise — after his ouster from the state’s Supreme Court in 2003 for refusing to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the courthouse. The group has filed scores of legal briefs in cases involving conservative Christian

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MOORE FROM AL

issues, but it was in many ways built around Moore himself.

In the past, Moore was running for public offices in Alabama, the church kept him in the public eye and helped establish a network of donors while he took on controversial positions on same-sex marriage, Islam and the separation of church and state. Over the years, it has provided him with health-care benefits, travel expenses and a bodyguard, documents show.

The Foundation for Moral Law's website routinely promoted Moore's speaking engagements and his book, "So Help Me God: The Ten Commandments, Judicial Tyranny, and the Battle for Religious Freedom." In his last two years as president, as fundraising dwindled, Moore's compensation amounted to about a third of the contributions to the group, tax filings show.

The charity has employed at least two of Moore's children, although their compensation is not reflected in tax filings. Moore's wife, Kayla, who is now president, was paid a total of $15,000 over three years through 2013.

Moore's charitable and political activities have also overlapped in significant ways. The former lieutenant governor of Alabama, current church president and his most recent campaign for state office, political records show.

An internal Revenue Service audit of the Foundation for Moral Law's 2013 finances, provided by the charity, concluded that it left out information about fundraising and other activities on its public tax filings and also identified discrepancies between those filings and its internal books. The IRS said that the issues "could jeopardize your exempt status.

Seven charity and tax law specialists consulted by The Post said the nonprofit's activities raised questions about compliance with IRS rules, including prohibitions on the use of a charity for the private benefit of an individual.

"I do think the benefit to Roy Moore," said Paul Streckfuss, a former tax lawyer at the IRS and editor of the EO-Tax Journal, "is that it's a bad precedent for people's findings."

In interviews with The Post, Alabama Criminal Court Judge John Bentley, a longtime member of Moore's board and a former chairman, denied that the Foundation for Moral Law served Moore's personal or political goals. He said the group's officials did not intentionally do anything wrong.

But he said that he could not fully explain inconsistencies in audits and public tax filings, and that he and other board members did not provide enough oversight. He acknowledged the nonprofit was essentially run by Moore and his family.

"That's my fault," he said. "I should have been a lot more active than I was.

Roy and Kayla Moore did not respond to interview requests. Kayla Moore provided answers to detailed questions in a statement, and the church gave The Post internal documents to clarify why Moore received the promised note. The agreement that he would be paid $180,000 a year, described in those documents, has not been previously reported.

LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

A year after his election to the state Supreme Court in 2009, Moore drew national attention and controversy for installing a 2.6-ton monument of the Ten Commandments in the court's building. His ouster from the bench in 2003, after he refused to obey a federal court ruling to remove the statue, made him a hero among some evangelical Christians.

The previous year, he had fought against legislation to move the monument, friends and allies created an organization they called the Roy Moore Foundation and Defense Fund to raise money. The organization's first application to be recognized as a charity was rejected in 2004 because the IRS determined that it "operated for the benefit of private interests."

The group renamed itself the Foundation for Moral Law and broadened its mission, saying it would promote the idea that "our rights are given to us by our Creator." The following year, the IRS approved it as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public charity, allowing contributors to deduct donations.

Moore became its chairman and traveled the country, giving speeches and making media appearances. He received no compensation at first, although the charity provided health insurance and covered travel expenses. The organization also gave him a bodyguard, paying for his clothing, rent and car. A former witness to the court's decision, Stephanie Hefley, recalled how Moore was "handed a microphone and was speaking to the country speaking. He needed protection due to threats," Kayla Moore said in her statement to The Post.

Political observers considered the nonprofit a showcase for the former justice. "It was a platform for Roy Moore to advance himself on any possible front," whether it was legal or political or cultural," said William Stewart, a professor emeritus of political science at the University of Alabama and a longtime observer of Moore's career.

Joining Moore at the nonprofit were two other state Supreme Court employees who also lost their jobs over the monument controversy. One of them, Richard Heaton, now Moore's campaign manager in the Senate race, became the charity's president. Moore's daughter, Heather, became its receptionist. In an interview, Bentley, the board member, played down the hiring of Moore's family members, describing them as "cheap labor." Later, he said he did not know exactly how much they were paid.

With donations pouring in — more than $15 million in 2006, $9 million in 2005 — the charity built an antebellum office building in downtown Montgomery for $546,000 and began erecting a wall that cost hundreds of thousands more, records show.

The charity hired the Richard Norman Company, a contracting firm in Virginia that raised money for conservative candidates. Months later, as Moore launched a campaign for Alabama governor, he turned to the firm for his political fundraising as well, drawing donors from across the country.

In an interview, former Foundation for Moral Law senior official said his firm kept the charitable and political operations separate. But he acknowledged that in both contexts, "Roy Moore's defense of the federal government was a central selling point."

Known as "The Ten Commandments Judge," he said. "That story was an important part of every fundraising appeal we did."

20 HOURS PER WEEK

Moore became the charity's president, committing himself to 20 hours a week, according to tax filings. The board agreed to pay him, the question was how much. They considered a figure as high as $800,000, but finally, according to an internal letter the charity provided to The Post, the figure was $9,000. On March 5, they decided to follow the plan. "Judge Moore has recommended a salary of $9,000," Bentley, then the chairman, wrote to other board members.

They agreed to pay him in an unusual way. Moore would be paid whatever speaking fees and donations for the charity he could generate through what was called "Project Jeremiah," the group's ministry to pastors and preachers. But he was guaranteed $180,000 a year under the agreement, with the charity making up the difference if Project Jeremiah revenue fell short. If the amount was for "legal work," Moore said in his statement to The Post.

"I don't think we had the cash in a given year, the debt to Moore would accumulate."

The Foundation for Moral Law created a separate bank account and earmarked donations to "Project Jeremiah," specifically for Moore. Bentley said.

"This is a very important project to restore a proper understanding of God to the preacher," he said. "But I used the money"," Moore wrote in 2007 in a personal fundraising message about "Project Jeremiah" on the charity's tax-exempt organization page. His compensation was reported as $180,000.

The charity's descriptions on public documents of its payments to Moore varied greatly. In some years, including 2013, when he was described as an outside legal contractor, tax filings show, and in others he was paid as president. His income compensation ranged from $35,992 to $105,900 — and not every year. A figure match the $180,000 on the board had agreed to pay him was.

Martin Wisnitsky, a spokesman for the charity, said Moore was never a legal consultant, despite the statement in tax filings. "Judge Moore never received separate compensation," Wisnitsky said in a statement. "This description was a straightforward for the services he provided to the Foundation that included overall supervision, educational programs, and participation in preparing amicus briefs on religious liberty and related issues."

ONE ITEM ON AGENDA

Moore's salary to Moore's monument battle was waning. Donations to the Foundation for Moral Law were in a nose-dive, the filing showed, down two-thirds from 2006. But the board stood by its pledge to give Moore $180,000 in compensation each year. In 2013, documents show, the board convened for an annual meeting in Gadsden, Alabama. There was only one item on the agenda: how to pay Moore. "Because of salary during the last four years," according to the board's record of the meeting.

According to his ability to pay his cash, the board agreed to give Moore a promissory note worth $393,000 that Moore could cash on demand, documents show. The board booked up its promise with a second mortgage on the charity's historic building. In effect, the board was giving him the money just to keep the church open, allowing him to operate its properties, it said.

Among the nine members on the board was Kayla Moore, who recused herself from the vote.

"I don't think we had the cash in a given year, the debt to Moore would accumulate."

"My salary does not come by way of a regular salary from the Foundation, but rather as a promissory note," he added. "If I don't fulfill the Foundation," he told a jury in August, according to a transcript of the hearing held in federal court in Alabama.

In December 2011, Bentley agreed to increase the amount of debt to Moore, anchored by the mortgage, to $499,000, records show.

The back-pay arrangement was not disclosed to the IRS on annual tax filings until Nov. 14, 2012, one week after Moore won an election to return to Alabama's Supreme Court. The tax filing, covering 2011, said he had been paid $393,000 in "retirement or other deferred compensation." The record left the amount in the original note, although mortgage records show the higher figure.

For 2012, Bentley bumped up the indebtedness to $540,000, mortgage documents show. On tax filings for that year, the charity listed he was paid $180,000 in "reportable" compensation and $360,000 in "other compensation," for the first time reflecting the $510,000 total he would receive each year under the agreement.

Moore's full $180,000 compensation should have been disclosed each year, but the charity did not report it as debt, said Marcus Owens, who led the tax-exempt organization division at the IRS from 1990 to 1999.

"The treatment of the payments to him really is quite irregular," Owens said.

Roy Dobson, an expert on nonprofit tax law, said the annual tax filings, known as a Form 990, are the public's only way to know how much money is going to fundraising and paying their employees each year.

"If people do not report what is intended to have sunlight on it, there's no point in having the form," she said.

Officially with the charity did not respond to questions about why the tax filings for the five years beginning in 2007 did not reflect the board's obligation to pay Moore $180,000 a year.

Kayla Moore became the charity's president when Moore returned to the Alabama Supreme Court in 2013, making $65,000 a year from 2013 to 2015. Roy Moore was kicked off the court for a second time last year for ordering an election after being ousting by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling allowing same-sex marriage.

In February this year, the IRS concluded its audit of the charity's 2013 finances, according to the documents provided to The Post. The IRS found "numerous items that it said could threaten the group's tax-exempt status if not resolved." The IRS wrote that the charity "did not identify its special fundraising activities." It also found that the group's tax filings contained figures that "did not reflect those recorded on your books of account." The document does not detail the activities or figures at issue.

In recent weeks, the Campaign Legal Center, a watchdog group in Washington, D.C., accused the charity of openly promoting Moore's Senate campaign through a Facebook page titled "Foundation for Moral Law."

Charges are prohibited by law from supporting or opposing political candidates.

Kayla Moore said in her statement to The Post that the Facebook page is "not a political page of the Foundation for Moral Law.

In an interview, Bentley said he could not account for all of the increases in tax filings, audits and other documents, in part because he had devoted so little time to doing the charity's financials. "I can understand why that would cause some concerns," he said.
ALABAMA PRISONS

State: Double mental health staff

After care deemed ‘inadequate,’ plan would boost staff by 125 employees

Mike Cason  mcason@al.com

Lawyers for the state of Alabama have proposed roughly doubling the mental health staff working in state prisons as part of a fix for a federal judge’s finding that care in the system is “horrendously inadequate.”

Lawyers for the Department of Corrections submitted the plan to U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson on Monday.

The plan would add about 125 full-time employees to the mental health staff at a cost expected to be more than $10 million annually, according to the proposal. That does not include the cost of an increase in correctional staff that is also part of the proposal.

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The proposal notes that the DOC does not have the funding to implement the plan and says it is contingent on the Legislature and governor approving that funding.

Plaintiffs who sued the state on behalf of inmates will get a chance to respond. Thompson has scheduled a hearing for Nov. 13.

The state's proposal also includes a plan for increasing correctional staff. DOC has hired consultants to do a comprehensive review of correctional staffing needs. The consultants have completed analyses at three prisons and would do so on the other 11 prisons if the court allows the plan to move forward.

The Southern Poverty Law Center and the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program sued DOC on behalf of inmates in 2014, alleging that mental health care, medical care and accommodations for prisoners with disabilities violated the Constitution and federal law.

Thompson divided the case into three parts.

The judge held a trial on the mental health claims in late 2016 and early 2017, hearing testimony from inmates, DOC officials, experts and others.

In June, the judge issued a 300-page opinion, finding that mental illness went untreated or poorly treated and that the care was so bad that it violated the Eighth Amendment, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment.

Inadequate staffing, both for mental health care and correctional staffing overall, were key causes, Thompson wrote.

Lawyers for the state say in the proposal that it is not an admission of liability and said they reserve the option to appeal Thompson's findings.

Gov. Kay Ivey was asked about the issues today.

"All along in this process I've said that it's important for Alabamians to make the decisions of how to resolve the issues in the prisons as outlined in the judge's order," Ivey said. "So this is the first step in that process of Alabamians taking the lead to address those challenges the court brought up."

Ivey said it was clear the state would need more money for prisons.

"I have not seen those numbers yet, but I do know we're going to have to have some more monies, a supplemental appropriation going forward," Ivey said.

The governor was not ready to say where the money might come from.

"We're studying all of that. We're just now getting some or the numbers to go by. It's going to be a challenge but we're up to it, Alabamians can solve this dilemma," Ivey said.

The state's proposal says it is based on two main objectives, defining the required level of staffing and establishing a plan to achieve that.

After the trial ended earlier this year, DOC Commissioner Jeff Dunn hired consultants to determine mental health staffing needs. "These consultants with nationwide expertise have recently have proposed initial staffing ratios to ensure the provision of comprehensive mental health services," the state's proposal says.

In July, the state issued a request for proposals from contractors to provide mental health and medical care under a comprehensive contract. The terms of the RFP would add about 125 full-time employees to the mental health staff. It would almost double the number of psychiatrists, psychologists, certified nurse practitioners, and registered nurses from the Oct. 1 levels, the court filing says.

"The cost for this additional staffing will increase by more than $10 million annually," the proposal says.

The DOC hired two recognized experts on prison staffing, Merle Savage and Margaret Savage. They have completed analyses at Bibb and Donaldson correctional facilities and at the Hamilton Aged and Informed Center and are prepared to do so at the other 11 prisons, the plan says. The state could ramp up to the necessary correctional staffing within two years of the plan being approved, the lawyers said.

The DOC has a four-person recruiting staff and has increased its advertising budget to boost recruiting, the state's lawyers said. Class sizes at the training academy have doubled and staffing at two prisons, Easterling and Venetia correctional facilities, has increased significantly, the lawyers said.

Also, in moves that DOC said were independent of the proposed plan submitted to the court, the DOC has hired the accounting and consulting firm, Warren Averitt, to analyze recruiting and retention policies. And it has entered a memorandum of understanding with the Troy University Center for Public Service to conduct a comprehensive analysis of compensation and benefits packages for DOC employees.
After mayor didn't hire him, tech-savvy fundraiser led Randall Woodfin's surprising money machine

By: Roy S. Johnson

Chris Barrineau was already respected throughout the state as savvy political operative and fund-raiser; he worked on several campaigns for former U.S. Congressman Robert "Bud" Cramer of Huntsville, as well as other candidates.

But the Mobile native always wanted to work on a Birmingham mayoral campaign, so early this year he reached out to incumbent William A. Bell, who was running for re-election after serving as mayor since 2010.

The two men met.

Barrineau had watched incumbent mayors in cities across the state--from Selma to Vestavia--get ousted by younger or simply fresher challengers, and he gave Bell an honest assessment of the landscape ahead.

"I said, 'Look, mayor, there a lot of civil unrest out there. It's gonna take a lot of money to win and I'd like to help you with that.' I liked what he was doing."
Yet Bell never returned numerous calls, Barrineau says.

