



# Blueprints moves beyond access to success

This year, we changed the name of Blueprints, our signature near-peer college access mentoring program, to the **Blueprints College Success Initiative**. Low-income, minority, and first-generation college-going students face academic, financial, and social barriers to prepare for college, apply to the best-fit schools, apply for financial aid, enroll and persist in their studies, and ultimately graduate. Access is not enough, and that's why we committed to advocating for our students' success on the pathway to a postsecondary degree or credential. ►

## 2015-16 Blueprints participants

### BY GRADE LEVEL



9th grade

555

10th grade

33

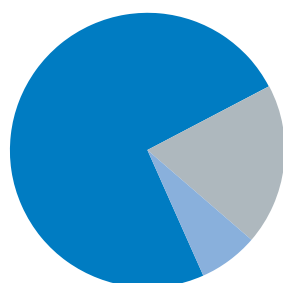
11th grade

511

12th grade

299

BY RACE  
and ETHNICITY



74%

African  
American

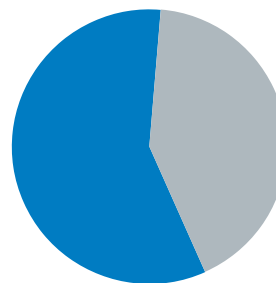
19%

White

7%

Hispanic,  
Asian, or  
Multiracial

BY GENDER



58%

Female

42%

Male

26%

First-generation  
college-going students

\$45.5 million

in supplementary scholarships

208

College student  
mentors

*College is the attainment of valuable postsecondary credentials beyond high school, including professional/technical certificates and academic degrees.*

#### COLLEGES ACCEPTED TO

Alabama A&M University  
Alabama Fire College  
Alabama State University  
Albany State University  
Alcorn State University  
American Music & Dramatic Academy  
Arkansas Baptist College  
Auburn University  
Auburn University Montgomery  
Austin Peay State University  
Benedict College  
Berea College

Bethune College  
Bethune-Cookman University  
Bevill State Community College  
Birmingham-Southern College  
Bradley University  
Carson-Newman University  
Clafin University  
Clark Atlanta University  
Concordia College  
Dillard University  
East Central Community College  
East Los Angeles Community College  
East Mississippi College

East Mississippi Community College  
Faulkner University  
Fisk University  
Florida A&M University  
Fort Valley State University  
Full Sail University  
Grambling State University  
Huntingdon College  
Itawamba Community College  
Jackson State University  
Jacksonville State University  
Jefferson State Community College  
Johnson & Wales University

Johnson C. Smith University  
Judson College  
Kennesaw State University  
Kentucky State University  
LaGrange College  
Lane College  
Lawson State Community College  
Loyola University  
Lurleen B Wallace Community College  
Marion College  
Marion Military Institute  
Mercer University  
Miami Dade College

Middle Tennessee State University  
Miles College  
Mississippi College  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State University for Women  
Mississippi Valley State  
Morehouse College  
Morris College  
Murray College  
Nashville State Community College  
Norfolk State University  
North Carolina Central University  
Northwest-Shoals Community College



*"Even though I am in college, there are still some things that are fuzzy to me. If they ask me a question, if I don't know the answer, then I'll be able to look it up. Through being a mentor, I have been able to learn so much."*

*Yaneliz Fernandez,  
Northwest-Shoals Community College Student  
Mentor at Phil Campbell High School*



*"My Blueprints mentor helped me write my scholarship application essays. A couple of times I even texted my mentor in the middle of the night. I was able to send her my essays, and she edited them and sent them right back to me."*

*Mariam Jalloh,  
Woodlawn High School Class of 2016  
Lawson State Community College Freshman*

## Lawson State and Alabama Possible launch peer mentoring partnership

Lawson State Community College and Alabama Possible teamed up to help recent Birmingham City Schools graduates successfully transition to college.

