

FREE

# The Valley Weekly

Volume 1, No. 7

Friday, October 17, 2014

## ROSETTA JAMES A Woman for the Age

Rosetta James is a community volunteer in the Huntsville-Madison County (Ala.) community. She moved to Huntsville, Ala., in 1973 after living in Long Island, N.Y., for 27 years. A native of Akron, Ala., in Hale County, James grew up in Alabama's Black Belt, where over half of the population is still African-American.

Upon relocating to Huntsville, Ala., she worked part-time for the Madison County Extension Office while supporting her late husband, McKinley James, with his landscaping business. This business afforded them the opportunity to meet and engage with many people in the Huntsville-Madison County vicinity. In her quest to make the community a better place, she, to this very day, rarely turns down volunteer requests (Rosetta James Foundation, 2014).

James became heavily involved in local civic, educational, religious, and political activities and causes, continuing her lifelong commitment to volunteerism after leaving New York. Her greatest local challenge was convincing others to allow her to lead and serve the community in diverse capacities with her mere high school education.

In a local and highly academic environment in which many

others are highly educated, James responded to skepticism about her ability to lead by taking on responsibility and working even harder. Owing to her enthusiasm and commitment to do her best, it was not long before community leaders recognized her unique abilities and invited her to serve on various boards and committees.

James remains an effective community organizer, a proactive champion for children, the elderly, the incarcerated, the abused, neglected and disenfranchised. Over the past 35 years, James has served numerous community organizations as a volunteer, including Church Women United – Board Member; HELPLINE – Board Member; Huntsville-Madison County Senior Center – Board Member; Madison County Day Care – Board Member; Pathfinders – Board Member; Alabama Democratic Conference – Board Member; NAACP – Board Member; Huntsville City Schools Advisory Committee; and First



Baptist Church – Jail Ministry and Missionary Worker.

Because she believes in serving the community as a whole, her community service has continued to epitomize the proverbial 'taking the bull by the horns.' Her political volunteerism has led to the registration of at least 6,000 Madison County voters. Today, she continues to single-handedly register hundreds of individuals to vote, including taking ballots to churches and civic organizations and absentee ballots to home-bound and elderly citizens. (Foundation, 2014)

After organizing countless voter registration drives, her commitment led the Madison County Chapter of the Alabama Democratic Conference to rename its annual membership breakfast "The Rosetta James Membership Breakfast," as well as to her appointment as Madison County's first Deputy Voter Registrar (Capitolwords Volume 151, Number 134, October 20, 2005). During the primary and election seasons, she continues to work 12–14 hours daily to meet her commitments.

Her current volunteerism and community service include the following organizations and agencies (Rosetta James Foundation, 2014): Huntsville-Madison



County Senior Center – Board of Directors; First Missionary Baptist Church – Active Member; Missionary Circle # 3 - Membership Chairperson; Joint Missionary Society; Congregational Care – Lay Minister; Jail Ministry – Active member for past 30 years; Mustard Seed Ministry - Missionary Work for Africa – Local Coordinator; Church Women United – Chairperson, Nominating Committee;

Alabama Citizens for Constitution Reform, Active Member; NAACP – Lifetime Member, Golden Heritage Member; Huntsville Madison County Chapter – Alabama Democratic Conference, Active Member; Madison County Democratic Party – Active Member; Madison County Board of Elections – Clerk; AARP – Active Member for past 15 years; and Madison County Democratic Women – Active Member.



## From the Editor

In my space, elders are honored and respected, sprinkled with a bit of awe! I was trained well.

Growing up, we cast our eyes downward when “community” elders spoke to us as an earnest signal of respect. Similarly, we put a “handle” on their names (i.e., Mr., Mrs. and Miss), and few sentences would end without “Sir” or “Ma’am.” Moreover, we were eager to help them with whatever they needed. *Outside* the “community,” we verified, respected and, then, helped.

Times have changed, and the world is more global. I joined Facebook and Twitter for the second time last week. We have instant, high-tech, touch-screen devices, and we want to be able to do everything now, with fresh information at our fingertips. So, let’s stay with it.

The “Honoring our Elders” Celebration is now an eight-year tradition in the local community. We will share more about the annual celebration as we approach our ninth year in March 2015. However, on Saturday, October 18, 2014, The Rosetta James Foundation is partnering with First Baptist Church (Governors Drive) to host *Washington Post* columnist Wil Haygood. Haygood will speak from the Family Life Center at 2 pm. He is the author of the book, *The Butler*, and co-produced the movie. He will speak on the topic: “The Butler: Serving Presidents.” After the talk, books will be provided by Books-a-Million, and Haygood will sign them during a public reception.



Last November, the Foundation, in conjunction with Red Mountain Theatre, hosted the production “Letter from Birmingham Jail” at the Lee High School Main Stage Theatre. The community’s response was overwhelming. Many attendees wanted to know when we would “offer another such educational and cultural program?” We hope our readers will join us on Saturday at First Baptist Governors. It promises to be time well spent.

