

09

Alabama Issues Forums

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The David Mathews Center for Civic Life

The David Mathews Center for Civic Life is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. The Center's purpose is to foster infrastructure, habits, and capacities for more effective civic engagement and innovative public decision-making. The Mathews Center is focused on how citizens create political will and sustain public policy community decisions. For information about the Mathews Center, contact Chris McCauley at P.O. Box 6, Montevallo, Alabama 35115. Phone 205-665-9005.

The National Issues Forums

The National Issues Forums issue book entitled "Democracy's Challenge: Reclaiming the Public's Role," was used by Alabama Issues Forums for the 2009-2010 project cycle. The Kettering Foundation prepared the issue book for National Issues Forums. Books in this series are used by civic and educational organizations interested in addressing public issues. These organizations use the books in locally initiated forums convened in hundreds of communities. For a description of the National Issues Forums, log on to the Web site: www.nifi.org.

Kettering Foundation

The Kettering Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute based in Dayton, Ohio (with offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City) was founded in 1927. It is engaged in a wide range of activities to promote civic participation and enrich public life. For information about the Kettering Foundation, log on to the web site: www.kettering.org.

David Mathews Center President & CEO:

Bob McKenzie

Alabama Issues Forums Program Director:

Chris McCauley

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Mark Wilson, College of Liberal Arts,
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Alexandria Smith, Ashley Tatum

Report Designer:

Melanie Poole



Message from the President

Fellow Citizens:

Welcome to the first annual David Mathews Center for Civic Life (DMC) reporting-out event for Alabama Issues Forums (AIF). We are pleased to have this inaugural event at the Alabama Department of Archives and History with the great, good help of Ed Bridges and his staff.

Each year DMC will conduct statewide community forums on at least one issue of importance to Alabamians. Center staff and cooperating institutions will gather insights about what citizens are thinking about tough choices. The Center will issue a public report of its findings. This year's focus is on Democracy's Challenge.

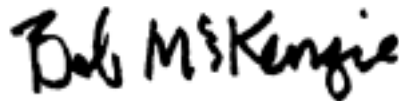
DMC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan entity seeking to foster infrastructure and habits for more creative community decision making on Alabama issues. DMC honors the life and work of David Mathews, a native of Grove Hill; former president of the University of Alabama; former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare; and now president and CEO of the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio. The Kettering Foundation is a research foundation with a single research question: what does it take to make democracy work as it should?

DMC works with numerous cooperating institutions, organizations, and individuals. Primary among these is American Village at Montevallo. We deeply appreciate the support of Tom Walker and his staff. In this particular effort, DMC has also worked with the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University and the National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI). William Muse, former president of Auburn University, is president of the NIFI Board.

Forums have addressed the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy in 21 communities involving over 400 citizens.

We owe particular thanks to Chris McCauley, Director of AIF; Mark Wilson and Christa Slaton of the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University; and DMC Jean O'Connor-Snyder Community Research Interns at Auburn. Other interns are at Miles College, the University of Montevallo, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and the University of Alabama. This intern program honors a fine lady who gave her talent and life to encouraging and developing young people.

Sincerely,



Robert H. McKenzie
President and CEO

Executive Summary

from Chris McCauley

The Project

Alabama Issues Forums (AIF) is a project with one primary goal – to bring Alabama citizens together to deliberate and take community action on a public issue. Oftentimes individuals engage in polarizing discussions and debates when discussing issues of public concern. Through deliberation, citizens are encouraged to actively listen and think through real solutions to issues, while also considering the trade-offs and consequences associated with the actions discussed. Whether the issue being deliberated upon is health care, gun violence, or civic engagement, deliberation assists communities in making innovative public decisions while factoring in a number of different approaches.

Over the past year, the David Mathews Center for Civic Life (DMC) has developed and implemented AIF in over 20 communities across the state of Alabama. Using the National Issues Forums (NIF) issue book entitled “Democracy’s Challenge: Reclaiming the Public’s Role,” DMC staff and interns have traveled from town to town working to create a statewide conversation on the civic health of the state of Alabama. Using deliberative forums, the Mathews Center has worked to bring communities together to think through why citizens are pulling away from public life and community engagement. Why are fewer and fewer people joining civic organizations and neighborhood associations? Why do citizens feel like they no longer have a say when it comes to public policy? Can ordinary citizens still make significant change at the local, state, and federal levels of government? These are all questions that emerged during this year’s project cycle.