Beginning this fall, second- and third-year Lawson State student mentors are checking in with first-year student mentees every other week. The mentors and mentees also meet each month for professional development workshops. Topics covered include budgeting, decision-making skills, study skills, successful relationships, and connecting academic studies and career success. ►



Oakwood University  
Orange Coast College  
Pensacola State College  
Reedley College  
Rust College  
Shelton State Community College  
Shorter College  
South Louisiana Community College  
Southern University  
Spring Hill College  
Stillman College  
Talladega College  
Tennessee State University

Texas Southern University  
Troy University  
Tuskegee University  
UAB  
UAH  
United States Military Academy  
University of Alabama  
University of Memphis  
University of Middle Tennessee  
University of Missouri  
University of Montevallo  
University of North Alabama  
University of North Georgia

University of North Texas  
University of South Alabama  
University of Southern Mississippi  
University of West Alabama  
Valdosta State University  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Wallace State Community College-Hanceville  
Wallace State Community College-Selma  
West Virginia University  
Western Kentucky University  
Word of Life Bible Institute  
Xavier University

### 2015-16 BLUEPRINTS PARTNERS

Central (Tuscaloosa) High School  
Hillcrest High School  
Holy Family Cristo Rey High School  
Francis Marion High School  
Locust Fork High School  
Montevallo High School  
Phil Campbell High School  
Ramsay High School  
Wenonah High School  
Woodlawn High School

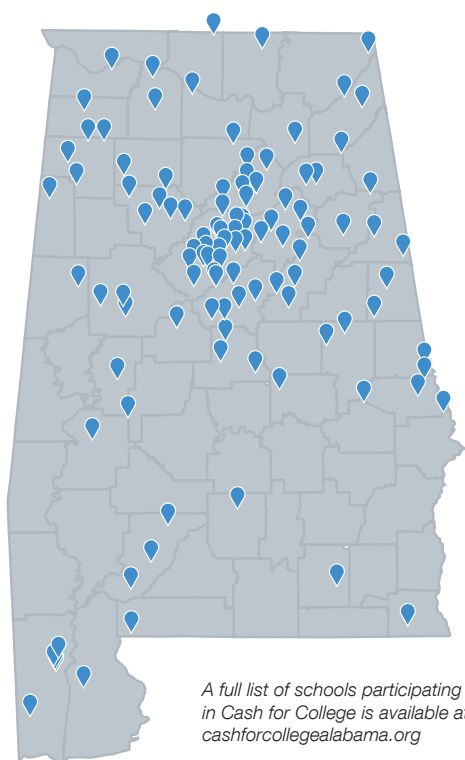
Birmingham-Southern College  
Lawson State Community College  
Northwest-Shoals Community College  
Shelton State Community College  
Troy University  
The University of Alabama  
UAB  
University of Montevallo

**Cash for College** makes college more affordable by boosting Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion through a combination of direct services in the Birmingham City Schools and a statewide FAFSA completion network.

The FAFSA is required for any student seeking federal and state financial aid, including grants and loans at all 2- and 4-year colleges. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 9 out of 10 students who complete a FAFSA attend college the following fall.

Low-income, minority, and first-generation college-going students are the least likely to know that financial aid, including Pell Grants of up to \$5,920 annually, is available by completing their FAFSA. Alabama students left \$63.8 million Pell Grants dollars on the table in 2013, and the state ranked 44th in FAFSA completion. ►

2015-16 CASH FOR  
COLLEGE PARTICIPANTS



A full list of schools participating in Cash for College is available at [cashforcollegealabama.org](http://cashforcollegealabama.org)

#### What's new for 2017?

- FAFSA filing began on October 1, 2016, instead of January 1, 2017
- Families use their 2015 taxes to complete their financial aid form
- 55 percent of Birmingham's Class of 2017 should have their FAFSA completed by June 2017
- 205 high schools statewide prioritized FAFSA completion by participating in Cash for College Alabama