"I thought the mayor would hire me," he says. "I don't know why he didn't."

At that juncture, in February, Chris Barrineau had never heard of Randall Woodfin.
"I asked someone, 'Who's the other candidate?' he recalls.

Not quite a millennial

At 44, Barrineau would be considered the grown-up in a room of millennials. Or maybe big brother. Yet his fund-raising acumen is rooted in technology, specifically the intersection of technology, the Internet, data and good, old-fashioned hard work: dialing thousands of telephone numbers and knocking on thousands of doors.

When he walked into Cramer's campaign headquarters in 1998, Barrineau quickly realized he was the only one there who knew how to operate a computer.

Nearly two decades later, however, he found in Woodfin, a true child of the digital age, a kindred spirit.

"I'd looked at his campaign report and saw that he'd raised $40,000 to that point, all from small donors," Barrineau says. "That impressed me. I knew there was something there I could use. I didn't know if he had a shot or not, but I thought, 'Why not?' He'd have a real chance if I raised a certain amount of money.

"I just had a hunch."

On the other side of the table, Woodfin, the still-long-shot challenger, was impressed, as well.

"He struck me as capable, trustworthy and a cool communicator," Woodfin says.
Soon thereafter, Barrineau became Finance Director of the Campaign to Elect Randall Woodfin.

'Go and change the world'

Barrineau didn't really have a plan when he graduated from the University of Alabama in 1998 with a communications degree. While in college, his mother, a special education teacher, died of cancer. She was 43 years old.

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"It was really awful," he says. "At 44, I've now outlived her. It was really horrible."
She left him with a $20,000 inheritance and a passion for education. He had no specific plan, other than to "go and change the world." One day he saw then-Lieutenant Governor Don Siegelman on television saying he was running for Governor, in part, to "turn around" education in Alabama.
"That hit close to my heart," Barrineau says.

So, the young man went to Montgomery, donned the only suit he owned and marched into Siegelman's campaign headquarters. "I wanted to do policy and volunteer," he says.

He was so sure he'd get hired he got an apartment.

But like his encounter years later with Bell, Barrineau's confidence was misplaced. "A lady walked to the door where I was sitting, spoke to me briefly and said she'd give me a callback," he recalls. "I never got one."

**Finally, a job!**

Before going to college, Barrineau's family had moved to Huntsville, so he returned there and was connected to the Cramer campaign. After seeing his computer proficiency, they hired him at $900 per month.

"I thought, 'This is fantastic!'"

Most candidates will tell you campaigning is hard work, pure and simple. Fundraising? Even more--specifically at the big-city and state levels.

"There is no glamour behind fundraising," Barrineau says. "You have thousands of call sheet, and call random people. It is grinding work."

Cramer's office still used paper calls sheets, but Barrineau "knew there was a better way to do it."

Utilizing his computer skills, Barrineau built a database of telephone numbers from the call sheets, then took computer classes at the University of Alabama and gained new insight on combining old- and new-school strategies and technology (the Internet, email, etc.) while working with Cunningham Harris and Associates, national fundraising consultants basing in Kentucky.

"I had a centralized database where people who had gone to the web to make contributions were input and we built on that," he said. "Any literature or emails we went out took people back to the donor areas and website."

It all came together in a multi-platform strategy that found a receptive ear in Woodfin.

**Far away from Birmingham**

Barrineau lives on a farm on 300-acres on the "outskirts" of Prattville, on land owned by his wife's family. They have two daughters--ages six and three--as well as a donkey that wandered onto the property, two rescue horses, and a pet pig, also a rescue. An old tractor sits in the front yard of the two-bedroom, 1-bathroom "old shack" in which the family resides.

Yet he didn't have to traverse the 80+ miles between Prattville and Birmingham very often. Not in this age, and not with a candidate comfortable with technology and a fund-raising ethic that had already achieved a modicum of success.
Woodfin could remotely dial into the database Barrineau constructed for the campaign. The candidate then had two cell phones: one for making calls, the other allowing Barrineau to send him text messages with information about the next caller.

"He could answer with, 'Hey, John, this is one of your Morehouse brothers.' We did this over and over and over and over ..."

We'll get back to those Morehouse "brothers."

Woodfin's initial notion of asking donors to contribute $18.71 per month (based on 1871, the year Birmingham was founded) struck a chord his millennial peers and others, and was at the core of his ability to raise, according to campaign finance reports, an average of $12,697 during the first seven months of his campaign--before Barrineau was hired.

The new finance director achieved some initial success. The average monthly intake almost doubled-- to $24,207--in March, April and May.

**Birmingham's business leaders were not on board**

The giving was still in small amounts, Barrineau says--five, 15, 25-dollar contributions, some 100-dollars, mostly from millennials. And Woodfin was gaining no traction from most of the Birmingham business community, which, of course, was solidly lined up behind the incumbent.

Call it: self-preservation.

"A lot of traditional givers in the Birmingham area, they didn't want anything to do with Randall Woodfin," Barrineau says.

Perhaps because major contributions are public and they knew the Bell campaign might not look lightly upon them offering favor to the enemy.

One respected business family did break ranks, as it were. Former EBSCO CEO F. Dixon Brooke, Jr. and his wife provided the largest single contribution to the campaign: $5,000.

"The mayor called him and asked him why he did it," Barrineau says. "They were just genuine people and they said they wanted to see a change."

But as my AL.com colleague Erin Edgemon recently revealed, Woodfin's ultimate fundraising success was mostly due to the alumni network of his alma mater, Morehouse College in Atlanta, where the candidate once served in the prestigious role of Student Government Association president.

Woodfin was a sophomore when Bakari Sellers arrived on campus as a freshman. "[Randall] was of course there early," says Sellers, now an attorney, former South Carolina state Representative and CNN political commentator. "He was probably the only person there who was frailer than me. But he was a mover and shaker and all the upperclassmen respected him.

"At Morehouse, the political culture is a bit different: Being SGA president is the equivalent of being the star quarterback on most campuses," Sellers added. "And Randell Woodfin was going to be SGA president."

**The turning point**

Around late May, the campaign obtained a list of 757 Morehouse alums, going back as far as the Class of 1945. That was the turning point.

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Barrineau says each of those names was called at least three times, with Woodfin on the telephone for "hours and hours," the fundraiser says. "I was guiding him, but he was calling, asking for $25, $50, $100. Some of the men he talked knew Martin Luther King or went to school with him."

Moreover, each call was quickly followed up with an email, leading potential donors to the website, where they could donate.

"We started hitting them with the same literature we sent to locals," Barrineau said. "The response was incredible. They were on fire."

Some alums, including Sellers, hosted fund-raisers in their cities, at least one netted $10,000.

"This Morehouse thing took off and turned into a viral campaign," Barrineau says. "I had no idea."

In June and July, again according to filings, the campaign raised $106,172--and an average of $53,086 each month.

Then in August alone, building on the energy and momentum leading up (and after) to the primary, the campaign raised $109,725--including $46,136 in the week following Woodfin's surprising first-place finish.

September, not surprisingly, was explosive: $117,226, including another $46,000+ week.

Finally, during the first week of October, which included Woodfin's election-night romp, the campaign raised $89,725.

The grand total--so far

Through last week, Woodfin raised $566,898--almost 30% of which Barrineau attributes to the Morehouse network.

"I've never seen anything like it," he says. "It was a real special case."

Barrineau, who earned $3,500 per month for his role as finance director, adds that a group of 50 local attorneys "of all ethnicities" also raised about $2,500 each.

Beyond fundraising, Barrineau says the campaign tied its boots-on-the-ground canvassing efforts into the database.

"This was a completely different environment than anyone has ever seen," he says. "The whole campaign was data- and tech-driven. There was synergy between social media, online communications, emails and even door-knocking, which was tied into the central database."

"They knew exactly where their votes were. We had over 21,000 people and we texted all of them," he says. "This is a new generation of campaigning, a new generation of voters, something Alabama has never seen."

"Our entire outfit, including fundraising, was very grassroots," says Woodfin, adding that the campaign received well over 3,500 donations. "[Barrineau] is the best fundraiser in the state."

"I still don't know why the mayor never hired me," Barrineau says of those days back in January when he wanted to work for Mayor Bell. "But I have a strong faith that God leads you where you need to go. This was where I needed to be."

Roy S. Johnson's column appears in The Birmingham News, the Huntsville Times, the Mobile Register and AL.com. He may be reached at rjohnson@al.com or twitter.com/roysj
MONTGOMERY

State already talking up next Census

Head count emerges as make-or-break political matter

John Sharp  jsharp@al.com

Census forms won't be mailed out for more than two years, and chances are that the government's 10-year head count is the furthest thing from most Alabama minds right now.

But that hasn't stopped some politicians, notably Gov. Kay Ivey, from sounding an alarm about the importance of bolstering the Census response rate by Alabama households in 2020.

"You must put this on your radar screens," Ivey told a recent luncheon group. "We must have strong participation in the upcoming Census. This is serious business for our state going forward."

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CENSUS
FROM A1

There is a lot at stake for Alabama, as predictions have surfaced that the state will lose one of its seven U.S. House seats. In addition, billions of federal dollars, for everything from transportation to children's health, get allocated based on the Census data.

"Even though we are a few years from forming the Census, the preparations start well in advance and there are things starting already at the federal level," U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, R-Fairhope, said. "It's not premature to be talking about it."

LAGGING GROWTH

The threat of losing a House seat comes because Alabama's population is growing at an unremarkable clip compared to states such as Georgia, Florida, Tennessee and Texas.

Since 2010, Alabama's population has climbed a measly 1.7 percent — largely thanks to Baldwin, Lee and Madison counties — making this the 36th fastest growing state.

The possibilities of future reapportionment are starting to become water cooler talk in Washington, D.C., U.S. Rep. Mo Brooks, R-Huntsville, said two of five House members in the northern or central part of the state would probably be bumped into the same congressional district if Alabama seats get cut.

Another immediate concern is how redistricting will be handled after the 2020 count concludes. The U.S. Supreme Court, this past week, heard testimony in a Wisconsin case about a 2011 district map drawn up by a Republican-controlled Legislature. The high court will determine if the map, deemed as blatantly partisan, should be ruled unconstitutional.

The court's ruling could determine how Alabama redraws its maps.

In Alabama, the Legislature establishes the maps of its own district boundaries and those of the state's congressional delegation. But in numerous other states, the job is given over to special redistricting commissions.

Gerald Webster, professor of political geography at the University of Wyoming and a former geography professor at the University of Alabama, said the Voting Rights Act maintains that the state keep a majority-minority congressional district. At present, that's the 7th District in west-central Alabama, the province of Democrat U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell.

The competition, Webster said, will be among the Republicans.

Byrne wondered aloud about the possibility of his southwest Alabama 1st District being cut into pieces, perhaps with adjacent Mobile and Baldwin counties represented by different House members.

"It's a natural fit for Mobile and Baldwin counties to be together," said Byrne. "I would hate to see it for people who live in the two areas to have one congressman from the Mobile side and another from the Baldwin side. I don't think it's likely, but it's not something you can take your eye off the ball about."

'PAY ATTENTION'

The concerns being raised in Alabama are nothing new, said Kenneth Prewitt, the Carnegie professor of public affairs at Columbia University and the head of the U.S. Census Bureau from 1998-2000.

"It will be hard to get the general public to pay attention to it, but it won't be hard to engage the chambers of commerce or the universities who are worried about it," Prewitt said. "There is $600 billion every year that will be spent and anchored on the results the Census gives you and it's allocated proportionately to population size for programs such as VA hospitals and lunch programs for school kids."

Prewitt, who oversaw the 2000 count, said states like California and New York were "leaders" in preparations before the Census Bureau mailed out its questionnaires that year. He anticipates more state leaders getting involved prior to the 2020 mailout.

"There are already anxieties in statehouses and chambers of commerce," he said. "The national Chamber of Commerce has said ... they use the data on where to put new Walmarts and where they know they can get an educated labor pool."

The key for state leaders will be to avoid a high undercount. Alabama, in 2010, was one of 20 states that had higher participation rate for mailing in Census forms than in 2000.

The five major counties of metropolitan Birmingham all topped their 2000 participation rates, as did Mobile, Montgomery, Lee and Baldwin counties.

The least participation occurred in rural and poorer counties within Alabama's Black Belt region where awareness may have been low.

Prewitt said, "The undercount, even if it's small, it will affect the allocation of funds... and it can affect who gets the last (House) seat."

In 2000, Utah missed qualifying for the 43rd and final House seat by 856 people. That seat went to North Carolina instead.

The Government Accountability Office has included the 2020 Census on its list of high-risk projects. The uncertainties include the bureau's budget and technology.

Prewitt said an increasing distrust of government could also be an issue.

"The best way to get a decent response rate is via advertising from trusted voices — our schools need to do it, our chamber of commerce to need to take it seriously," he said.

"When there is a nervousness about data and concerns about privacy, these trusted voices are indispensable."

Said Prewitt: "Your governor is really smart to start the alarm bells now. If it doesn't work well, there will be a big undercount. And if Alabama is really in that running for the 43rd seat, the governor has an even stronger point to make."
Five to be honored for civic leadership

Hall of fame induction will be held Oct. 19

By Ken Roberts
City Editor

Each year, the Civic Hall of Fame honors people whose actions have made an impact on the quality of life in Tuscaloosa County.

Five people have been chosen this year to join the elite list of exceptional citizens who have made significant, long-term contributions to the development of Tuscaloosa County.

Organizations, businesses and individual citizens submitted nominations for the 2017 class to the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama. The nominations were reviewed by a committee and honorees were selected.

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HONORED

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The Civic Hall of Fame was born during the chamber’s 100th anniversary year in 2000. With this class, 108 citizens will have been inducted as members of the Hall of Fame.

The 2017 honorees will be inducted at 4 p.m. Oct. 10 at the Alberta Center of Performing Arts, 2700 University Blvd. E. There is no cost to attend the event.

Here are this year’s honorees:

Susan Phifer Cork (1953)

A lifelong resident of Tuscaloosa, Cork attended the Tuscaloosa City School system and the University of Alabama. With her family, she is part of the leadership of Phifer Inc.

Although she has a busy career working alongside her husband and sisters at Phifer, Cork is committed to an active role in community service, serving as chairwoman of the United Way of West Alabama Alexis de Tocqueville Society, past chairwoman of the board of directors of Christ Episcopal Church preschool, sustaining member of Junior League of Tuscaloosa, and on numerous other boards and committees.

She was instrumental in raising money for and developing the Tuscaloosa Children’s Center, and was part of the Alabama Department of Mental Health’s first Historical Committee, which was established to formulate a restoration and preservation plan for the historic portion of Bryce Hospital.