Public Deliberation

In a deliberative forum, participants work together to determine what they commonly hold valuable in relation to a public issue, and, using a series of approaches, decide on a particular action that can be taken to address that issue. Democracy’s challenge was the AIF issue that was addressed during the 2009 - 2010 project cycle, and, like most issues that have been named and

framed by NIF, it has three approaches associated with it. The approaches used to address democracy’s challenge include: rebuilding the moral foundation, reinventing citizenship, and bringing the public back into politics. Although these are the three primary approaches, participants can always address an issue using an approach that is not included in the issue book.

The Moral Foundation

The first approach focuses on rebuilding democracy’s moral foundation. According to the NIF issue book, some experts believe that our country was founded on a number of moral principles that are quickly eroding in our present day society. Further more, for our democracy to properly function, there must be a significant commitment on behalf of teachers, parents, and government to instill democratic values in all citizens. Advocates of this approach support mandatory character education programs, laws aimed at keeping families together, and censorship of television and radio programming.

Whether listening to prisoners at the Staton Correctional Facility or Youth Leadership participants in Bibb County, Mathews Center moderators and recorders often witnessed forum participants talking through this approach in a dismissive fashion. Several participants initially reacted positively toward the idea of rebuilding the moral foundation, but, as each forum progressed, most groups regularly took a stand against the government endorsing a predetermined list of “democratic morals and values.” This shift usually occurred after someone in the group would ask the following question: “Who decides which morals and values should be taught?” Although the wording of this question varied with each group, it did create a situation in which forum attendees had to think through the tensions and trade-offs associated with legislation and public school standards rooted in morality. Alabama citizens might agree that responsibility, sacrifice, and charity are important values to instill in young people, but, as the Mathews Center heard from hundreds of AIF



participants, these are values that should be taught at home. As one participant pointed out, with so much diversity in our country, it may be nearly impossible to decide on a set of mandatory moral lessons and laws that should be implemented by the government.

Reinventing Citizenship

Approach Two encourages forum participants to think about the civic relationships that help promote a healthy democracy. Advocates for this approach believe that participation in civic groups, neighborhood associations, and public service organizations helps citizens recognize the importance of community engagement. According to the NIF issue book, these are the opportunities and experiences that illustrate how people can come together and address problems in their community on their own.

Many of the AIF participants found this approach to be the most thought-provoking of the three. Conversations on civic relationships typically lasted for close to an hour at every forum, and there were several instances where citizens started considering real community action that needed to be taken. Although a majority of the participants agreed that joining community-based groups and volunteering are important aspects of democratic life, they also recognized that free time plays a big role in determining how often a person can participate in civic activities. Interestingly enough, a number of participants worked through the time issue by discussing the importance of interacting with neighbors. Whether or not you have several hours in a week available for attending meetings and/or working on a community project, you always have time to introduce yourself to your fellow neighbors and community members. As many of the participants pointed out, civic relationships can easily start in your front lawn. Many of the AIF moderators and recorders believe that these discussions will eventually turn in to real community action at the neighborhood level. If people are not talking, how can they know what issues are affecting the community as a whole?

Bringing the Public Back Into Politics

The third approach focuses on the role that citizens play in politics. Advocates of this approach believe that the public should play a more active role in policymaking and that legislators need to reflect the needs and concerns of their constituents by actively engaging them. To achieve this, citizens need to utilize public deliberation, hold meetings in public spaces, and frequently communicate with policymakers.

Throughout the AIF project cycle, hundreds of participants expressed their frustration with politics. Approach Three works to address this frustration, while also getting forum participants to think through the role that the public plays in politics. Oftentimes the public withdraws from politics out of frustration, but our forum experiences suggest that citizens are likely to engage or re-engage in politics if they feel a direct personal connection to the issue at hand. One participant, for example, suggested that the civic health of the state is not perceived as an issue for most people because the effects are not as immediate as a national tragedy or natural disaster. This general sentiment heard in many forums suggests that the public has to be able to see and experience the effects of public issues before they are able to act.

The Future of AIF

Over the past year, the Mathews Center has worked diligently to bring deliberative experiences to as many Alabama communities as possible. After working with 21 communities and 400 participants, the Center is hopeful that deliberation will continue to spread across the state until every city and town in Alabama is utilizing public forums to address issues of concern. Through the 2009 - 2010 project cycle, the Center also got the opportunity to see democracy in action. Civic groups, neighborhood associations, and individual citizens are pursuing innovative projects everyday to overcome democracy's challenge. As concerned citizens in a civic climate that has been gradually declining for the past 50 years, we should all be hopeful and inspired by citizens who are still actively engaged in their communities.

