Fund Spotlight

Alabama Hard to Count Census Collaborative

If you follow the Community Foundation on Facebook, you’ve seen the numerous posts shared about the upcoming census and the Alabama Hard to Count Collaborative. You might wonder, why is this important and why is the Community Foundation involved?

The Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama (CFNEA) is part of a collaborative effort of Alabama not-for-profit organizations working to ensure everyone is counted in the 2020 Census. CFNEA serves as the fiscal sponsor for a national grant which supports this effort. Engaging community foundations has proven to be a particularly effective form of census outreach.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census of the United States every 10 years. The data collected during the census is used in a variety of ways that affect decisions regarding community services provided to residents and the distribution of more than $675 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year. This funding supports local programs for schools, health care, community assistance, infrastructure and other important needs. The census also determines the number of representatives each state will have in Congress.

The census counts every person – both adults and children – living in the United States. This information helps monitor changes in communities and is used to identify and address public service needs such as health care, education, public safety, housing, food, and rural access to broadband. The census is safe and secure. All the information you provide to the U.S. Census Bureau is confidential and cannot be used against you by any government agency or court. Anyone who violates this law faces severe penalties.

“We are using our expertise to ensure fair representation for the residents of northeast Alabama as well as the entire state of Alabama,” says Jennifer S. Maddox, President & CEO.

Meet Jay M. Williams, MSW, State Coordinator for the Alabama Hard to Count Collaborative

Jay leads the planning effort of community-based organizations across Alabama (CBOs), under the leadership of the executive, deputy, and project directors of Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (HICA), Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice (ACIJ), Blackbelt Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, Voices for Alabama’s Children, Greater Birmingham Ministries, Alabama Giving, and the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham. Additionally, Jay coordinates a statewide network and aligns the on-the-ground efforts of community-based organizations that are committed to ensuring an accurate and comprehensive census count.

When you fill out the 2020 Census you are helping to create a stronger Alabama for all. Stand up and be counted. Learn more at ALABAMA COUNTS https://census.alabama.gov/.
Stringfellow Health Fund Grants Total $236,477

CFNEA hosted a reception for representatives from 16 not-for-profit organizations on December 11, 2019. “We are excited about the organizations that received grants in the Fall of 2019 Grant Cycle and the positive impact each program will have in the communities they serve,” remarked Fred Smith, MPA, Director of Grants and Partnerships.

Alabama Chapter-American Academy of Pediatrics/Reach Out and Read-Alabama - parents and caregivers will receive a book that provides daily tips to enhance brain development in their child.

Anniston’s Fatherhood Initiative - youth living in a home without an active father will be given opportunities to receive education and participate in programs that create positive changes in their lives.

Community Enabler Developer, Inc. - individuals unable to afford their medication, medical supplies and medical expenses will receive financial support.

Coosa Riverkeeper - assists Coosa Riverkeeper in testing swim spots along the Coosa River and alerting swimmers when an unsafe condition is determined.

Etoawah Free Community Clinic - 100 uninsured, low-income patients in Etoawah County will receive a cardiovascular evaluation, equipment, medication and education.

Family Success Center of Etoawah County, Inc. - low-income families will receive mental health services at no cost.

Friends of the Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County - a lactation pod will be placed in the library for nursing mothers to care for their infants in a private and comfortable area.

Health Services Center, Inc. - offers free screening and/or treatment for patients with Hepatitis C.

Impact Alabama: A Student Service Initiative - children will be screened for vision problems and provided with follow-up care as needed.

Kid One Transport - transports children and expectant mothers to medical appointments.

Never Surrender - breast cancer patients receive financial support for medical care, equipment, and out-of-pocket expenses.

Smile-A-Mile - assist cancer patients and their families with improved mental well-being and support.

The Arc of Calhoun and Cleburne Counties - provide financial support so children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities can attend a summer camp which helps them grow social and life skills.

The Council on Aging of Etoawah County, Inc. - court-appointed guardians receive education and resources for clients under their care.

The Learning Tree, Inc - 10 children, ages 2 through 6, from low-income families will receive Applied Behavioral Analysis to increase kindergarten readiness skills.