In 2016, Cork was named a Pillar of West Alabama by the Community Foundation of West Alabama. Along with her husband, Brad, she was selected as the recipient of the 2015 Family of the Year by the United Way of West Alabama Alexis de Tocqueville Society.

Arlington L. Freeman
(1934-2003)

Born in in Fayette County, Freeman received his education at the Fayette County Training School, Stillman College and Alabama State University.

A longtime employee of what began as the Tuscaloosa City Recreation Department, Freeman showed a devotion to providing recreational opportunities to all areas of the community, but particularly in the West End of Tuscaloosa. Freeman initiated and guided the development of Palmore Park, a 175-acre development in west Tuscaloosa.

He also directed youth and sports programs for all ages. In 1996, Community Center Park in West End was renamed A.L. Freeman Park.

Freeman was also involved with the American Red Cross, the Murphy African American Museum and the Drug Prevention Task Force Committee. He served as senior commissioner with the Tuscaloosa Youth Development Council and was an advisory member of the Tuscaloosa County Sheriff’s Department - Juvenile Division.

Freeman earned numerous awards, including the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Man of Distinction. Feb. 20, 1996, was proclaimed by the city of Tuscaloosa as “A.L. Freeman Day.”

Frank Michael Reilly
(1954)

By the time Reilly was born in Montgomery, his father had been killed in a military airplane crash.

The youngest of four children with a working mother, Reilly had ample unsupervised time after school, at night, on weekends and during summer breaks. He spent much of that time at the South YMCA in Montgomery, where he encountered role models and learned the lessons of public service and the value of volunteerism.

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Reilly has since served on the Tuscaloosa YMCA board of directors for decades, working to raise money for the new YMCA building and also serving as the chairman of the board. He followed in the footsteps of his mentor, Pettus Randall, III, in investing time in the Tuscaloosa community. As CEO of Randall-Reilly, he participated in several capital campaigns, including the effort to raise $6.5 million for a new building for St. Francis of Assisi University Parish.

Reilly's interest in aiding children led him to help the Boys and Girls Clubs of Tuscaloosa, joining with other community leaders in resolving problems and ensuring the organization offers young people a safe place to learn after school and during the summer.

In 2011, the Reilly family was named the Alexis de Tocqueville Society Family of the Year, due in large part to Reilly's efforts to recruit new members to the society. Because of the society, more than 7,000 local children are served annually by the United Way's Success by Six, Jump Start and Dolly Parton Imagination Library programs.

Betty Shirley (1927-)

As a young adult, Shirley suffered from mental illness and was successfully treated at Bryce Hospital. After her recovery, she spoke openly about mental illness to civic organizations and churches and became an advocate for mental health treatment and education. Families in crisis called upon her for information, to be a listening ear and to provide hope.

As a mental health advocate, she has served on the board of Friends of Bryce and served as co-chairwoman of the Hospital Ball of Druid City Hospital to raise money for a mental health wing. She was also a fundraiser and member of the board of Counseling Ministry Professionals.

Shirley was named the Outstanding Member of the Mental Health Association in 1990, was named a “Point of Light” by President George H.W. Bush, and in 2002, the psychiatric clinic at the University of Alabama School of Medicine was named in her honor.

She is also involved in the Rise Center and Crossing Points, and both programs have grown in funding and support thanks to her efforts.

Jimmy Warren (1954-)

Born in Jasper, Warren moved from the family farm in Walker County to Holt when he was six months old so his father could start a job as a forklift driver at the Central Foundry. His mother quilted and canned vegetables to help support the family.

In school, Warren was selected at Eastwood Junior High's most outstanding student when he was in the ninth grade. At Tuscaloosa High School, he was one of the school's outstanding seniors, and was editor of the Black Warrior. He worked three jobs to pay for college and graduated magna cum laude.

Warren worked at Creative Displays and TotalCom, and in 1983, bought TotalCom and became its president. In the more than three decades since, TotalCom has grown to be a regional firm and represents clients throughout the Southeast. Through his agency, Warren has donated hundreds of hours of pro bono work to various charitable organizations.

Additionally, Warren has taken a range of leadership roles, both in a civic capacity and in his industry. He served as president of the Tuscaloosa Advertising Federation and governor of the district, serving on the national board and elected to the Council of Governors. He was inducted into the American Advertising Federation Seventh District's Hall of Fame and received the Barton Cummings Gold Medal, the American Advertising Federation’s highest award.

He is a founding director and serves on the advisory board of the Bank of Tuscaloosa, and served in various roles with the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, including being instrumental in the creation of the Civic Hall of Fame. Warren was Member of the Year in 2000 and received the Chamber’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000.

Warren served on the city of Tuscaloosa’s Planning and Zoning Commission for 16 years and was chair for eight years. He serves on the board of the Tuscaloosa Public Library and has served as a board member for the Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Authority and a division chair for United Way, among many other boards. A loyal supporter of the University of Alabama, he is a member of the President’s Cabinet and the board of visitors of the College of Communication and Information Sciences.
A J McCarron knows a thing or two about playing quarterback for the Crimson Tide. The Cincinnati Bengals passer is Alabama's career leader in passing yardage, passing touchdowns and total offense.

So, when a two-time national champion and school legend uses his bye week to come back to Tuscaloosa and watch practice, it's a good idea to be all ears.

Although his busy NFL schedule doesn't allow him to watch Alabama the same way that he used to, McCarron has seen enough to know Nick Saban has another great team, highlighted by sophomore quarterback Jalen Hurts.

"He's excellent," McCarron said of Hurts. "He's young, but he's played great. I think he's done what they have asked. He's only going to get better, that's usually how it works whenever you start playing. I'm excited for him. He's a really good dude."

On Wednesday, McCarron stopped by the Crimson Tide's practice facility to say hello to his former coaches and get to know some of the current players on the team. Hurts was one of the guys he made sure he spoke with.

"I talked to (Hurts) a little bit yesterday, but not long," McCarron said. "I just kind of said what's up to everybody. This offseason, I plan on working with all of the quarterbacks here. So, hopefully, we'll get to spend a lot more time together."

McCarron won 36 games as a three-year starter for Alabama, averaging 12 wins per season during the BCS era. Hurts, who has already reached a national championship game, won 14 games in his first season with the Crimson Tide. Those numbers are great, but it's something McCarron said Hurts shouldn't let go to his head.

"Take it day-by-day," McCarron said. "Don't get too high, don't get too low. One of the good things about playing (for Alabama) is you're going to win a lot of games, but a negative that comes with it is there's..."
going to be a lot of people that tell you how good you are. You can get caught up in that and have a game where you lose, but you're not supposed to lose. Take everything in stride and have fun with it."

As for the possibility of Hurts reaching the NFL as a quarterback, McCarron said that’s hard to know. He believes it’s “more than likely” the sophomore will play out all four years of his college eligibility, leaving Hurts plenty of chances to show he is capable.

“I think he needs to take care of his body and not take some of the hits that he does. I know he’s an unbelievable runner,” McCarron said. “And also he needs to continue to grow as a passer. I told coach that I’d like to work with him and work with the other guys. I’m not saying that I know everything, but I’ve been around for a long time, and I’ve learned from a lot of great people.”

Two of those people McCarron has spent time around in his stint with the Bengals include quarterback gurus Tom House and Adam Dedeaux, who have coached Tom Brady, Matt Ryan and several other NFL passers.

"Being able to see someone’s throwing motion and know what they need to fix is good, and I think I could help in that way and help him grow,” McCarron said. "He’s young. He’s only going to get better."
New entertainment district to start

By Jason Morton
Staff Writer

Starting this weekend, an expanded version of the Downtown T-Town Entertainment District will take effect.

This slightly larger version of the entertainment district will be active between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. each Friday and Saturday through Jan. 27.

The district, which has been in place since Sept. 15, allows participating alcohol retailers within the district boundaries to serve to-go alcoholic beverages in a designated cup.

On these days and during these times, downtown patrons will not be cited for carrying an open alcoholic beverage within the borders of the district, which encompasses much of the downtown retail area.

The updated version of the district, adopted Tuesday night by the Tuscaloosa City Council, was enlarged to include businesses, like River restaurant on Jack Warner Parkway and R&R Cigar on Sixth Street, that were left out the first time.

And the decision to allow the entertainment district each weekend through Jan. 27 was based on the remainder of the Alabama Crimson Tide football season, along with the upcoming Holidays on the River event, hosted annually by the city at the Tuscaloosa Amphitheater.

Legislation that would permit these open beverage districts was enacted by the Alabama Legislature in 2012. Under the legislation, municipalities with at least 25,000 residents, as well as those with an incorporated arts council, main street program or downtown development entity, could establish special districts in which laws

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that ordinarily restrict the open use of alcoholic beverages could be modified or lifted.

While the first version of the state law permitting entertainment districts said cities of Tuscaloosa's size could have up to two, that has since been amended to allow up to five districts when at least four restaurants or

bars with liquor licenses are operating within a district's borders.

The City Council created the Downtown T-Town Entertainment District at the urging of Dan Robinson, owner of the Cravings specialty food store on University Boulevard, last month after he suggested it would cater to Tuscaloosa visitors and college football fans while highlighting downtown retailers, many of which he believes go unnoticed much of the time.

It was established to operate on a temporary basis to gauge how it would be received, and whether the Tuscaloosa Police Department would have any trouble monitoring alcohol use in the area.

Last week, city officials said no problems had arisen.

Reach Jason Morton at jason.morton@tuscaloosanews.com or 205-722-0300.
Five students vie for 2017 homecoming queen

UA queen to be crowned at halftime of Saturday's game

Staff report

University of Alabama students will vote this week to elect the 2017 homecoming queen.

The court will be presented and the queen crowned at halftime of Saturday's football game against the University of Arkansas at Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Here's a look at this year's homecoming court:

**Mackenzie Brannan**

Class level: Senior
Sponsoring organization: Read Bama Read
Philanthropic cause: Read Bama Read, a nonprofit that focuses on childhood literacy
Hometown: Austin, Texas
Major: Psychology

**Abigail Greenberg**

Class level: Senior
Sponsoring organization: Delta Delta Delta
Philanthropic cause: Rags 2 Riches, which provides clothes and other necessities to needy people in Tuscaloosa
Hometown: La Mesa, California
Major: Communication studies

**Lane Griffith**

Class level: Senior
Sponsoring organization: National Society of Black Engineers and Collegiate
Philanthropic cause: Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama, a non-profit organization that seeks to increase housing opportunities for people in need
Hometown: New Market, Alabama
Major: Political science/journalism

**Allison Mollenkamp**

Class level: Senior
Sponsoring organization: Society of Professional Journalists
Philanthropic cause: Humane Society of West
Hometown: Jefferson City, Missouri
Major: English

**Alex Smith**

Class level: Senior
Sponsoring organization: Society of Professional Journalists
Philanthropic cause: Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama, a non-profit organization that seeks to increase housing opportunities for people in need
Hometown: New Market, Alabama
Major: Political science/journalism
UA marks homecoming with bonfire, parade

Staff report

The theme this year for homecoming at the University of Alabama is "Sweet Home Capstone."

Alabama will play the University of Arkansas on Saturday night at Bryant-Denny Stadium. The game will kick off at 6:15 p.m.

The week leading up to the game will include athletic competitions, service activities, food drives, lawn and storefront decorations, talent shows and the annual parade and bonfire.

Because of inclement weather, Sunday's 29th Annual Roll Tide Run was canceled.

There will be bowling Monday from 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. at the AMF Bama Lanes.

On Tuesday, a basketball tournament begins at 5:45 p.m. at the recreation center.

Students will also vote on Tuesday to elect a homecoming queen via myBama. The 2017 queen will be crowned during halftime of the football game on Saturday.

A dodgeball tournament will start at 5:45 p.m. Wednesday at the recreation center.

There will be a choreography competition at 6 p.m. in Coleman Coliseum and a trivia night at 8 p.m. at Heat Pizza.

On Friday, the annual pep rally and bonfire will be on the Quad at 7 p.m. and a step show presented by the National Pan-Hellenic Council at 8:30 p.m. at Coleman Coliseum.

Saturday, there will be the annual homecoming parade beginning at 1 p.m. along University Boulevard.

For more information, go to https://homecoming.sa.ua.edu.
UA building briefly evacuated

Suspicious package turned out to contain clothing

Staff report

Rose Administration building on the University of Alabama campus was evacuated for about two hours Friday morning after a suspicious package was found behind the building, which houses administrative offices.

The package, which was found in a mailbox, contained clothing, said a university spokesperson. University police received a report about the package at about 8:10 a.m. University police taped off the area around the building as well as nearby Adams Hall and the East Annex, but vehicle and pedestrian traffic were allowed to continue along University Boulevard.

The area was cleared to reopen at about 10:20 a.m. The FBI, a postal inspector and the Tuscaloosa Police Department's bomb squad assisted in the investigation, according to the university.
HEALTH CARE

UAB Nephrology clinic opens in Leeds

UAB Medicine has opened a weekly nephrology clinic at its facility in Leeds.

UAB nephrology physicians Gaurav Jain and Vinay Narasimha Krishna will be on-site each Friday to provide care at the facility, located off of I-20 at exit 140, just across from the Bass Pro Shops at 1141 Payton Way.

UAB Medicine-Leeds, offering primary and specialty care, opened in October 2015.

UAB nephrology physicians at the clinic will provide timely consultations to patients with complex renal issues, including acute kidney injury, chronic kidney disease, uncontrolled hypertension, electrolyte disorders and glomerular disease.

Physicians can refer a patient by calling the UAB Medicine Access center at 205-934-3411. Urgent consults can be made by calling 205-934-2646.

UAB nephrology physicians aim to accommodate all consults within a week and provide communication back to the referring physician’s office based on the evaluation of the patient.

UAB Nephrology is recognized as one of the top 15 nephrology divisions in the country by U.S. News & World Report. — Erin Edgemon
SOUTHERN RESEARCH PARTNERS WITH INTERNATIONAL BIOTECH FIRM

Southern Research has made its first licensing agreement in 10 years in an effort to develop a new anti-cancer drug.

The Birmingham nonprofit has signed a research and license contract with startup biotech firm Bionetix Inc. out of Suwon, South Korea. The two companies plan to develop a drug that affects a key genetic switch associated with suppression and regulation of the growth of certain types of cancer.

"The collaborative effort with Bionetix will allow us to accelerate our exploration of an epigenetic approach that could produce life-saving anti-cancer agents as well as continue our commitment to the identification of novel therapeutics," said Mark Suto, vice president of Southern Research's Drug Discovery Division.

Researchers want to develop a drug that would block, or at least inhibit, certain epigenetic processes linked to changes in tumor cell DNA that allows the cells to survive and spread. A drug that can inhibit these processes also can be useful against chemotherapy-resistant tumors in combination with targeted cancer therapeutics and as a therapy for cancer immunotherapies.