Overcoming Challenges to Democracy in the State of Alabama

by Mark Wilson

Nearly 2,500 years ago in ancient Greece, the Athenian political leader and statesman Pericles stood over the bones of fallen soldiers and delivered an address to honor the dead and comfort the grieving. In addition to his reflections on the valor of the vanquished, he made memorable statements regarding the public work of citizens in a democracy. "Ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters," he suggested. "Instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all."

Alabama Issues Forums is rooted in the belief that ordinary citizens can and do make a significant impact on the issues that concern them and that opportunities for deliberative decision-making strengthens their work. Pericles was right: Public matters require judgments, not just opinions, and wisdom comes from individuals acting in community with each other.

Examples of civic and public innovation

The state of Alabama's abundant natural resources and spectacular geographical, biological, geological and physiographical diversity is only surpassed by its equally diverse and hardworking people. No matter the social, political, ethnic, or religious background or affiliation, Alabamians throughout the state care deeply about their families and communities. And this inaugural year of *Alabama Issues Forums* reveals ample evidence that citizens are seeking to turn a multi-decade national decline in civic participation around and strengthen democracy in the process. The examples are encouraging, and while this report cannot document all of the state's stories, the ones below reveal something unique about the place we call home.

Citizens in Birmingham meet regularly to discuss issues and implement solutions through a young organization called Catalyst. Believing that civic engagement should be enjoyable and fun, Catalyst convenes its

members for meetings in local restaurants, art galleries, and other creative spaces. Their experiment in mixing social events with action-oriented discussion and topics is unique, as is their Web address: hiptobecivic.com.

Citizens in Collinsville (pop. 1,700) are celebrating their first year in a new public library, having renovated an historic building downtown into a functional facility that provides public space, as well as books and Internet access. The library hosts regular English classes for the rising Hispanic population and, like many public libraries across the state, serves as a center of community activity. The new facility is larger and more functional than the gas station that formerly housed the library. Several years in the making, citizen effort and dedication to the project show the great return on the investment of public will.

Valley (pop. 9,200) is a young town, incorporated only thirty years ago, but its history dates back to the mid-19th century when cotton was king and processed in textile mills along the Chattahoochee River. The decline of textile manufacturing has forced citizens to make difficult but necessary choices regarding the city's future, and the citizen-led Valley Community Development Corporation is seeking to redevelop the Langdale and Riverdale mill buildings into usable space for economic and community revitalization. Historic preservation and interpretation is a priority, as the city already has over 1,200 listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Prisons are often overlooked places for finding public knowledge, but the state's 28,000 inmates have experiences and wisdom to share, especially those who study writing and literature through the Alabama Prison Arts & Education Project, a program of the psychology department in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University. Instructors from Auburn University, the University of Alabama, Huntingdon College, and other institutions of higher learning



challenge students to think broadly and creatively while developing the skills citizens need to make contributions to the public good.

The Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama uses its assets to enhance the quality of life in a seven-county region, and one of its key initiatives is in the area of early childhood learning. But instead of limiting its brain trust to the board of directors and experts around the state and nation, the foundation chose to convene public deliberative forums and weigh the pros and cons of various approaches to the issue alongside and with citizens who hold early learning valuable as well. The foundation provided childcare for forum participants, and the conversations offered a unique window into challenges parents face related to childcare and quality of education. As a result of these gatherings, the foundation established a Pre-K Transition Team, which included parents and early learning professional that developed Kindergarten Transition Materials including a list of Pre-K Skills for School Readiness, A Parent's Checklist For Helping A Child Succeed In Kindergarten, and a Pre-K History Form providing the kindergarten teacher with information on the child's early learning experiences.

Citizens in Birmingham have a history of using public deliberation to address issues of public concern through a project known as Birmingham Issues Forums. Organizers Peggy and Curtis Sparks network with a number of diverse partners to offer deliberative experiences on a variety of public issues each year. In addition to convening forums on this year's AIF topic, citizens have deliberated on youth violence and minimizing the achievement gap over the past year.

The potential for civic innovation is greater in communities that have public spaces where citizens hear the voices of others, and find their own as well. The Just Folk Coffeehouse is providing a unique public space in the small town of Elba (pop. 4,200). The ambitious project to renovate the historic Claire

Theatre (c. 1947-1953) has helped members of Covenant Community Church and countless other local citizens participate in downtown revitalization, providing a unique and beautiful space where people can meet each other and experience both the visual and performing arts.