*"The FAFSA will help my parents and me with finances for college. It helps take the pressure off me."*

Destiny Hicks  
Wenonah High School Class of 2016  
North Carolina Central University Freshman



*"Cash for College is an easy way for an adult to provide support and encouragement to students. I think the FAFSA is such a concrete way to help a student who has the potential to access the next level of education."*

Kristan Walker  
Director of Outreach Ministries  
Trinity United Methodist Church



## Cash for College Birmingham

Cash for College's key partnership is in the Birmingham City Schools, where we aim to boost the FAFSA completion rate from 36 percent in 2013 to 70 percent by 2020 through direct services with Birmingham City Schools seniors and their families. Cash for College shares FAFSA completion data with local educators, holds FAFSA workshops, and connects families with tax prep workshops and FAFSA events.

**1,233** STUDENTS SERVED

**132** VOLUNTEERS

**60** FINANCIAL AID  
WORKSHOPS

**54%** OF BIRMINGHAM'S CLASS OF  
2016 THAT COMPLETED THEIR  
FAFSA BY JULY 1, 2016

## Cash for College Alabama

Cash for College Alabama builds a college-going culture by encouraging students and their families to complete their FAFSA. Participating high schools completed a short application, set a FAFSA completion goal, and agreed to make FAFSA completion a local priority.

Participating educators got professional development and technical assistance to promote FAFSA completion at their school, and Alabama Possible shared FAFSA completion data and best practices gathered from partners both in and out of Alabama.

**121** PARTICIPATING  
SCHOOLS

**17,751** HIGH SCHOOL  
SENIORS

**7,574** FAFSA  
COMPLETED AS  
OF JULY 1, 2016



*"I want to be able to go to college to become a nurse. I am happiest when I am helping others. Without FAFSA, I wouldn't be able to go to college."*

Tamara Fletcher  
Montevallo High School Class of 2016  
University of South Alabama Freshman



*"Being the only counselor in a school can be challenging when undertaking big projects such as FAFSA completion. Cash for College gave me a network of resources and people to connect with."*

Kathryn McElvy  
School Counselor  
Wadley High School



*Clockwise, from top: Alabama State University students presented their research on the geography of poverty; Auburn University students reflected on how to bring lessons learned back to campus; please save the date for the 2017 event; and Troy University students shared their work fighting food waste and food insecurity with Campus Kitchens.*

## Alabama college students are hungry for justice

*Conference equips students to advocate to end poverty and hunger*

More than 900,000 Alabamians, including 300,000 children, are impacted by poverty and/or food insecurity. On February 19, 2016, 80 students, educators, and community leaders gathered at Troy University-Montgomery to share information and plan for the future.

Students presented their advocacy projects, which ranged from mapping poverty in Montgomery, to student-run meal recovery programs and near-peer college access mentoring.

What did students take away?

Troy University students discussed the need for student-to-student outreach across Troy's three campuses to connect to community organizations already involved in issues of poverty and hunger.

Alabama State University students and faculty discussed how to use university resources to cultivate broader engagement with low-income and food-insecure communities near their Montgomery campus.

Auburn University students committed to collaboration among similar groups to overcome apathy caused by an overwhelming number of engagement opportunities.

Birmingham-area students from the University of Montevallo and UAB agreed that there is value in starting with a small, concerted group rather than waiting for critical mass. ►

# Lifetime of Learning conference encourages civic engagement

*Higher education network members participate in issues-based discourse on poverty and social justice*