Under the agreement, Southern Research will conduct studies to identify and optimize new inhibitors of methyltransferases as potential drug candidates. In collaboration with Bionetix, Southern Research also will define the overall development strategy for the new compounds. The first stage is purely exploratory for the moment.

"What we are looking at in this exploratory effort is a wide range of specific genes and biomarkers," Suto said. "This will help us identify the types of tumors that should be targeted and which patients would be most likely to benefit from the treatment based on this epigenetic approach."

Southern Research and Bionetix plan to complete the collaborative research program as well as begin preclinical and clinical development programs by early 2019.

Bionetix, as part of the collaboration, can exercise an option to acquire the global exclusive commercialization rights for the optimized inhibitors as well as the application technologies and will develop them further independently.
No matter how you slice it, the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is one of the most critical places of Birmingham’s economy.

The center has a massive budget that would rank among the area’s largest companies. It attracts world-renowned researchers, a huge amount of research dollars and draws people from across the world to Birmingham.

And, in August, the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center got a new leader.

Dr. Michael Birrer, a trailblazer in the world of oncology, succeeded Dr. Ed Partridge as the leader of the center.

Birrer arrived from Massachusetts General and Harvard with an impressive resume and ambitious goals for the cancer center that include strategic hires, new facilities and significantly increasing clinical trials - a move that could attract pharmaceutical firms and boost commercialization efforts.

The oncology veteran’s bold vision is one that could shape not just his own organization, but the overall Birmingham economy.

Birrer recently sat down with the BBJ to talk about his plans for the UAB Comprehensive Center and more.

What attracted you to this job and this position in Birmingham? I’ve spent about 30 to 35 years in cancer care and research and my specialty is gynecologic cancers. The position at Harvard was a program leader and was quite good, and there was a lot of interesting research up there. But the question was, “What comes after that?” I could’ve stayed there and it would’ve been entertaining and interesting, but the chance to impact a broader number of cancer patients is what attracted me to the cancer center director position. And then the question becomes “Where do you go?” My requirements were an institute of excellence, but of a size that I can get my hands around it. So UAB fit perfectly because it was one of the first eight cancer centers funded by the NCI back in 1972, and it’s been continuously funded for 45 years. So that in and of itself reflects how effective and talented the people are here. Because of its culture and the way it’s designed, I can actually see most of what’s going on. I can get my hands around it. It’s just a perfect fit for me, and a lot of potential for growth.

What are one or two initial priorities coming into this job? No. 1 is the clinical trials structure. We’ve got wonderful trials. We put about 500 patients on per year. I want to triple that. Part of that is we want to strike an appropriate balance between industry trials. Industry has a lot of interesting drugs, and they pay very well. Balance that with cooperative group trials – part of a national network – which academically we need to do. And what’s called investigator initiated trials, or IITs. These are homegrown trials that we think of the science, we write the protocol and the company support it. So we’ve got to balance that portfolio out. We can probably do that in six months. The tripling will take maybe one or two years.

What do you think the impact of tripling that would be for the patient community? It would go beyond (the local patient community). We will become the cancer clinical trial center for the South. It’s not to say we don’t do a good job now, but it will be substantially larger. I’d like to think that cancer patients in Birmingham, and certainly Alabama, would be served. But I would like to think we’ll be having patients from Mississippi, Arkansas, western Georgia and the panhandle of Florida, even northern Florida. When they say, “I’ve got cancer and I’m interested in clinical trials,” the first name that pops into their mind will be the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center.

In terms of strategic hires, do you envision a ramp up in hiring? So for HemOnc (hematology oncology) itself, which is the clinical portion, for the lack of a better description, I would probably double the size of it. We, right now, have several disease centers where we have...
literally one physician, maybe two. We need a team of four or five. I would say a minimum of 20 physicians we would hire. I say strategically because I don’t see us hiring evenly across. Breast cancer, for instance, is a well-established program. They don’t need another clinician. They may need another researcher. Lung needs several hires into those positions. I am also thinking of building a program in cancer cell metabolism, which is a hot topic. Cancers alter metabolism and begin to use other carbon sources for energy. It’s important because we can exploit that if we understand it. There are a number of drugs working their way through clinical trials targeting cancer cell metabolism. The science is very rich. There are a number of people on campus already doing this work, so the question is, “Can we have strategic hires to build a program on metabolism in cancer?”

**What is your take on the health care scene in terms of chronic conditions in the South, in terms of the impact on the cancer center and opportunities they create?** There are several cultural differences, which are important to recognize, and can actually be a strength to the cancer center. Sadly, we have a higher instance of smokeless tobacco use and tobacco use. So, we’re developing a big program that’s based on philanthropic dollars in head and neck tumors. Head and neck tumors used to be a terrible set of cancers that nobody wanted to work on and the science was unknown. That’s all changed. We’re building a head and neck program based on that… Also, dietary issues, lack of exercise, caloric intake creates some skewing in the types of tumors that we see. So, for instance, endometrial cancer is very much related to obesity and the gynecological oncology team saw 300 new endometrial cancers last year. At Mass General, we probably saw 50 total. So, we need to address that. Can we look at the impact of obesity and hormonal levels on endometrial cancers? Can we conduct trials in terms of the institution of dietary restriction and exercise either in patients who have already been treated or in patients who don’t have it but are at risk. These are things that I think would be uniquely applied to within the cancer center because of our location.

**In terms of facilities, do you think we’re set or is there anything more we need?** Give me a building. It’s more of a marketing/branding issue, but if you ask patients “Where’s the cancer center?” They look around completely befuddled and end up pointing to the Wallace Tumor Institute, which is fine, but it’s a research building. Ray Watts and Dean Vickers and I have talked about it. One model would be a standalone, comprehensive cancer center outpatient clinic. Right now, our outpatient (clinic) is in the Kirklin Clinic, but it’s buried with rheumatology, cardiology, all sorts of things and everybody recognizes we can do better than that. Whether it is a standalone building, or should we renovate the Kirklin Clinic and take over a couple
of floors, that’s also a model we’re talking about. I think that’s within the 10-year plan, I would like it in a five-year plan.

What do you think the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center’s role is in women’s cancers, and where do you see that going from here? I think the future may hold that we combine gynecological and breast and make a women’s cancer program. The GYN program is very strong, and I’m very excited about that, because they have a great group of clinicians and are very interested in translational research. Although I was at Mass General and at Harvard, it wasn’t that easy, so I think that’s going to be a great opportunity and we’re going to grow that and I’m bringing in about $3 to $4 million dollars’ worth of research grants so that’s going to be exciting. The breast program I’m excited about because they are very well organized and very established. They have effectively the only multidisciplinary approach to patients in the cancer center. So, I use them as a model. So when the patient comes in, you’ve got a surgeon in the room, radiation oncologist in the room and medical oncologist in the room. They all see the patient, hopefully simultaneously, and they chat among themselves. Their research is just a tad thin, so I talked with a number of people about putting out an advertisement for either a lab-based or physician scientist interested in translational research and breast cancer, so we’ll be doing a strategic one or two hires there. They also do a very good job in philanthropic fundraising.

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation is aiming for $1 million this year, and they give it all to UAB. You need philanthropic funding to make it work.

In terms of recruiting strategic hires, how do you feel Birmingham is set up in luring one of these powerhouse researchers or clinicians from other parts of the country? You do suffer from these biases in terms of image, which are completely fabricated.

I came here the first time and what shocked me was not Birmingham – it was UAB. I sort of said, “Why have you been hiding this place? It’s unbelievable with its size and depth.” I think the challenge is to get people here. Once they get here and they see it, they see the size of UAB, they see Birmingham and they look at the suburbs. I’m anticipating it’s not going to be a problem. My job is to sell the cancer center in terms of enthusiasm and where we’re going, and I’m happy to do that.

What is your vision? Upward and onward. Again, I think that we are a place to go to in Birmingham and Alabama. We want that to be extended to the South. We are the place in the South. Forget about Vanderbilt, Emory – we’re the place in the South. Above that, I really would like to be recognized nationally from a clinical trial and research standpoint … I don’t mind patients going to M.D. Anderson to get a second opinion. What bothers me is if they don’t come back. You want to go to M.D. Anderson – fine, but you’re going to find the same trials we have and you only have to drive seven minutes to get it. That’s the goal.

10 years from now where do you hope the cancer center is? Well, I certainly want to continue to be comprehensive, and we need to pay attention to that. We undergo a review every five years and the next one is in three years. I think we’re in good shape for that. I would love to see us with a clinical trial menu that is second to none and that certainly people and patients in the South and even in other places say, “I want to go down to UAB.” I’d like to see a physical structure that people can say, “This is my home and this is the cancer center.” Right now, we have six research programs at the cancer center. At Harvard, they had 17. We have the potential of expanding that, having 10 or 12 different programs. And I’d like to see really robust branding and marketing and that will bring patients in, but it also ties in with philanthropic fundraising.

Looking ahead 50 years how do you see the world of cancer treatment? You don’t have to wait 50 years. The big changes are already occurring and are going to accelerate. You look at immunotherapy, which has exploded. Metastatic melanoma, a disease that when I trained, we wouldn’t even treat it. Those patients were given four months to live and there was not much we can do. We now have survival curves that are flat, meaning that they are not dropping. They are four years with no evidence of the disease. They are probably cured. That’s from immunotherapy. You’re going to see more of that … I actually believe the holy grail for cancer research has always been early detection assays. It’s been real hard to develop, but you’re going to see those. There will be blood tests where you begin screening the general population. They’ll be cheap enough where we can afford it and then you’ll find the high-risk patients and they’ll get surgery and avoid the tumor. Will cancer go away? The answer is no. My view is cancer is a disease of aging. It will always be here, but what it will do is it will become like Type 2 diabetes and patients basically live with it or we detect early and cure them.
Tech Center gives engineering student major edge

By: Pavlik-Hernandez

Coleman Cook knew from a young age that he wanted to be an engineer. In a single evening, he could put together an elaborate Lego set only to tear it down the next day and build his own creation. His favorites were roller coasters and robots.

Fast forward to high school, where Cook became deeply involved with the robotics program at Elkmont, which required him to go to the Limestone County Career Technical Center several times per week.

“Through robotics, I got interested in concept engineering, and the pre-engineering program at the tech center seemed like a natural way to explore the field,” Cook said.

To say that he excelled in the pre-engineering program would be an understatement, according to Casey Wigginton, Cook's high school engineering teacher. “With a student like Coleman, who has such high aspirations, my job was to not get in his way and help him make his ideas a reality.”

Coleman not only earned a full-tuition scholarship to the University of Alabama in Huntsville with an ACT score of 34, he was one of only six high school students in the world to pass the Certified LabVIEW Associate Developer exam. CLAD is an industrial-level certification for the LabVIEW programming language. College engineering students often take the CLAD test if they plan on going into industrial testing or production industries.

“I used the LabView programming language extensively during robotics,” Cook, the lead programmer of his robotic team said... “I think I passed because of my four years of experience using LabVIEW, and I did a significant amount of studying.”

Cooks’s and robotics’ teams ranked 26th and 27th internationally in 2016 and 2017, respectively. He was also the Chief Executive Officer of an underwater robotics team his senior year.

His LabVIEW credentials landed Cook an internship at Electrifil Corp., an automotive supplier in Elkmont where he was able to convert work hours into pre-engineering credits at LCCTC.

“I was the first intern to use LabVIEW to work on programming some of the machines there and did some wiring,” he said. “My time there helped me understand industrial systems tremendously and I think it gave me a major edge.”

On Oct. 3, Cook shared about his internship and the edge it has provided him now that he is in college at the North Alabama Workforce Development Conference held at Adtran Huntsville.

“I was given five minutes in a 15-minute block to speak and basically shared how internships like the one I had can benefit people pursuing a degree in an engineering field,” Cook said.
Cook was pulled in a couple of different directions when trying to settle on a major but finally settled on computer engineering because it combines his favorite fields—electronics and computer programming.

His plan is to earn his bachelor's in four years, a rarity for engineering majors and then complete his master's degree in one year using the Joint Undergraduate Master's Program at UAH.

"I wouldn't be nearly as prepared if I had not attended the tech center," Cook said. "I probably would have spent my freshman year in college wondering what I was going to major in. But instead I know exactly what I want to do and have some experience to back me up."

Cook hopes to work for an upper-level company doing research and computer programming once he completes his master's degree.

Wigginton has no doubt his former student will accomplish that goal and much more.

"Coleman is going to do anything and go anywhere he wants to," Wigginton said. "Ideas inspire him and he devotes a lot of time to make those ideas happen."
UAH conducts Army Senior Logistician Advanced Course

By: University of Alabama in Huntsville

Professional Development Solutions at The University of Alabama in Huntsville is strengthening its ties to the U.S. Army Logistics Community by partnering with the Civilian Logistics Career Management Office to design and deliver the Senior Logistician Advanced Course for senior Department of the Army civilian logisticians (GS-14/GS-15 level) globally within major commands throughout the Army.

UAH recently hosted 30 participants who play a vital role in the Army’s global supply chain, supporting sustainable Army readiness by creating and implementing logistics policies, programs and plans. The course also included a tour of Science Engineering Services and SCI Technology facilities to learn how private industry supports the warfighter and provides life-cycle services. William Moore, assistant deputy chief of staff, G-4 Headquarters from the Pentagon, participated in the closing dinner, course brief outs and a graduation ceremony to demonstrate the investment the Army is making in their people.

Professional Development Solutions understands the impact of expanding thinking capacity and providing strategic professional development to Army senior civilians who perform crucial duties in support of our Armed Forces. Program Director, Lane Fabby, said, “We are proud to assist the Army in shifting the logistics culture from stove-piped tactical logisticians to multifunctional integrated logisticians in order to better support mission readiness and prepare for the supply chain of tomorrow.”

SLAC is UAH’s new two-week learning event, offered multiple times annually and aimed at closing competency gaps that provides education and networking opportunities for senior leaders in the 0346 community. SLAC covers the 12 Integrated Product Support competencies, Cybersecurity, Managing in an ERP Centric Environment, and threads Leadership Development and Strategic Thinking themes in order to broaden perspectives.
Climate change machinery cranks up following recent hurricanes

By: James H. "Smokey" Shott

It’s as predictable as the sun rising in the east: when any notable weather event or series of them occurs, the human-made climate change enthusiasts engage their propaganda machine and bombard us with more dire warnings of impending doom. This seems more important to them than the suffering caused and damage done.

When Hurricanes Harvey and Irma struck the southern and eastern U.S. in close succession recently, they were the first two Category 4 hurricanes to do so in the same year in 166 years of record keeping. Immediately, self-identified weather specialists Leonardo DiCaprio and Pope Francis burst forth with dire warnings of human-caused climate change.

Al Gore, who makes his money these days writing books about imagined weather calamities without the benefit of knowledge of the subject, told the World Economic Forum, “This is an unusual time. Within the last two weeks, we have had two more record-breaking, climate-connected storms.”