West Anniston Foundation - educate the community regarding healthy nutrition options and offer structured exercise programs.
New Funds

Family Savings Credit Union Scholarship Fund - to provide scholarship awards to students in areas served by the Family Savings Credit Union.

Oxford Regional Events Fund - to support public events in the City of Oxford that serve and enhance the quality of life in the region.

A Beautiful Partnership Promotes Employment in Etowah County

At a luncheon held on December 3, 2019 in Montgomery, AL, the Alabama Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities recognized the Exchange Bank of Alabama-Gadsden, Gadsden City Schools, Beautiful Rainbow Café, the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, and the Stringfellow Health Fund for their partnership to promote employment in Etowah County.

A program of Gadsden City Schools, Beautiful Rainbow Café uses culinary arts to teach students with cognitive disabilities a variety of subjects as well as employability skills. Chip Rowan, a special education teacher/gourmet chef/lawyer, created the Café.

Each partner brings a unique resource to the Café/classroom. The Exchange Bank of Alabama-Gadsden teaches students how to manage their money and pay bills, as well as saving for the future. In addition to providing transportation to and from the Café, the Gadsden City School System encourages the hands-on-teaching methods of Chip Rowan. The Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama provided a grant in 2017 to assist with startup costs, and in 2018 provided a grant to pay wages to the students working in the Café.

Welcome Cassandra Norton
Meeting and Technology Specialist

Cassandra joined the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama on October 1, 2019 in a brand-new position as Meeting & Technology Specialist. Prior to joining the Community Foundation Cassandra worked for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services in Anniston, AL.

A graduate of Auburn University, Cassandra earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Rehabilitation Services and Disability Studies with a focus on individuals with disabilities and case management. She is a native of Calhoun County.

As Meeting & Technology Specialist, Cassandra will plan, manage and execute a variety of meetings for the Community Foundation and assist staff with technology needs.

Welcome Cassandra Norton
Meeting and Technology Specialist

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BIG IDEAS! BIG WINNERS!

Just over a year ago, CFNEA desired to celebrate its 20th Anniversary in a BIG way. Several ideas were tossed around by trustees and staff. One great idea began to take shape and they said, “What better way to celebrate than by offering a unique grant opportunity to the communities in the region served by CFNEA.” Thus, the BIG IDEA Grant was established. This grant challenged not-for-profit organizations throughout the region to submit a video application showcasing a BIG IDEA for their organization or community.

The BIG IDEA Grant Reveal was held on Friday, November 1, 2019 at the Oxford Performing Arts Center in Oxford, Alabama. Not-for-profit organization volunteers, friends and community members gathered in the theatre with free popcorn and soft drinks to see the videos and share in the excitement as the winners were announced. The BIG winners were:

• 1st Prize ($20,000)
  Mentorone Educational Resources Foundation “Pathways to Community” – building an interactive exercise and art park.

• 2nd Prize ($2,000)
  Hiztorical Vision Productions “Documenting the History of Hobson City” – creating a documentary film about the history of Hobson City.

• 3rd Prize ($200)
  CEPA Management “Spotlight Program” – taking theatre to St. Clair County Schools.

• Honorable Mention ($20)
  Talladega College “Hale Woodruff Conversation Village”; Boys & Girls Clubs of Gadsden/Etowah County “Media Production Program for Students”; Ft. Payne Main Street “Electric Vehicle Charging Stations”;
  Anniston Museum of Natural History “Recycle Your World”; SAFE “Workforce Ready on The Go!”; Samson’s Strength Sustainable Veterans Project “Transitional Homes for Veterans” and, Gadsden State Community College “Cardinal Catalyst”.

Just as the event was coming to a close and all awards were made, CFNEA President and CEO, Jennifer S. Maddox, announced a surprise ending that had guests on pins and needles. The program of one of the Honorable Mention organizations struck a chord with the Daniel Foundation of Alabama and the Caring Foundation of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama. They stepped in and made a second First Prize available.

Second 1st Prize ($20,000)
JSU Foundation “Breathe Easier” – creating a 4 to 6 week in-home exercise and education program for individuals with COPD.

See the videos submitted on our website: www.yourcommunityfirst.org/big-idea-grant-winners-amp-videos/ and follow their progress on our Facebook page.