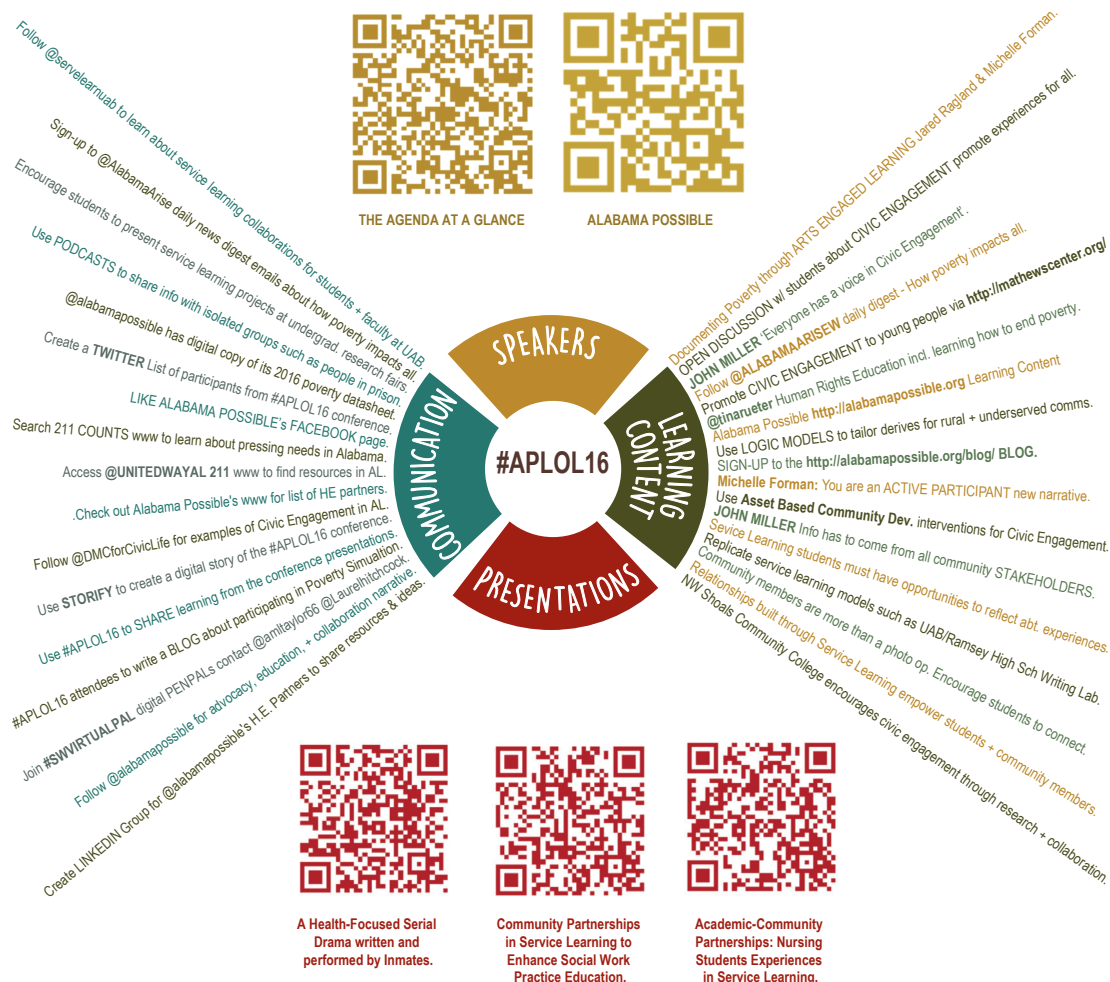
Nearly 100 faculty, staff, students, and community partners gathered at UAB on Friday, October 7, to share best practices among Alabama colleges and universities to use engaged learning initiatives as a foundation for justice learning. Justice learning teaches students about reasoned debate and the often-conflicting values inherent in American democracy.

UAB Institute of Human Rights Director Dr. Tina Kempin Reuter started the day with a talk about the purposes and potential of human rights education. Educators from disciplines including the arts, nursing, English, social work, and student leadership shared best practices learned from their on-the-ground experiences.

Lunch included a panel discussion about lessons learning in equipping students to lead with equity based on 2011 Tornado Recovery, and the day ended with a poverty simulation.