Youth leadership programs around the state, usually organized by county by partners such as chambers of commerce or Alabama Cooperative Extension agents, provide opportunities for teenagers from area schools to develop skills, build relationships with new peers, and execute a community action project that will have lasting benefit on the area. Adult mentors come from private businesses, governmental entities, and non-profit organizations---illustrating well the fact that public education is truly public and not the sole responsibility of the board of education and teachers in classrooms.

Citizen involvement in Alabama is not limited to those born and bred—or who live year round—in the state. Members of the Missouri Snowbird Club, who roost in Orange Beach and Gulf Shores during the winter, are active honorary Alabamians with a history of contributions to the area. The fourth annual trivia night and silent auction raised \$10,000 for the cities' libraries and boasted a sell-out crowd.

Public discussion of literature and history often provides citizens a safe and productive way to share what they hold valuable. This past spring an ambitious statewide project, The Big Read: Alabama Reads The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, sponsored by a host of institutions, businesses, and local public libraries, brought citizens together for creative moments of discovery as they explored Mark Twain's classic novel. In addition to promoting literacy and public library usage, the massive program challenged communities to work together for one common purpose: reading and discussing the same book.



Teenagers and Photovoice

This year's cycle of Alabama Issues Forums included sessions with teenagers on democracy's challenge, and we challenged teens to answer the following question: Why do you think citizens are not more active regarding the issues that concern them? Students answered the question individually, and then we commissioned them—each with a disposable camera—to find something in their community that symbolized or illustrated their answers. All public problems affect teens in one way or another, and seeing the world through their eyes and minds is enlightening and instructive, a building block of public knowledge that can lead to innovative public solutions.

From a student in Kinston:

"The majority of citizens located in small rural cities and communities in south Alabama feel they do not have a 'say' as to how their state is run. Larger industries are usually established in major cities or cities with larger populations. Politicians tend to seek guidance from these areas due to a larger population of campaign contributors as well as larger audience to hear the issues. With no industries or financial ability to attract industries, smaller rural cities are dwindling to ghost towns. No industries, no business, no



citizens and no 'say.' Citizens feel there is no need to have civic life because they receive no attention from the people who need to help them with their needs. Only the few percentages remain active to help with community projects to try and rescue their livelihood."



From an 11th grader in West Blocton:

"There is a recession going on today, and some people would rather be earning money than give time out of their lives to help better their community. I know that money can take you far, but money cannot buy the friendships that can be

gained from participation in community service."



From LaFayette:

"Citizens are not more active towards the issues that concern them because they are more occupied with trying to come up with an excuse as to why they cannot make a difference or have a say. . . .People would rather take the easy way out and do nothing than to rise

with a solution as to how they can do something. . . . Instead of taking the opportunities given, we as a whole just waste time on other things. If people as busy as celebrities find the time to reach out and help the country of Haiti and its people then people such as the average working man or woman should have the time to step up and make a difference in their communities."



From Opinion to Judgment: Examples of the Power of Public Deliberation

When citizens participate in the hard work of weighing the costs and benefits of various approaches to solving problems, individuals and groups find opportunities to reflect on their individual journeys, as well as how they should act together to create solutions. As we went through the AIF process this year, many citizens came to the realization that they do in fact play a crucial role in making democracy work as it should. Community action is not abstract or impossible. Moderator Christopher McCauley recorded many of these moments in forums:

“At on point, one of the women in the room suggested that members of the civic group in attendance should start riding the buses in town, since the organization was not reflective of the great diversity of the city, especially those persons who may not have computers at home. She said that everyone in attendance should ride the bus and talk to someone about the organization, and also offer a ride to the meetings if the person proves to be interested. This idea really got everyone in the room thinking. Others suggested using Wiki sites and Facebook, but I could really tell that the bus-riding idea had made a big impression on everyone. It was almost as if you could read each participant’s expression as saying, ‘Why have we ignored the bus riders of our community?’”