“We are departing the familiar bounds of history as we have known it since our civilization began,” he said. “And why? Because today like all days we will put another 110 million tons of man-made heat-trapping pollution into the atmosphere, using the sky as an open sewer.”

Creating heat-trapping pollution is one thing Gore does know well. An article in The Daily Signal said this: “According to the report, compiled from public records requests and information from the Nashville Electric Service, Gore’s 20-room, 10,070-square-foot, Colonial-style mansion consumed an average of 19,241 kilowatt-hours per month — more than 21.3 times that of the U.S. household average of 901 kilowatt-hours monthly.”

If global warming/climate change resulting from human activities is really as threatening as Gore preaches, one might expect him to lead the way toward lowering pollution levels, rather than doing the opposite. Gore’s actions and his words send substantially different messages.

Those advocating the idea that the activities of humans harm the environment seem to ignore the bad news for their cause, which is good news for the rest of us: data demonstrates that there has been no real warming for nearly 20 years. That, among other inconvenient truths, is routinely ignored.

Dr. Roy Spencer is a real climate scientist, unlike Gore, DiCaprio and the Pope. His education is in atmospheric sciences, his doctorate is in meteorology, and he works at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Fed up with the pseudo-science flying around these days, he wrote a book challenging the commonly paraded idea that this season’s hurricanes are what climate change looks like. He argues that these storms are neither an aberration nor a result of rising carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

A former senior scientist for NASA, Spencer explains that “There have been many years with multiple Cat 4 hurricanes in the Atlantic, but there is nothing about global warming theory that says more of those will make landfall,” adding that “While the official estimate is that this was the first time two Cat 4 storms hit the U.S., since Florida was virtually unpopulated before 1900, we probably don’t really know.”

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Spencer cited data of all major hurricanes to strike Florida since 1900 that show no increase in frequency or intensity as measured by wind speed. Florida’s worst hurricane on record struck on Labor Day, 1935, and is one of only three Category 5 storms on record to make landfall in the U.S.

Datasets from the journal “Geophysical Research Letters” in 2011 show that the global number and intensity of tropical storms and hurricanes have not increased over the past four decades, and tropical storms and hurricanes from 1999 to 2011 are significantly below the peak strengths. As with the data showing no atmospheric warming since 1998, this data strengthens the idea that the global warming theory is just a lot of hot air.

But why would actual scientists participate in promoting a ruse without a true scientific basis? Because there is a lot of research money for the taking if you support this hoax.

One scientist finally had enough of the dramatic changes in his field.

In October of 2010, Hal Lewis, University of California, Santa Barbara, sent a message to Curtis G. Callan, Jr., Princeton University, who was at the time president of the American Physical Society.

“When I first joined the American Physical Society sixty-seven years ago,” Lewis wrote, “it was much smaller, much gentler, and as yet uncorrupted by the money flood (a threat against which Dwight Eisenhower warned a half-century ago).”

“How different it is now. The giants no longer walk the earth, and the money flood has become the raison d’être of much physics research, the vital sustenance of much more, and it provides the support for untold numbers of professional jobs,” he said. “For reasons that will soon become clear my former pride at being an APS Fellow all these years has been turned into shame, and I am forced, with no pleasure at all, to offer you my resignation from the Society.”

This is a troubled time for America. It is a time when some scientists and journalists think their personal concerns are more important than the ethics and standards of their professions, or the needs of the country.
Hurricanes not the result of climate change

By: Staff

A Washington Post-ABC News poll released on Thursday shows that 55% of Americans think that the severity of recent hurricanes is most likely “the result of global climate change.” That people believe this is not surprising—we are told over and over: man-made global warming has made the Gulf of Mexico warmer and the air more humid thereby making tropical cyclones—called hurricanes in the North Atlantic—more frequent and more intense. ‘We must reduce our carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions to lessen the increasing hurricane threat,’ they claim.

But this is completely wrong. Dr. Roy Spencer, a principal research scientist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville explains that “major hurricanes don’t really care whether the Gulf [of Mexico] is above average or below average in temperature.” Similarly, M. Mohapatra and V. Vijay Kumar of the India Meteorological Department state in their March 2017 research paper, “there is a decreasing trend in the tropical cyclone number over the North Indian Ocean in recent years, though there is an increasing trend in the sea surface temperature…”

Hurricane frequency is determined by six factors

So, if not temperature, what does make one hurricane season worse than another?

America’s ‘hurricane guru,’ the late Dr. Bill Gray, emeritus professor of atmospheric science at Colorado State University, showed that the seasonal hurricane frequency is determined by six factors:

1. The rotational tendency, or vorticity, already present in the atmosphere.
2. Pressure gradients determined by latitude.
3. Wind shear, the changes in wind speed and direction that occur between layers in the atmosphere.
4. Ocean thermal energy.
5. The rate of change of temperature with altitude.
6. Relative humidity in the mid-troposphere.

Of these six factors, only wind shear has been exceptional this year in the Gulf of Mexico. It was very low wind shear, not temperature, vorticity, humidity or anything else, that is therefore the main cause of the high activity in this year’s hurricane season. And wind shear is a natural phenomenon that varies across the globe and is determined by a host of meteorological factors, none of which are under human control.

Florida and Texas need to engage in ‘vertical evacuation’ by building multistory storm shelters

The global warming/hurricane connection completely falls apart when one looks at the observational data. For example, it was during the 1945-77 global cooling period, when ocean temperatures worldwide were undoubtedly lower than today, that we witnessed stronger hurricanes than now. For example, Hurricane Camille, the second-most intense tropical cyclone

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to strike the U.S. on record, slammed into Mississippi as a category 5 (the strongest) hurricane on August 18, 1969, producing a storm surge of 7.3 meters.

The most powerful tropical cyclone on record worldwide was not recent either. Immediately following the cooling period, the 2,200 km-wide ‘Super Typhoon’ Tip, the strongest ever, made landfall in southern Japan on October 19, 1979 (Irma was 680 km across; Harvey 400 km). The biggest storm surges worldwide were 14.5 meters in Australia in 1899 and 13.6 meters in Bangladesh in 1876. During the warmer 20th and 21st centuries, no tropical cyclone was strong enough to generate a surge greater than 10 meters.

The fact that hurricanes and other tropical cyclones are not caused by, or even significantly enhanced by man does not give us an excuse to do nothing about them, however. Florida and Texas need to engage in ‘vertical evacuation’ by building multistory storm shelters that allow residents to take refuge above the storm surge, instead of today’s ineffective ‘horizontal evacuation,’ forcing people to flee the waves on clogged highways. The U.S. should look to India’s storm shelter network for an example of success in this regard—no one need walk more than one kilometer anywhere on India’s coast to get to a shelter. If India can afford it, why not the U.S.?

It is time to develop improved early warning systems and more storm shelters. Concerning ourselves with CO2 emission reduction is a wasteful distraction and will have no impact on future hurricane strength or frequency.
Defending against the unmanned aircraft threat

By: Steve Johnson

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — Anyone looking for a symbol of our brave new world could easily pick a drone. The remote craft, also referred to as unmanned aircraft systems got their start with work like that done at UAH some 15 years ago. The first unmanned aircraft there was called the BASSETT. It was a large, noisy, gas-powered model helicopter.

“We got into it after 9-11 because everyone was looking at security and how to protect infrastructure throughout the nation, and the military infrastructure,” said Gary Maddux with the UAH Systems Mgt. and Production Center.

UAH is still working with drones, but they’ve come a long way in the past decade and a half. The original purposes have become just “some” of the things for which you can use drones.

“Well, the anticipated outcome from the industry is very, very large. The main reason is because if you can think it, a UAV can probably do it,” said Taylor Abingdon from Avion Solutions.

Like researchers at UAH, Huntsville’s Avion Solutions is working to expand the list of things unmanned aircraft can do. The U.S. Military certainly has plenty of uses for them. At one test site nearly every work day you can see a Shadow in operation. This large unmanned aircraft is a prime way to save American lives by doing reconnaissance missions.

Of course when the enemy does the same thing that becomes a problem. Boeing is working on a solution for that. A laser than can essentially bring a drone down. “You could lock on the target. It’s a dime size beam at a mile, and you can shoot down this quad copter in 11 seconds,” said John Matlock from Boeing.

The U.S. Army has certainly realized the drone threat is serious and growing. That’s one reason the air defense stinger missiles will get new proximity fuses. It allows them to explode near a drone, and bring it down.

“It definitely will save lives. You know, especially for those small threats. The Stinger proximity fuse will be able to go after those threats,” said CW5 Julian Evans, at the CMDS office.

Drones are definitely a part of our world that isn’t going anywhere. Figuring out how to use them and defeat them is something that happens every day at Redstone Arsenal and across north Alabama.
Climate scientist rebuts Hollywood hurricane hype: ‘This is what weather looks like’

By: Valerie Richardson

Sparring with celebrities and Al Gore over global warming may not be what Roy Spencer had in mind when he earned his Ph.D., but it’s certainly become a bustling sideline for the University of Alabama in Huntsville climatologist.

A month after rebutting Mr. Gore’s documentary “An Inconvenient Sequel,” Mr. Spencer has published another short e-book, this one challenging statements by Jennifer Lawrence, Bill Nye, Stevie Wonder and others linking global warming to this year’s active hurricane season.

Called “Inevitable Disaster: Why Hurricanes Can’t Be Blamed on Global Warming,” the 50-page book was released Monday, and like his August e-book, “An Inconvenient Deception,” it’s already made landfall on the Amazon bestseller list.

As of midday Thursday, “An Inconvenient Deception” and “Inevitable Disaster” ranked number one and two on Amazon’s list of bestsellers in the category of Environment & Nature, while Mr. Gore’s companion book to “An Inconvenient Sequel” ranked 100th.

Mr. Spencer’s latest book challenges the oft-repeated assertion that this year’s powerful hurricane season is “what climate change looks like,” arguing that the storms are neither an aberration nor a result of rising carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

“This isn’t what human-caused climate change looks like,” Mr. Spencer said in the e-book. “It’s what weather looks like.”

Hurricane Harvey and Irma became the first two Category 4 hurricanes to strike the U.S. coast on the Atlantic side in the same year, based on 166 years of record-keeping, prompting warnings from Mr. Gore, Pope Francis, Leonardo DiCaprio and others about human-caused climate change.

“This is an unusual time. Within the last two weeks, we have had two more record-breaking, climate-connected storms,” said Mr. Gore in a Monday speech at the World Economic Forum.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo weighed in at a Wednesday press conference, saying “we’ve had multiple Category 4 hurricanes come on land, more than ever before.”

A former NASA senior scientist for climate studies, Mr. Spencer said that having two hurricanes make landfall on the lower 48 within one year isn’t proof of climate change.

“There have been many years with multiple Cat 4 hurricanes in the Atlantic, but there is nothing about global warming theory that says more of those will make landfall,” Mr. Spencer said in an email. “While the official estimate is that this was the first time two Cat 4 storms hit the U.S., since Florida was virtually unpopulated before 1900, we probably don’t really know.”

Before this season, no Category 3 or larger hurricane had hit the U.S. coast since 2005 in what has been dubbed the “hurricane drought.”
In his speech, Mr. Gore said the record five-day rainfall from Hurricane Harvey constituted a “once-in-25,000-year event” and in some parts of Texas, a “once-in-500,000-year event.”

“We are departing the familiar bounds of history as we have known it since our civilization began,” Mr. Gore said. “And why? Because today like all days we will put another 110 million tons of man-made heat-trapping pollution into the atmosphere, using the sky as an open sewer.”

Those in the climate-change movement argue that while climate change doesn’t cause hurricanes, it makes them more intense, thanks in part to warmer sea temperatures.

“Often in the past these storms would churn up cold water from deeper down in the ocean and reduce the temperatures that drive the strength of these storms, but the heat went all the way down more than 200 meters to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, so it didn’t short-circuit,” Mr. Gore said. “It stayed. As many of the climate scientists are now pointed out, the melting of the Arctic is disrupting the northern hemisphere and storm track. You may remember the discussions last winter of polar vortex. It’s the same phenomena except it’s the summer.”

Mr. Spencer called the former vice president’s analysis “some sort of pseudo-meteorological gobbledygook.”

“What made Harvey rain totals exceptional was the system stalled next to the coast, which was due to a very temporary weakening of atmospheric steering currents,” said Mr. Spencer. “Virtually the whole month of August was below normal in temperature over most of the U.S., not what global warming theory predicts at all.”

He cited a graph of all major hurricane strikes in Florida since 1900 showing no increase in frequency or intensity as measured by wind speed. The worst hurricane on record to strike Florida was the 1935 Labor Day hurricane, one of only three storms on record to make U.S. landfall at Category 5.

If there is a trend, it’s that hurricanes seem to come in waves. The period from 1941 to 1961 was especially active for hurricanes making landfall, followed by a dip in the 1980s, then peaking again in 2004 and 2005.

Based on the frequency of Category 4 or higher hurricanes striking the continent since 1851, he said, “we should get two Cat 4+ strikes once every 50 years, on average,” which hasn’t happened in 150 years, meaning “we were overdue.”

Far more unusual is the 12-year hurricane drought, he said, which should occur based on probability once every 250-300 years, but so far nobody is attributing that fortunate happenstance to climate change.

“You can come up with all kinds of hurricane statistics which don’t mean much,” Mr. Spencer said. “Florida was hit by Cat 4 hurricanes four years in a row, in 1947, 1948, 1949, and 1950. Then when Andrew hit in 1992, it had been 32 years since a Cat 4 hurricane had hit Florida. It doesn’t mean anything.”
Workshop explores maximizing energy savings

By: William Farrow

More than 50 government and industry representatives have converged at the Bevill Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville for the first Energy Savings Performance Contracting Measurement and Verification Workshop.

The workshop allowed attendees to share information, experiences and lessons learned on past and ongoing ESPC projects.

An ESPC is an acquisition vehicle an installation can use to meet energy and water reduction goals without upfront capital costs. In close coordination with the garrison and Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, the energy service contractor provides capital and expertise to make comprehensive energy and water efficiency improvements on facilities or implement new renewable energy capabilities and maintains them in exchange for a portion of the generated savings.

These third party financed agreements allow the garrison to focus appropriated funds on mission critical requirements.

Measurement and Verification is the term given to the process to ensure savings delivered by an ESPC project meets or exceeds the guaranteed savings goal established under the contract.

Shah Alam, Huntsville Center ESPC post-award team lead and the workshop organizer, emphasized two key areas of improvement: annual reporting of government impacts on energy savings, and government witnessing of annual M&V data collection efforts.

“The total cost saved can be affected by many factors, such as energy prices,” Alam said. “The M&V process allows the energy savings delivered by the ESPC to be isolated and evaluated objectively.”

During the daylong workshop, ESPC experts shared information with attendees through briefs and feedback sessions.