In order to continue the conversation beyond the boundaries of the conference, participants were invited to contribute to the #AP2016LOL Learning Wheel, pictured below. ►

## Lifetime of Learning #APLOL16 Alabama Conference LearningWheel



# Could you survive a month in poverty?

*More than 1,200 Alabamians had the opportunity to learn about the barriers that low-income families face by participating in poverty simulations facilitated by Alabama Possible.*

Poverty simulation participants role-play a month in the life of a low-income family and grapple with challenges as they try to get to work, get the kids to school, feed their families, and keep their homes safe. As a result, participants report they have greater impact in their volunteerism, philanthropy, and advocacy efforts.

## What do participants say?

*"How do we help poor people without making it harder on them?"*

*"People from low income families really want to do better, but things help to prevent it."*

*"My agency is going to rethink our processes regarding required documentation and rescheduling appointments."*

*"I learned not to pre-judge people and will listen to why they need assistance."*

*"The simulation gives people a realistic view of poverty."*

*"I will have more compassion and empathy with my clients."*

*"I will tell people about the various problems that feed into poverty: transportation, keeping a job, feeding your family, and paying utilities."*

*"I'll try to help people without referring them to another agency."*

## 2016 POVERTY SIMULATION PARTNERS INCLUDE

Alabama Association of School Boards  
Alabama Partnership for Children  
Alabama State Bar Association  
Auburn First Baptist Church  
Auburn University  
Avondale Samaritan Center  
Canterbury United Methodist Church  
Chambers County Schools  
Community Action Association of Alabama  
Faulkner University

Leadership Alabama  
Leadership Birmingham  
Leadership Montgomery  
NAACP – Alabama Chapter  
National Association of Social Workers – Alabama  
Roanoke City Schools  
Tarrant City Schools  
Trinity United Methodist Church  
Troy University

United Way of West Alabama  
UAB  
University of Montevallo  
Utah Community Action Partnership  
Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church  
Walker County Youth Leadership Forum  
Wallace State Community College – Hanceville  
Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham

*To bring a poverty simulation to your campus, civic organization, business, or faith community, please contact Kristina Scott at [kscott@alabamapossible.org](mailto:kscott@alabamapossible.org)*





*Clockwise from top: Roanoke City Schools educators experienced the impact poverty has on their students; child development and community service workers from North Alabama Community Action Agencies learn about the roles they will play during a simulation at a JCCEO Head Start center; youth at Auburn First Baptist Church think about the choices single moms must make to provide for their kids; Shoals-area Leadership Alabama alumni teamed up with local leaders, educators, and social service agencies to host a poverty simulation in Florence; a participant in the Florence simulation got information about payday loans at the Quick Cash; applying for public benefits like food stamps provided a lifeline for a participant in a simulation at the Avondale Samaritan Center.*



## BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS JOURNAL

### 2016 Nonprofit Awards Outstanding Small Nonprofit



### 2016 Social Work Practicum Agency of the Year

### Executive Director Kristina Scott named one of AL.com's 2016 Women Who Shape the State



**Many thanks to the foundations, higher education institutions, faith communities, business and community organizations, and individuals who supported our work and made financial contributions.**

#### FAITH COMMUNITIES

Auburn First Baptist Church  
Avondale Samaritan Place  
Canterbury United Methodist Church  
Christian Service Mission  
Church of the Nativity, Episcopal  
Independent Presbyterian Church  
Faith Chapel Christian Center  
Southside Baptist Church  
Vestavia Hills Baptist Church  
Trinity United Methodist Church

#### COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice  
Alabama ARISE  
Alabama Partnership for Children  
Alabama School Readiness Alliance  
Alabama State Conference of the NAACP  
Alabama State Department of Education  
Birmingham City Schools  
Birmingham Education Foundation  
Blount County Schools  
Bold Goals Coalition  
Chambers County Board of Education  
Community Action Agencies of Alabama  
Daniel Foundation of Alabama  
David Matthews Center for Civic Life  
EAT South  
End Child Hunger in Alabama Taskforce  
Equal Justice Initiative  
Florence Housing Authority  
Franklin County Schools  
GEARUP Alabama  
Habitat for Humanity  
Tuscaloosa  
Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama  
Holy Family Cristo Rey Catholic High School