“At one college campus forum, a professor who attended seemed skeptical of the whole deliberative process. And he was very annoyed with the use of the word ‘civic.’ Throughout the evening, he would ask students to clarify what they meant by ‘civic engagement’ and/or ‘civic participation.’ Finally, I asked him if he had ever worked with people in his community to take action on a public issue. After thinking for a moment, he described a situation where everyone in his neighborhood came together to

address an issue involving dog owners who seldom cleaned up after their pets. He said that the neighborhood worked together, and, eventually, they helped pass an ordinance requiring owners to remove the waste. This gentleman’s story helped to really move the forum into a new direction. The group was no longer hung up on definitions and skepticism, and they all began to share stories that were similar to the dog clean up ordinance. One young lady discussed the process that her hometown went through to go from being ‘dry’ to ‘wet,’ another professor described his community’s experience with an interstate expansion project, and a young man discussed an experience in which he worked with his friends to keep wakeboarding legal on an inner coastal area.”

“As we were concluding, one of the students – a football player who had not said much during the forum – leaned back and raised his hand. I encouraged him to speak, and he went on to say, ‘This [a forum] can start a fire. When I woke up this morning the last thing on my mind was government and citizenship. But now I’m thinking about it.’”

Conclusion

Whether it is a group of people coming together to address sustainability issues in Birmingham, a teenage girl in Kinston, Alabama taking a photo of an abandoned storefront, or a college professor realizing for the first time that civic participation is real, people in Alabama are discovering ways in which they can improve the civic health of the state and overcome democracy’s challenge. And, for the first time since its inception, Alabama Issues Forums was able to provide a number of opportunities for community partners, moderators, student interns, and concerned citizens to come together and recognize the importance of their thoughts, actions, and words regarding this issue.

Questionnaire Tallies

The David Mathews Center for Civic Life conducted over 21 forums with close to 400 Alabama citizens during the 2009 - 2010 project cycle. Mathews Center staff and interns utilized the National Issues Forums (NIF) issue book entitled "Democracy's Challenge: Reclaiming the Public's Role," for every forum conducted, as well as the complementary post-forum questionnaire. Of the 400 participants, 266 completed the NIF questionnaire, while another 50 completed an alternate questionnaire that was created for participants with special literacy needs. Also, a number of participants declined to complete the questionnaire, and/or they departed the forum before it was distributed. The results of the alternate questionnaires are discussed throughout the report, and the responses for the NIF questionnaire are as follows:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the statements below?					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Note Sure
A. Since fewer people belong to organizations like Rotary Club and PTA where people come together to exchange ideas, democracy has become more difficult to practice.	30%	47%	11%	6%	6%
B. Americans today are more concerned with their rights than their responsibilities as citizens.	51%	39%	5%	3%	2%
C. Elected officials, who should be focused on serving the public interest, are more responsive to special interests and lobbyists who control the money.	55%	30%	9%	3%	3%
D. Most Americans no longer have the time or inclination to participate or be involved in community or civic activities.	25%	41%	22%	7%	5%
E. Americans have turned their backs on politics because politicians no longer listen to them.	30%	44%	16%	6%	4%
F. Old-fashioned values like hard work, sacrifice, and taking responsibility are essential to a thriving democracy.	59%	30%	5%	3%	93%

<i>2. Do you favor or oppose each of these actions?</i>					
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Note Sure
A. Expand public financing of political campaigns.	24%	18%	24%	20%	14%
B. Require all young people to perform at least 40 hours of community service before they can graduate.	29%	36%	16%	15%	4%
C. Institute neighborhood councils of local citizens in every city so that residents are more involved in local decision making.	42%	42%	10%	3%	3%
D. Make character education part of the public school curriculum to teach children core values, such as honesty, cooperation, and taking personal responsibility.	42%	39%	11%	5%	3%
E. Offer businesses a tax deduction when employees take time off from work to participate in civic activities.	32%	38%	18%	6%	6%
F. Require one year of public service for all citizens, either in the military or in a national service program such as the Job Corps.	16%	26%	15%	37%	6%

<i>3. Do you favor or oppose the statements listed below?</i>					
	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Note Sure
A. The government should mandate a stricter code so that television programs reflect America's family values, EVEN IF this infringes on what many Americans feel is in their private domain.	16%	21%	26%	32%	5%
B. People should make a greater effort to engage in community activities, EVEN IF this means sacrificing time normally spent with their families.	22%	43%	21%	9%	5%
C. Political campaigns should be financed mainly by tax dollars, EVEN IF this costs taxpayers more money.	11%	12%	21%	43%	13%