Bruce Forsberg, the center’s engineering team lead for ESPC, explained that a key part of the M&V process is the development of an M&V plan, which defines how the savings analysis will be conducted before the energy conservation measure is implemented.

“This provides a degree of objectivity that is absent if the savings are simply evaluated after implementation,” Alam said.

Huntsville Center energy engineers Bryant Marshburn and Carl James provided guidance on simplifying annual M&V reporting and emphasized consideration of uncertainties in developing realistic estimates for guaranteed savings amounts for each ESPC project.
William Eggleston, Huntsville Center safety engineer, spoke to the group about the safety requirements while collecting M&V data and Matt Urbanic, ESPC Contracting, clarified reporting requirements for ESPC projects.

Jason Bray, ESPC program manager, said in 2010 there were no more than 15 ESPC projects on Defense Department installations. He said today there are more than 60 and in the next three-to-four years he estimated there will be more than 100 ESPC projects.

Bray said that growth shows why partnerships are so important to the ESPC program.

“Bringing together the government and the ESPC community into a central location not only strengthens those partnerships but also builds upon the business model of M&V,” Bray said. “By coming together on an annual basis we can continue to share ideas and lessons learned that will help further the success of the ESPCs now and in the future.

“As the Department of Defense portfolio continues to grow in third party financing, it is imperative through our partnership with the private sector, that together we ensure the customer is both educated on what M&V requires and the roles and responsibilities for government and ESCOs therein.”

Navy Cmdr. Walter Ludwig, representing the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations and Environment, said saving energy is obviously the right thing to do for the environment; it’s also vital to national defense as energy cost savings helps transform the U.S. military into a more lethal and capable force.

“Measuring and evaluating (our projects) enables us to get more money to the warfighter. For every dollar saved in an ESPC, that’s a dollar that’s going to the warfighter,” Ludwig said.

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Auburn investigating after report alleges academic fraud
School calls ESPN story "categorically false"

By Tom Green tgreen@al.com

For the third time since August, Auburn has retained the services of Birmingham-based law firm Lightfoot, Franklin and White to conduct an investigation regarding the school's athletic programs.

According to an ESPN report Wednesday, the school hired the firm to look into allegations that a part-time academic support staff member took a final exam for at least one football player from last season's team. In a statement released Wednesday afternoon to AL.com, Auburn's athletic department said the "investigation is not a member of the current team and was not a member of the team at the time of the allegation. He is a former player who came back to school to complete his degree."

Auburn released a statement to ESPN calling the allegation "categorically false" while confirming that the law firm was retained on Aug. 31.

"It's simply not true," the statement read. "The person making the accusation is a part-time employee placed on administrative leave on Aug. 31 because of a dispute with a coworker. She is making claims not supported by facts, and based on what ESPN told us, she keeps changing her story. Neither she, her attorney nor our investigation have produced anything to support her claims."

The ESPN report originally stated the player in question was a member of the 2016 team, but later updated the story to reflect that the player was on the 2015 team.

The report, which cites an anonymous source, alleges that a mentor in the Auburn's Student-Athlete Support Services department took an online final exam for a student-athlete. A tutor who works with that mentor became aware of the allegation in February while reviewing a football player's academic records and noticed that the player received a perfect score on the final exam just a few weeks into the course.

The tutor then informed the mentor's supervisor, and in August the tutor who reported the allegation was told her job wouldn't be renewed, according to the report.

The report states that Auburn's response to ESPN claims the tutor signed 38 bi-monthly timesheets throughout her employment "stating that she has no knowledge or has not witnessed or assisted a student-athlete in participating in academic dishonesty. She has also signed compliance forms indicating no knowledge of wrongdoing."

The university also sent a follow-up email to ESPN saying that the internal investigation included a phone call to the accused football player, who denied any wrongdoing of academic dishonesty.

This investigation marks the third time in the last six weeks that Auburn has enlisted the services of Lightfoot, Franklin and White to conduct internal investigations into the athletic department.

The school retained the firm's services on Aug. 29 to conduct a "comprehensive review" of the softball program in the wake of allegations of abuse and sexual harassment by former coach Clint Myers and assistant coach Corey Myers, both of whom have since departed the program.

Then last month, the school hired the law firm to conduct an internal investigation into the men's basketball program after associate head coach Chuck Person was arrested as part of an FBI investigation into corruption in college basketball. Auburn confirmed Thursday it had received a grand jury subpoena in relation to the basketball probe.

Auburn.com reporter James Crepea contributed to this report.
A fitting end to an emotional victory

Blocked FG as time expires clinches homecoming win for the Blazers

**Evan Dudley For AL.com**

It really does not truly get any better than this, for so many reasons,” coach Bill Clark said. “They were playing for their teammates, they were playing for our alumni on homecoming against a conference opponent, but the special part was playing for those kids and those names on the back of their jerseys. It wasn’t made up, it really was that important and special to them.”

The Blazers had plenty of problems in the second half, but found a way to extend their lead to 23-16 late in the game. Louisiana Tech got the ball back and drove to tie the game, but missed the PAT and settled for a one-point deficit.

UAB couldn’t sustain the next drive, and the Bulldogs put themselves in position for the win when senior linebacker Shaq Jones had an idea.

“I was supposed to be on the field, but we got this thing called leaper where we get the tall guys,” he said. “I’m pretty tall myself, but I saw Jamell (Williams) and he’s a lot taller than me, so I asked coach to switch.”

The switch provided the necessary height, effort and trust needed to pull out the victory for the Blazers. Louisiana Tech kicker Jonathan Barnes struck the ball perfectly with a wide enough angle, but Keely made contact and the ball fell to the ground as the Blazers began celebrating.

“When they kicked it, him and Stacy both got a hand on the ball,” Jones said. “They’re the two tallest guys on the team, and it worked out in our favor.”

It’s a signature win for Clark and the Blazers, considering how far they’ve come since the program was reinstated.

“It’s a big win for us, and more so our supporters,” Jones said. “We always talk about protecting our house, and we put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into things like that.”
Johnson: All players eligible "at this point"

Internal investigation ongoing in response to FBI investigation, resignation of Tide assistant

By Cecil Hurt
Sports Editor

University of Alabama men's basketball coach Avery Johnson has received "no new information" into events that led to the resignation of former UA associate athletics director Kobia Baker.

Johnson said Thursday all players are eligible "at this point," although an internal investigation is ongoing and will likely continue until there is more certainty about the direction of an FBI investigation that has resulted in 10 arrests. Further subpoenas were issued to at least three schools, not including Alabama, on Thursday.

"I'm confident in our compliance department, our athletic department and our administration," Johnson said. "We have been proactive with all the different authorities involved in the investigation."

Baker resigned last month after being identified as a participant in a meeting intended to steer the family of Alabama freshman Collin Sexton to an Atlanta-based financial advisor. According to an FBI document, Baker accepted a cash payment in return for his influence with the Sexton family. The report did not indicate whether any cash was then funneled to the Sexton family, and Sexton's brother, Jordan, has denied any wrongdoing by the family.

Johnson said he would continue to share information but was confident that all players would remain eligible "unless we are notified of something else."

"I think I've tried to be forthcoming and transparent since.

See BASKETBALL, C5

BASKETBALL

Continued from C1

I've been here, and I want that to continue," he said. "But as of right now, I don't have any other updates on that situation."

Johnson was upbeat about Alabama's on-court situation although one key player, senior forward Riley Norris, is out on a "week-to-week" basis due to a hip injury.

"We had a great Pro Day (on Wednesday)," Johnson said. "We had over 50 NBA scouts and front office personnel. Some of them had never been to Tuscaloosa before, so we had a little reception for them afterwards and got some very positive feedback on some of our players."

Reach Cecil Hurt at cecil@tidesports.com or 205-722-0225.
Surprised with a scholarship

By Drew Hill  
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

Walk-on point guard Taylor Berry patiently waited for her mother to pick up the phone. When she heard the voice on the other end, the words exploded out of her mouth.

“Mom, hurry, you need to put me on speakerphone,” Berry said in a frantic voice. “Something happened.”

The expression of panic was all for show. Earlier that morning, Alabama women’s basketball coach Kristy Curry shocked Berry by surprising her with a full scholarship, and she wanted to do the same when she broke the news to her parents.

“My mom immediately started crying, she couldn’t believe it,” Berry said. “It made my dad start laughing in the background and he just kept yelling ‘Roll Tide’. They were overjoyed.”

The plan to surprise Berry with the scholarship started in July for Curry. After seeing the open scholarship and the two years of steady work from her walk-on, the decision was easy. The question for Curry wasn’t whether the opening would go to Berry, but how she would deliver the news.

By the first week of practice, the fifth-year coach settled on a plan. She realized her team had 14 players and 14 core values. Each player would be given their own envelope with one of the values to read, and Berry’s final envelope would finish with the big news.

“I told them that we had something from the department,” Curry said. “Everyone’s going through their philosophy, and we have to film our philosophy. Some of them wanted to open their envelope too quickly — kids like to read ahead. We had to make sure they kept their envelope closed.”

During her two-year span

See WOMENS, C4
WOMENS

Continued from C1

with the program, Curry said she has never taken issue with the energy and effort from Berry at practice, and admires her abilities in the classroom as well. After her first two years in Alabama's chemical engineering program, the junior maintains a 3.91 GPA.

“At the end of the day, we've always told our kids from the moment we got them that we're going to do the right thing,” Curry said. “We've said that we're going to be fair and consistent. The right thing to do was to scholarship her for the 2017-18 season because she's earned it. She exemplifies everything we want to be in the classroom, on the court, and in the community.”

The letter to Berry read, “Grit and gratitude are the last of our 14 core values today that we will mention. We want to be the hardest-working team in the SEC on the court, in the classroom, and in the community with a faithful heart. Taylor, because you represent all 14 of the 14 core values we have reviewed today, it is my honor to award you a full scholarship.”

Before she could finish reading, Berry began to tear up and her teammates began to pile onto her with cheers and a group hug. They realized how hard she had worked for that moment.

“Everyone was just as surprised as I was,” Berry said. “To see reactions of my teammates when I got that scholarship was priceless to me because it showed how much they care about me, and respect me and love me. They've seen me work hard for so long. So, for them to be just as excited and genuinely happy for me — there was so much love in that moment. For the rest of the day I couldn't stop smiling.”
The NCAA said it will form a commission to study the inner workings of college basketball in response to a federal investigation into bribery and fraud that rocked the sport and implicated several assistant coaches.

The NCAA announced the commission Wednesday and said former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will lead the committee.

"We need to do right by student-athletes," NCAA president Mark Emmert said in a statement. "I believe we can — and we must — find a way to protect the integrity of college sports by addressing both sides of the coin: fairness and opportunity for college athletes, coupled with the enforcement capability to hold accountable those who undermine the standards of our community."

Emmert said the NCAA needs to quickly make "substantive changes" in the way it operates.

He said the changes will focus on the relationships between the NCAA, schools, athletes and coaches with outside entities like shoe companies, agents and financial managers. He said the committee will also examine the effects of the so-called "one and done" rule that prompts players on a pro track to play in college for one season, as well as college basketball's broad relationship with the NBA.

Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said he's been saying change is overdue.
NCAA

Continued from C1

for about 10 years. He said young basketball players are playing too many games in the summer, when they have contact from too many people outside of their inner circles.

"My only piece of advice, don't let the process ruin you because we will. I blame myself," Izzo said. "And keep your group small, whatever that is, keep it small. You've been raised by Mom and Dad for 17 years and things are OK. ... They've done a pretty good job because you're eligible in school and you can become a big-time basketball player. Why all of a sudden do we need 20 other people coming into your world?"

The commission will begin its work in November and deliver its recommendations on legislative, policy and structural changes by April.

Other members of the commission include Association of American Universities president Mary Sue Coleman, Florida athletic director emeritus Jeremy Foley, Hofstra athletic director Jeffrey Hathaway, Atlanta Hawks owner/vice chairman Grant Hill, USA Basketball chairman General Martin Dempsey, Notre Dame president Rev. John Jenkins, retired basketball coach Mike Montgomery, Georgia Tech president Bud Peterson, former basketball star David Robinson, former White House counsel Kathryn Ruemmler, Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith and National Association of Basketball Coaches board member John Thompson III.

"The distinguished individuals selected to serve on this commission, led by former Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice as chair, have diverse backgrounds and experience in government, higher education and collegiate athletics," National Association of Basketball Coaches executive director Jim Haney said. The commission plans to have at least four meetings by March 2018.

Foley said the work ahead is important.

"The collective talent, experience and wisdom of the people I have the opportunity to work with is off the charts," he said. "We have the chance to make a positive impact on the health of college basketball going forward, and that's a responsibility we won't take lightly."

Federal complaints revealed in New York accused coaches, financial managers and an Adidas executive of trying to influence players on choosing schools and financial advisers.

"Individuals who break the trust on which college sports is based have no place here," Emmert said. "While I believe the vast majority of coaches follow the rules, the culture of silence in college basketball enables bad actors, and we need them out of the game. We must take decisive action. This is not a time for half-measures or incremental change."
The Dapper Suit-Maker At the Center of NCAA Probe

By: Ben Cohen

NFL and NBA stars trusted Rashan Michel to make them look good. And that’s what made him so valuable in one of the biggest alleged bribery schemes in college sports history.

Rashan Michel often bragged about his outsize influence in basketball. Except he wasn’t a millionaire coach or a highly connected agent. He was the owner of a bespoke clothing shop in Atlanta.

“I got all the college coaches right now,” Michel said in a phone call with a financial adviser named Marty Blazer. “I make all their suits.”

What Michel didn’t know was that Blazer wasn’t only a financial adviser. He was also a government informant. And he was recording their conversation.

The call is documented in a resulting criminal case that has roiled the billion-dollar industry of college sports. Michel is one of the saga’s more unexpected characters. He once brawled with Dominique Wilkins over an unpaid debt. Before that he was fired as an NBA referee. And he became a basketball power broker only because of his lifelong interest in fashion.

But now he is facing criminal charges after federal prosecutors said last week that Michel identified coaches willing to accept bribes and connected them to financial advisers and sports agents who expected to have college-basketball players steered their way in return for the envelopes of cash they provided.

As part of the arrangement, prosecutors allege, it was understood those players would splurge at Michel’s shop when they could afford it. And once he made the introductions, according to the complaint, Michel also took a cut for himself.

Michel’s attorney did not respond to requests for comment. Michel could not be reached.

At the center of the scandal is Blazer, a financial adviser who was under Securities and Exchange Commission investigation when he promised to lead investigators to more prominent targets in the basketball world, even though he didn’t know many.

That’s where Michel came in. He was the middle man, according to the complaint.

But Michel wasn’t affiliated with a sports agency or sneaker company. He was the owner of a successful menswear shop with a recognizable brand. Michel’s suits were easy to spot by the yellow stitching around the lapel hole.

NFL and NBA stars trusted him to make them look good. And that’s what made him so valuable to Blazer’s scheme.