Jones Valley Teaching Farm  
National Association of Social Work - Alabama  
National College Access Network  
Perry County Schools  
Roanoke City Board of Education  
Shelby County Schools  
Thompson Foundation  
Tuscaloosa City Schools  
Tuscaloosa County Schools  
United Way of Central Alabama  
United Way of West Alabama  
VOICES for Alabama's Children  
Women's Network

#### FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATE SUPPORT

Alabama Media Group  
Alabama Power Foundation  
Alabama State Bar Association  
Alagasco/Spire Energy  
AmazonSmile  
BBVA Compass Foundation  
Beeland & Grace Nielsen Fund  
Birmingham Jewish Foundation  
Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP  
Burr & Forman, LLP  
Cahaba Brewing Company, LLC  
Caring Foundation  
Cole Financial Planning  
Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham  
EW Motion Therapy Management  
Honda Manufacturing of Alabama  
Iberia Bank  
Joseph H. & Reva Engel Foundation  
Kresge Foundation  
Leaf & Petal  
LIV Apartment Partners LLC  
Lloyd Wilson & Associates  
Lumina Foundation  
Markstein  
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation  
Mayer Electric Supply Co.  
Medical Properties Trust

National Bank of Commerce  
Noble Hour  
Progress Bank  
Reese Phifer, Jr. Memorial Foundation  
Regions Bank  
Taco Bell Foundation For Teens  
Tarrant City Board of Education  
Team Tacaia Charities  
VIVA Health  
Vowell & Associates  
Vulcan Materials Company  
Walker Area Community Foundation  
Wells Fargo Foundation  
Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham  
Youthserve - Youth Philanthropy Council

#### HIGHER EDUCATION ALLIANCE CORNERSTONE MEMBERS

Auburn University  
Auburn University at Montgomery  
Birmingham-Southern College  
Northwest-Shoals Community College  
Samford University  
University of Alabama at Birmingham

#### HIGHER EDUCATION ALLIANCE MEMBERS

Alabama Community College System  
Athens State University  
Calhoun Community College  
Enterprise State Community College  
Faulkner University  
Jacksonville State University  
Judson College  
Lawson State Community College  
Northeast Alabama Community College  
Shelton State Community College  
Trenholm State Community College  
Troy University

University of Montevallo  
University of West Alabama  
Wallace State Community College—Hanceville

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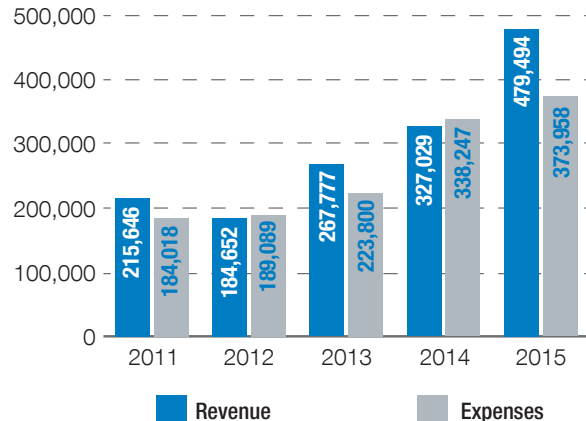
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## Growing investments to remove barriers to prosperity, 2010-2015



source: Alabama Possible Form 990, available at [alabamapossible.org/990](http://alabamapossible.org/990)

*Alabama Possible is a statewide 501(c)(3) nonprofit which breaks down barriers to prosperity through education, collaboration, and research. We have changed the way people think and talk about poverty since 1993.*

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