	Yes	No	Note Sure
4. <i>In your forum, did you talk about aspects of the issue you hadn't considered before?</i>	71%	29%	
5. <i>Do you have a clearer or deeper understanding of the issue than you did before the forum?</i>	73%	12%	15%
6. <i>Did you hear new ideas or see new possibilities for dealing with the issue that you had not considered before?</i>	73%	16%	11%
7. <i>Do you have greater respect for the points of view of people you disagree with?</i>	65%	15%	20%
8. <i>Do you see more common ground for dealing with the issue or where your thinking overlaps with other people?</i>	70%	11%	19%

	None	1-3	4-6	7 or more	Note Sure
9. <i>How many National Issues Forums have you attended before this one?</i>	77%	13%	3%	4%	3%

	Male	Female
10. <i>Are you male or female?</i>	43%	57%

	17 or younger	18-30	31-45	46-64	65 or older
11. <i>How old are you?</i>	37%	28%	12%	16%	7%

	African American	Asian American	Hispanic	Native American	White/Caucasian
12. <i>Are you:</i>	28%	<1%	<1%	2%	68%

Alabama Issues Forums Community Partners

The David Mathews Center for Civic Life organized forums in over 20 Alabama communities for the 2009-2010 Alabama Issues Forums project cycle. The Mathews Center would like to acknowledge all of the community partners and conveners that helped to make these forums possible. Thank you for your dedication to your communities and AIF.

Anniston, AL – March 2, 2010

Anniston Parks & Recreation, Community
Foundation of Northeast Alabama

Auburn, AL – April 8, 2010

College of Liberal Arts, Auburn University

Birmingham, AL – December 10, 2009

The University of Alabama at Birmingham,
Global and Community Leaders Honors
Program

Birmingham, AL – February 18, 2010

Catalyst Green

Birmingham, AL – March 8, 2010

Samford University Fellows Program

Birmingham, AL – March 11, 2010

Birmingham Issues Forums

Centreville, AL – January 24, 2010

Bibb County Youth Leadership

Chatom, AL – February 11, 2010

Washington County Youth Leadership

Collinsville, AL – January 20, 2010

The Harvest Center Launch Pad

Collinsville, AL – January 20, 2010

Collinsville Public Library English as a Second
Language Class

Elmore, AL – November 19, 2009

Staton Correctional Facility, Alabama Prison
Arts & Education Project

Elmore, AL – April 1, 2010

Elmore Correctional Facility, Alabama Prison
Arts & Education Project

Lafayette, AL – January 27, 2010

Lafayette High School, Valley High School,
Chambers County Career Technical School

Montevallo, AL – March 23, 2010

University of Montevallo Student Affairs

New Brocton, AL – February 10, 2010

Coffee County Youth Leadership

Opelika, AL – February 24, 2010

East Alabama League of Women Voters

Orange Beach, AL – March 4, 2010

Orange Beach Public Library

Prattville, AL – February 18, 2010

Autauga County Extension, Prattville Area
Chamber of Commerce

Tuskegee, AL – February 11, 2010

Booker T. Washington High School, Hill & Lowe
Educational Services, BridgeBuilders

Tuscaloosa, AL – November 6, 2009

New College with partners Culturally Speaking
and the English Language Institute at the
University of Alabama

Valley, AL - March 11, 2010

City of Valley

Uniontown, AL – February 9, 2010

Uniontown Public Library

Uniontown, AL – April 29, 2010

Uniontown Public Library and Uniontown Cares

Thank You

The David Mathews Center for Civic Life would like to thank the Community and Civic Engagement Initiative in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University for its coordination of AIF deliberative forums and activities with teenagers in Alabama communities.



Jean O'Connor-Snyder Community Based Research Interns:



Betheny Kapper,
Sophomore,
Political Science



Alexandria Smith,
Sophomore, Journalism



Morgan McKean,
Sophomore,
Journalism



Ashley Tatum, Junior,
Communication and Art





Event: Citizens' Congress

Date: June 23, 2010

Time: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Place: Liberty Hall at the American Village in Montevallo,
Alabama

Purpose: The David Mathews Center for Civic Life invites Alabama citizens to help determine the issue for public deliberation and decision-making during the 2010-2011 Alabama Issues Forums cycle. The Citizens' Congress will also be an opportunity for citizens to develop understanding and skill in democratic practices, as well as network with other civic innovators around the state. There is no cost to attend, and lunch will be provided.



DAVID MATHEWS CENTER FOR CIVIC LIFE

David Mathews Center for Civic Life
P.O. Box 6
Montevallo, AL 35115

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