See next page
“He knows everybody,” said one of Michel’s friends.

Michel met Blazer through an unnamed sports agent in 2015, according to the complaint, and it wasn’t long before he provided actionable intelligence. Michel happened to know that former NBA player and Auburn assistant coach Chuck Person was looking for a $60,000 loan, and Blazer agreed to front Person money in exchange for Person steering players back to Blazer’s financial advisory.

It was a win for everyone involved. Person secured his loan, Blazer found his way into basketball and Michel took the promise of future business as his finder’s fee. The prosecutors say his total profits through the lifetime of the scheme amounted to nearly $50,000.

The complaint describes a meeting in a New York hotel room last December on the day Auburn suffered a buzzer-beating loss at Madison Square Garden. Person brought one of his players. “This is how the NBA players get it done,” Person said. “They get early relationships and they form partnerships. They form trust.”

He then explained to the player, who hasn’t been identified, why it was important for him to know Michel.

“Rashan can get you suits and stuff,” said Person, one of Michel’s customers. “You’ll start looking like an NBA ball player. That’s what you are.”

Michel eventually asked Blazer for monthly payments as he recruited more coaches into their alleged bribery plot, according to prosecutors.

Kobie Baker, Alabama’s associate athletic director, was an unlikely target. Baker was previously an NCAA compliance officer. It was his job to enforce college basketball’s recruiting rules. “He will be able to use his expertise and help our coaching staff maintain the Alabama men’s basketball program’s high standard when it comes to integrity and compliance,” coach Avery Johnson said when Baker was hired in 2015.

Less than two years later, Baker was in an Atlanta restaurant meeting Michel and Blazer.

They were allegedly there to convince the father of an Alabama freshman basketball player to let Blazer manage his money. At one point, the complaint says, Michel texted Blazer to suggest they leave the table, allowing Baker to be alone with the player’s father. When they were in the bathroom, Blazer handed Michel an envelope for Baker. Inside was $10,000 in cash.

Baker, who could not be reached, was not named in the criminal complaints but has been identified by people familiar with the matter as a staff member in the alleged schemes. He resigned hours after the charges were unsealed, Alabama officials said.

How did Michel, a clothier who was even more dapper than his debonair clients, find himself entangled in this elaborate alleged bribery scheme?
He grew up in the 1980s idolizing Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson. But he quickly realized he wouldn’t be an NBA player. “I wanted to be just like Magic,” he said in 1998. “But the Lord puts you in situations where he wants you to be used.”

That’s how he became an NBA referee. He got his break when the NBA locked out its referees during a 1995 labor dispute. Michel was one of their replacements. He officiated his first NBA games when he was 21 years old.

Michel was hired as a full-time referee in 1997 and was the youngest official in the league. But he was fired by the NBA after only four seasons, a person familiar with the matter said, because his officiating put him among its lowest-ranked referees. Michel has called hundreds of college games since then, including more than 25 women’s games last year, according to Stats LLC.

After his NBA career was over, Michel embraced another longtime passion: He’d always been intrigued by how people dressed. As a child, he once said in an interview, he browsed thrift stores for bargains. He even wore a necktie every day in high school and college.

“I think clothes always speak for you,” he said in 2014.

Michel had a friend in the fashion business who respected his style and hired him to be a salesman. His first big clients were the former NBA player Quentin Richardson and the recording artist Brandy in the early 2000s, he has said.

He launched his own clothing shop, Thompson Bespoke, and Michel’s suits quickly became popular in Atlanta because of his charismatic personality and shrewd business instincts. He was recently planning to expand to Charlotte—and that’s where he was arrested last week.

While his Instagram account projects a glamorous life, one in which he’s surrounded by NFL and NBA players, Michel had problems with some clients. He famously got in a fight with Wilkins, a Hall of Fame player, on the court after a Hawks game in 2011 over claims that Wilkins owed him for suits he made five years earlier. Michel was arrested and had a swollen eye in his mugshot. The charges were later dropped, and Michel won a pre-trial settlement when he sued for damages. (Wilkins could not be reached for comment.)

Michel also outfitted lawyers, politicians and bankers in expensive suits with his signature lapel flair. Among his other regulars: college-basketball coaches. He even opened a pop-up shop in Houston during the 2016 Final Four there and offered “bespoke garment packages” to attract new customers. His best deal was four suits, four shirts and four ties for $4,000.

At that point, though, Michel was a key part of Blazer’s plan. They would have their first meeting with Person only months later.

But the relationship didn’t last. Michel was on the outs with Person and scouting other coaches by the next Final Four. He didn’t know that Person and Blazer were talking directly because Person had made a request to Blazer: don’t tell Michel. He believed that Michel was trying to “double dip,” according to the complaint. While he appreciated everything he did for them, Person said, they no longer needed Michel. “We are beyond him now,” Person told Blazer.
Tide takes Intercollegiate for first win of season

By Joe Klingbeil
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

VESTAVIA HILLS — The Alabama men's golf team was pretty easy to recognize as it walked the lush, green landscape of Old Overton Club, donned in the classic crimson polo Tuesday afternoon.

It was even easier to recognize the Crimson Tide as the best team in the field over the last two days, as Alabama held a firm grasp on its lead it produced Monday, and won the Jerry Pate National Intercollegiate for the fifth time in the last six years.

"Every win is special, and it is," coach Jay Seawell said. "I'm proud of our guys, I'm proud of the way they handled the last five holes, it got really tight. The guys handled the last three or four holes really well, and I think they've learned from the last two tournaments we've played, so as a coach I'm very proud."

Alabama tallied a final round score of 3-under-par 277, and racked up a three-round total of 19-under 821, which was six shots better than the closest opponent.

Lee Hodges led the charge

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GOLF
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for the Crimson Tide, posting a 9-under 271, his career-best for a 54-hole total. It was Hodges' fourth and final time playing at the Jerry Pate Intercollegiate, and he sure did make the most of it.

"I'm proud of how the boys fought today," Hodges said. "I played well, but I had a rough stretch in the middle, I made three bogeys in a row, but other than that I thought I played pretty well, I can't complain."

Hodges finished third overall in individual scoring and Davis Riley, who turned in a 4-under 66 on Tuesday, finished sixth.

After a string of second-place finishes to begin the season, the Crimson Tide officially has its first win of the 2017-18 season.

"It shows that they want to be winners," Seawell said. "It shows that they care about each other, which is what I love. Like I said, in the ups-and-downs we had a lot of guys bounce back and do things properly. When things aren't going your way it's really easy to get selfish and none of our guys did, so I'm really proud about how they played team golf today."

Coming in second place, after a vehement comeback attempt, was Auburn, who posted a 13-under 267 final round, followed by Baylor, who finished 12-under-par 828 on the tournament.

"Another great win at the Jerry Pate, who is so kind to give up his time and money to make such a special event for everybody," Seawell said. "But also us as Alabama to win it, which we've done a few times now, it makes it even more special."
NO. 1 ALABAMA
VS. ARKANSAS

Minkah being Minkah

Tide defensive back putting together a Heisman resume

Matt Zenitz mzenitz@al.com

Seeing Texas A&M line up in that formation, Minkah Fitzpatrick thought back to a tendency he noticed while studying Aggies game tape.

Two wide receivers were lined up on each side of the field. And based on his film study, Fitzpatrick knew that the Aggies will usually motion star wide receiver Christian Kirk to the other side of the field when lined up in that formation, before then running a pick play concept with Kirk and the receiver he motions next to.

That's what they did. But Alabama's star defensive back was ready. So Fitzpatrick avoided the attempted pick and stayed with wide receiver Camron Buckley as he worked across the field. Then, noticing that quarterback Kellen Mond had been staring at Buckley the entire play, Fitzpatrick held back some to let Mond believe Buckley was open before jumping in front of him as soon as Mond released the ball. Interception.

"I was going to close on it a little bit and not let him throw it and (let the pass rush) get pressure on the quarterback and just let him throw it away," Fitzpatrick said. "But I saw him staring at him, so I kind of baited him and let him throw the ball and just broke on the ball and made the play."

Minkah being Minkah.

Earlier last week, Texas A&M coach Kevin Sumlin said Fitzpatrick should receive consideration for the Heisman Trophy. And Fitzpatrick continues to add to his Heisman resume with performances like the one against Sumlin and the Aggies on Saturday.

Five tackles. Two stops for a loss. A forced fumble. A pass breakup. And that critical interception during the fourth quarter with the Aggies 10 yards away from a touchdown that would have cut Alabama's lead to seven.

"Minkah does it as well as anybody I've ever coached in terms of how he works every
MINKAH
FROM B1

day, how he finishes plays, his conditioning level," Saban said in August. "Just phenomenal. Phenomenal. Pays attention to detail. It's important to him. Makes sure he knows what to do. ... He works every day to get better. I hope we have more and more players who work like him because when you have players that do that you usually have a pretty good team. He sets a great example."

While defensive players are rarely even finalists for the Heisman Trophy, it's easy to make a case for Fitzpatrick.

The junior is likely the best player on the top-ranked team in the country, a true playmaker and difference-maker with nine career interceptions and an Alabama record four pick-sixes.

Led by players like Fitzpatrick, the Tide is 6-0 and ranked fourth nationally in scoring defense.

The 2016 first-team All-American is tied for third on the team with 28 tackles, has a team-high 4.5 stops for a loss and has also posted a sack, two additional quarterback hurries, four pass deflections and the interception while lining up at three different spots in the Alabama secondary.

The New Jersey product was named SEC Co-Defensive Player of the Week, Chuck Bednarik Award Defensive Player of the Week, Bronko Nagurski National Defensive Player of the Week and Lott IMPACT Trophy Player of the Week after his game against Texas A&M. And he may soon be in the mix for some even more prominent awards as well, like the one Sumlin mentioned last week.

"I think he's one of the best players in the country," Sumlin said. "He's played all those positions back there in the secondary. And you can tell he's a frustrated offensive guy because when he gets his hands on the ball, he tries to score every time."
Aggies are a reminder that it won't always be easy for Tide

Cecil Hurt

COLLEGE STATION, Texas

Sometimes, on the road in the Southeastern Conference, it doesn't come easy. It's not 50-0 every week, much less 59-0 or 66-3 or any of the astronomical scores Alabama had made a two-week habit of recording.

Even with all the talk of how the SEC has morphed into a Mountain West Conference clone, the fact remains there are nights when you have to go on the road, play in front of 100,000 fans against an opponent that's ready for its shot at history — and survive.

That was what happened for Alabama on Saturday night, a classic win-and-move-on 27-19 victory against Texas A&M that landed somewhere in the middle ground between best performance and worst-case scenario.

Except for a long Damien Harris run that reversed momentum immediately following an Aggie field goal, the offense seemed to sputter for much of the first half. There wasn't a collapse, and the only turnover didn't come until the third quarter. But it was not crisp.

Fortunately for Alabama, Texas A&M consistently plays like a car that rolled off the assembly line before the last few bolts were tightened, wobbling at unexpected

See HURT, C6
HURT

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times in unpredictable directions. Too many men on the field scuttled one Aggie drive. (Alabama later returned that favor.) Fumbles by the Aggies at random intervals resulted in either turnovers or terrible field position. The Aggies' offensive sequence at the end of the half was messy clock management and gave Alabama an opening, although UA didn't take advantage of it.

A freshman quarterback had some role in that shakiness, although it is hard to lay it all on Kellen Mond. Facing a freshman QB seems to happen every time Alabama has faced the Aggies under Kevin Sumlin. The same thing happened in the Manziel years, too; he just made enough amazing individual plays to balance out the rough spots.

Mond made one of those plays for the first Aggie touchdown, a whirling dervish escape act that resulted in a fourth-down touchdown for Christian Kirk on a juggling catch that ended up in-bounds in the opinion of the replay booth, if not of those watching at home in Alabama. He made another one in the closing seconds. But one or two plays weren't quite enough to defeat Alabama. Whether the 60-minute scrap will carry over enough to keep Texas A&M from its regularly scheduled post-Alabama collapse is another question — and not Alabama's concern.

What Alabama has to do is return for a prolonged homestand — three games and an off-week — to polish things up. Nick Saban will have plenty of material. A blocked punt alone probably supplies him with enough nuclear energy to light Singapore for an entire year. Throw in the fourth-down conversions and the penalties, and building a new sun isn't out of the question.

For all that fuel, though, and for all the disappointment felt by the portion of the fan base that cannot stand a minute's discomfort, this was not a loss. It was a win, one that the toughest man in the stadium on Saturday night, former Alabama and Aggie head coach Gene Stallings, would have embraced with open arms at one time. There was that era, after all, when every SEC game was hard-fought, or so it seemed.

The last two weeks had to have been fun for Alabama fans. The next two weeks might be the same. But the reminder Alabama isn't going to be perfect every single time out against talented opponents came at an appropriate time, even though it's doomed to go utterly unappreciated.

Reach Cecil Hurt at cecil@tidesports.com or 205-722-0225.
There are seven active coaches who either played or coached for legendary Paul Bryant

By Cecil Hurt
Sports Editor

Years ago, two of the Southeastern Conference’s top young coaches – Bill Battle of Tennessee and Charley McClendon of LSU – had a conversation about their mentor, Alabama coach Paul W. “Bear” Bryant, a visit that Battle recalled in an interview with The Tuscaloosa News this week.

“Cholly Mac came up to me once at the SEC meetings and he said, ‘Bill, all they want to talk about is how many people he puts into head coaching jobs. They never talk about the ones he puts out,’” Battle said. “And it ended up happening to us, too.”

Bryant’s legacy and influence was such that 48 of his former players and coaches eventually wound up as head coaches in the collegiate or professional ranks. Of the remaining original member schools still in the SEC, nine of the 10 schools – every one except Georgia – had a Bryant disciple at the helm at some point. (History has a funny way of repeating itself, as Nick Saban is placing former assistants in head coaching positions at a similar rate today.)
This weekend, when Alabama travels to Texas A&M, another branch of the Bryant coaching tree will be celebrated. The Aggies are honoring their 1967 Cotton Bowl championship team on the 50th anniversary of their Southwest Conference title and upset of Alabama in Dallas to end the season. Gene Stallings, who played for Bryant at Texas A&M, coached that team and, despite recent health problems, hopes to be in attendance.

That's just another indication of the long shadow that Bryant cast over the coaching profession.

"Part of it was that he had such a long period of success," Battle said. "He won in every era -- the 1950s, the '60s, the '70s and the '80s. I don't think people fully recognize the social changes that happened in America in those years, some of the biggest changes ever. From Lexington, Kentucky, in 1952 to Tuscaloosa in 1982, that's a huge difference, but he was always able to be successful. So the people who worked with him were part of something special.

"He did a great job teaching, of paying attention to detail. He didn't miss a thing."

"I came here from a high school program that won six games in three years. The big headline in the paper my senior year was "West End Finishes Successful 4-4 Football Season." So you can imagine what a change it was for me to come into his
program. I learned absolutely as much as I could."

There are seven active coaches today in either professional or major college football who either played for Bryant (five), coached on his Alabama staff (one) or served as a manager and student assistant with his team's (one).

- Bruce Arians, the running backs coach at Alabama in Bryant's final two years, is now the head coach of the Arizona Cardinals. He told ESPN in 2016 that his coaching philosophy is built on a phrase that he learned from Bryant over 30 years ago - 'Coach 'em hard, hug 'em later.'

- David Cutcliffe, who was a manager and a student assistant for UA defensive coordinator Ken Donahue in the 1970s, is now the head coach at Duke.

"I watched tape with Ken Donahue for hours every morning before I'd go to class," Cutcliffe said before an Alabama-Duke game in 2010. "I took advantage of every opportunity I could to see how Coach Bryant managed the staff, managed the squad. I've got books of notes that are very dear to me that I reference a good bit on things Coach Bryant talked about with big games, circumstances."

When Mal Moore was hospitalized at Duke Medical Center prior to his death in March 2014, Cutcliffe would visit Moore on an almost daily basis and share Bryant stories.

- Sylvester Croom, an All-America center for Bryant in the 1970s, is now the running backs coach for the Tennessee Titans, where one of his protégés is former UA running back and Heisman Trophy winner Derrick Henry.

"When I was an assistant (under Bryant) at Alabama, I wrote down a lot of things," Croom told The News in an interview during his time as head coach at Mississippi State. "I still read them. I have incorporated a lot of it into the program. Even some of the old recruiting material they've got, hey, I take them and put them on our stationery. I'm
not ashamed."

* Amos Jones was a walk-on running back from Aliceville in the early 1980s at Alabama. He took a job as an assistant coach when Arians was named head coach at Temple in 1983 and has served in both college football and the NFL. He has reunited with Arians and is currently the special teams coach with the Arizona Cardinals.

* Joey Jones was a wide receiver from Mobile's Murphy High School and part of the 1980 Alabama recruiting class, playing three years for Bryant and one for Ray Perkins. He is back in his hometown as head coach of the South Alabama Jaguars.

* John Mitchell, who entered history as the first black player at Alabama in 1971, is currently the defensive line coach and assistant head coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

* Mike Riley, a defensive back at Alabama in the early 1970s, is currently the head coach at Nebraska.

"I wasn't a very good player," Riley said on a recent Big Ten teleconference. "But Coach Bryant made me feel like I was. That's what he did best. I appreciate that now, more than I did at the time, that it was a part of college football history."

Battle says the Bryant disciples still in coaching 35 years after the man himself retired share one common characteristic.

"One thing I learned, though, was that no one could be just like Coach Bryant," Battle said. "You had to be yourself. You weren't going to be him. Now, some of the coaches who played or coached for him were more like him and some weren't like him at all. But I had to be Bill Battle, Gene Stallings had to be Gene Stallings and so forth. "I think the ones who are still coaching learned from him, but they aren't trying to be him."

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Blind Man's Lawsuits Seek Access to College Websites

By VIVIAN WANG

The lawsuits came one after the other, against Fordham University, Manhattan College, Long Island University and other area colleges and universities.

In all, eight suits have been filed in federal court in Manhattan over the past two weeks, most recently against Hofstra University on Long Island on Oct. 4. In each case, lawyers for Emanuel Delacruz, who is blind, charged that the college’s website is inaccessible to their plaintiff and therefore in violation of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

The filings are part of a growing number of actions involving accessibility and the internet. The federal law requires that public accommodations be accessible to those with disabilities, and legal battles have long revolved around physical spaces and therefore physical solutions, such as elevators or ramps. Now, advocates and lawyers argue, websites are also public spaces and need to be accessible, with things like captions or audio descriptions.

Since January 2015, at least 751 lawsuits have been filed over the issue. The vast majority have focused on retailers and restaurants, according to a legal blog that tracks such suits. Only seven of the suits have been directed at academic websites. Mr. Delacruz’s suits alone doubled that count. And another website, which includes not only lawsuits but also government investigations into web or technological accessibility, lists 37 schools that have been accused of noncompliance with disability law.

Advocates for the deaf sued Harvard and M.I.T. in 2015 for failing to caption online lectures and other educational materials. In 2016, after a complaint by two deaf people, the Department of Justice’s civil rights division found the University of California, Berkeley, had violated disability law by not providing the appropriate accommodations for its own free video lectures and podcasts.

“As more and more students are aware of their rights, and as websites have become so much of what universities now focus on, in their marketing materials for example, it’s not surprising to me that there will be an increase in these types of lawsuits,” said Arlene Kanter, director of the Disability Law and Policy Program at Syracuse University’s law school.

Whether the plaintiffs will prevail is unclear. The Americans With Disabilities Act, written in 1990, makes no mention of the internet. The Department of Justice, which enforces the act, has issued guidelines about web accessibility but no formal regulations on how to achieve it — and they seem unlikely to materialize soon, after the federal government in July placed web regulations on its list of “inactive” agenda items.

The question has largely been left to judges, who have ruled both for and against disabled plaintiffs. In March, for example, a California judge dismissed a blind man’s suit against Domino’s Pizza, because the chain offered an option to order by telephone. But in June, a Florida judge ruled that the grocery store Winn-Dixie had to offer the same accommodations on its website as it did in stores, and in July, a judge in Brooklyn ruled that the website for Blick Art Materials had to be readily accessible to a blind man.

The result of these conflicting rulings is a legal gray area ripe for, depending on your viewpoint, either significant civil rights advances or exploitation by lawyers looking to make a quick buck through settlements, said Tom Stebbins, executive director of the Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York.

Absent clarity from the federal government, Mr. Stebbins said, some lawyers have filed identical lawsuits against multiple businesses or universities in the hopes of reaching a settlement with one or more of them.

“These are cut-and-paste lawsuits,” he said. “You just have these lawyers taking advantage of a good-intentioned law to make
money.”

The lawsuits filed in New York on behalf of Mr. Delacruz are “all similar,” his lawyer, Dana Gottlieb, wrote in an email. They state that Mr. Delacruz tried to find information, such as tuition costs, location and academic calendars, but was unable gain access because the websites were not readable by his screen-reading software.

A hyperlink in one complaint, against Hofstra, opens the website of the College of New Rochelle. According to court records, Ms. Gottlieb was ordered to refile one of the complaints because the wrong party was selected as the defendant.

Ms. Gottlieb, of the Gottlieb & Associates law firm, declined to comment further or to say anything more about her client, including his age and what he hoped to study. But Jeffrey M. Gottlieb, the founder of the firm, wrote in an email that private lawyers had to step in, given the lack of government action.

“When ‘lawsuit-reform’ organizations protest about the nature of these lawsuits, they are only advancing the interests of wealthy corporate interests that fund them,” he wrote. “If they were truly reform oriented, they would advocate for more government intervention to protect the rights of those who most need protection.”

Most of the colleges did not respond to requests for comment. A spokesman for Iona College said that it “takes all matters of discrimination seriously and strives to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and appropriately.”

Some disability rights advocates, acknowledging the charges that some lawyers are just looking to cash in, have distanced themselves from the suits.

“We do not condone just filing a blizzard of lawsuits in order to get settlements. That’s not solving the underlying problem,” said Chris Danielson, public relations director for the National Federation of the Blind. His organization has pushed instead for clearer federal guidelines on web accessibility.

Critics have also pointed to the Berkeley case as evidence that the strategy can go awry. After the Department of Justice found the university to be in violation of the disabilities act, Berkeley responded by taking down more than 20,000 videos and audio files, a move administrators had called “unenforceable” but unavoidable given the “extremely expensive” cost of compliance.

But disability rights lawyers and advocates said the concerns were misplaced.

“There will always be lawyers who are eager to find business,” Ms. Kanter, the Syracuse professor, said. “But if the university is vulnerable, and if they have violated the law by not providing accessibility, that’s what the role of lawyers should be, which is to monitor such complaints.”

Eve Hill, a former deputy assistant attorney general in the civil rights division of the Department of Justice, said lawyers could not manufacture plaintiffs out of thin air. Ultimately, she said, lawyers represent people who — regardless of their lawyers’ motivations — are being barred from accessing public services.

“There has to be somebody who is trying to access the website,” said Ms. Hill, who is now a disability rights lawyer. “Imagine if you were that person. Imagine if you were trying to apply to school, and every college you went to check out refused to tell you how.”
Ten current or former students at Louisiana State University were arrested Wednesday in connection with the death last month of an 18-year-old freshman who became severely intoxicated during a fraternity hazing ordeal, the latest in a series of student deaths following such rituals.

One of the students, Matthew Naquin of Fair Oaks Ranch, Tex., faces a felony charge of negligent homicide in addition to a misdemeanor charge of hazing. The other nine face misdemeanor hazing charges, according to the university’s police.

On the morning of Sept. 14, Maxwell Gruver, an aspiring sports writer, was taken by two fellow students to a Baton Rouge hospital, where he was declared dead. He had passed out on a couch at the fraternity house around midnight.

A toxicology report on Mr. Gruver, of Roswell, Ga., revealed that his blood alcohol content was .496 percent, more than six times the legal limit for driving, and that he had aspirated vomit into his lungs. The cause of death was “acute ethanol intoxication with aspiration,” according to the East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner’s Office.

"Today's arrests underscore that the ramifications of hazing can be devastating," the university's president, F. King Alexander, said in a statement. "Maxwell Gruver's family will mourn his loss for the rest of their lives, and several other students are now facing serious consequences — all due to a series of poor decisions."

The hazing at the Phi Delta Theta fraternity, where Mr. Gruver was a pledge, or prospective member, involved a question-and-answer game called “Bible study,” in which pledges were forced to drink "a pull" from a bottle of alcohol if they answered questions incorrectly, according to an arrest
warrant.

Pledges had received text messages ordering them to report for Bible study at the chapter house on the evening of Sept. 13. The 18 to 20 pledges who showed up were told to get Solo cups of lemonade that would be used as chasers.

"Naquin was yelling, 'Are you ready for Bible study?'" the warrant said.

The pledges were told to line up in a dark hallway and place their noses and toes against the wall, the warrant said. A strobe light was flashing and loud music was playing.

One member told the police that Mr. Gruver kept juggling up the Greek alphabet and that Mr. Naquin, 19, forced him to drink each time he made a mistake. Mr. Naquin was behaving so aggressively that another member told him to "cut it out," the warrant said.

Another pledge told the police that he believed Mr. Gruver was targeted because he was frequently late for events.

"During the course of the interviews, the recurring statement was that Naquin was the most aggressive and in charge of the hazing event," the arrest warrant said.

A lawyer for Mr. Naquin, John S. McLindon of Baton Rouge, said he did not want to discuss specifics of the case out of respect for the Gruver family, but added, "I think we should wait until all the evidence comes in" before making a final judgment.

The death resulted in the chapter's closing and a temporary hiatus on all Greek life activities at L.S.U. On Oct. 4, fraternities and sororities were permitted to resume activities but with new limits. The university also convened a task force to study Greek life.

Of the 10 men arrested on Wednesday, eight, including Mr. Naquin, are students. One was a student at the time but has since left, and one is a former student.

A student accountability office is conducting an investigation that could lead to disciplinary action, according to Ernie Ballard III, L.S.U.'s media relations director. Under Louisiana law, any student convicted of hazing must be expelled.

Mr. Gruver's death followed several other highly-publicized deaths in recent years, also leading to criminal charges and the closure of fraternity chapters.

Timothy Piazza, a student at Penn State from Lebanon, N.J., died Feb. 4 after a night of hazing. That led to strict new regulations on Greek life, including a prohibition on liquor, kegs and all-day parties. In May, 18 students were charged in Mr. Piazza's death — including eight with voluntary manslaughter — but the more serious charges were thrown out by a judge.

Also in May, four men pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in connection with the 2013 death of Chun Hsien Deng, a student at Baruch College in Manhattan who was knocked out and killed during a hazing ritual that occurred on a fraternity trip to Pennsylvania.
Yale's Endowment Reports a Slowdown in Growth

Diversity in Holdings Curtained Returns For Longtime Leader

By GERALDINE FABRIKANT

Yale University's endowment, the second largest among the nation's colleges, has been distinguished in recent years for its handsome returns — and for turning out money managers who follow the investment principles of its chief, David F. Swensen. But its latest report card, issued Tuesday, was disappointing.

At a time when many of the largest endowments are reporting gains in the mid-teens, Yale said it generated an 11.3 percent return for the fiscal year ended June 30, bringing its value to $27.2 billion.

Among the better performers were the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which registered a 14.3 percent increase; Stanford University, with a 13.1 percent return, and Princeton, with 12.5 percent growth. Dartmouth, a far smaller school with a $4.96 billion endowment, appeared a strong winner with a 14.5 percent return. A number of the larger schools have yet to release returns.

The Yale endowment also trailed the mean one-year return — 12.7 percent — of 450 institutions tracked by Cambridge Associates, which manages money in the nonprofit sector.

Yale's return did outpace that of the biggest university endowment, Harvard's, which managed a return of 8.1 percent.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Swensen noted Yale's modest holdings in domestic equity markets — about 4 percent of its holdings — which reduced its exposure to risk. "Last year that helped," he noted, helping it to post a gain when many others were showing lackluster returns or a loss. But in the most recent year, the allocation curtailed Yale's gains from a booming stock market.

Yale continues to diversify its holdings into hedge funds, where it has 25 percent of its assets, and venture capital, with a 17 percent stake, in addition to foreign equity, leveraged buyouts and real estate, as well as some bonds and cash. That diversification strategy, which Mr. Swensen pioneered, is widely followed by larger institutions.

Indeed, the leaders of the M.I.T. and Stanford and Princeton endowments — Seth Alexander, Robert F. Wallace and Andrew Golden, all trained at Yale. The strategy of using outside managers to handle these diverse asset groups has been widely imitated.

One holdout had long been Harvard, where a large chunk of the endowment was managed internally. But under its new chief, N. P. Narvekar, more of the funds will be overseen by outside firms as Harvard shrinks its own staff.

The diversification approach at many of the largest endowments has generated some skepticism in an era when stock markets have been strong. But over a 20-year period ended June 7, Yale pointed out in its release Tuesday, the endowment produced an average annual return of 12.1 percent — outperforming domestic stocks, which returned 7.5 percent, and domestic bonds, which returned 5.2 percent.

Endowments are a crucial component of university budgets. During the financial crisis of 2008, when many endowments plummeted in value, some schools had to cut spending significantly. Distributions from the Yale endowment to the operating budget have increased at an annualized rate of 9.2 percent over the past two decades. It is the university's largest source of revenue, and in the current fiscal year, it is expected to contribute $1.3 billion, roughly 34 percent of the university's operating budget.