October continues to be Breast Cancer Awareness Month as we honor the lives and legacy of both victims and survivors of breast cancer. We celebrate the work of Liz Hurley and the 11th Annual Liz Hurley Ribbon Run. Some 7,000 runners are expected to participate on Saturday. The impact of Liz’s work on the Huntsville Hospital Foundation Breast Cancer Fund continues to be spectacular. Similarly, the Kimberly Fails Jones Memorial Foundation hosted its 4th Annual Breast Cancer Survivor’s Celebration at the Marriott last Friday. For those of us who knew Kimberly, she was a beautiful young lady whose short life deserves our time and attention. We applaud her parents, Edna and William Fails, as they continue the work of their late daughter by inspiring breast cancer patients and survivors each day.

Finally, fall is here, and most of us are following our favorite football teams. I hope your team is winning! I’m still praying for my team. Until next week,

*Dorothy*

*“Times have changed, and the world is more global ... We want to be able to do everything now.”*



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### The Valley Weekly

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# Overpowering the Voices in One's Own Head

Over the weeks and months to come, I wish to bring on-going messages about this dreadful disease of the brain that seems to be taking over our communities. When this illness shows itself, most of the time people are totally unprepared and not informed. Consequently, the "consumers", the ones with the illness, find themselves on a very lonely and frustrating path.

I saw a mother actually put her daughter "out on the street" because of her daughter's behaviors and needs, which obviously the mother was not "prepared" to deal with and properly "support". Putting her 16 year old daughter out ... was certainly not the answer! Where there is a lack of knowledge the people will perish.

When I attended the meetings with my daughter, sponsored by HNAMI, for the "consumer", I would sit and listen to some of the most heart-breaking stories told by people diagnosed with some form of a mental illness. In most cases, their families had cast them aside. The support and understanding they so desperately needed was never there.

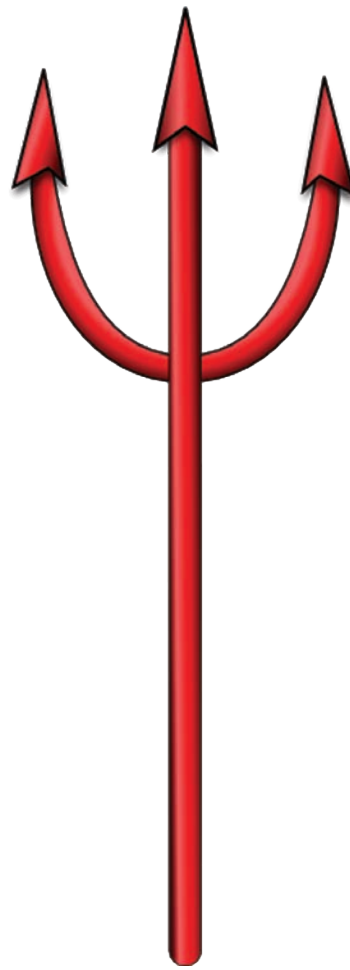
One lady told her story of how in the early stages of her life, before she actually *knew* what her problem was, she was wild, promiscuous, had begun drinking heavily and eventually did drugs all in a ditch effort to escape the "demons" in her head. Her marriage ended in a divorce and her children came to "disown" her. When she finally got a definitive diagnosis, she was somewhat relieved to know what she was experiencing inside of her head was not a figment of her imagination. However, her own children refused to believe the report! They preferred to embrace all of her "negative" behaviors when she was actually "ill," but not accepting the fact that her behaviors were as a result of her mental

illness. They were never "forgiving." Her heart was broken. She found herself in a world disconnected from those she gave birth to and loved.

There were other stories in the room similar in that before a definitive diagnosis was given, so many of the people confessed they got strung out on either alcohol or drugs and sometimes both ... trying to escape "the demons" in their head. We read horror stories today as a result of that person struggling with a mental illness. And I dare say in most cases, if someone went inside the home of that family and did an investigation, it would be revealed that the proper steps were never taken to help that person.

So, I encourage *my* readers to not take this subject lightly. If you know of someone or have a loved one, family member, neighbor, co-worker, who is behaving strangely, begin to observe them with a more critical eye and encourage them to get help. Do it lovingly, with patience and compassion. Huntsville NAMI has a wonderful program for both the "consumer" and family members. Please take advantage of all they have to offer.

Mental illnesses include such disorders as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic and other severe anxiety disorder, autism and pervasive developmental disorders, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, borderline personality disorder, and other severe and persistent mental illnesses that affect the brain. These disorders can profoundly disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, moods, ability to relate to others and capacity for coping with the demands of life.



However, the good news is ... *mental illnesses are treatable.* Most people with a serious mental illness need medication to help control their symptoms, but they also need to rely on supportive counseling, self-help groups, assistance with housing, vocational rehabilitation, income

assistance and other community services in order to achieve their highest level of recovery.

**FACT:** Mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence.

**FACT:** Mental disorders are the leading cause of disabilities (but can have a productive life) in the North America, Europe and increasingly, in the world. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.

**FACT:** Mental illness strike individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and "the old" are especially vulnerable.

**FACT:** Without treatment the consequences of mental illness, for the individual and society, are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives. The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than 100 billion dollars each year in the USA.

Until the next time, I leave you with this information to soak in and to share with others. Together, with the proper information, we can make a difference in the lives of those who need our loving support, empathy, compassion and understanding.

by Bonnie Spencer  
Aka "Chirping Bird"/Nanticoke  
Tribe/Delaware

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## Local Film Students to Capture Inner Workings of Rose Parade

Spearheaded by the Media Arts Institute of Alabama (MAIA) headquartered in Huntsville, Ala., a dozen communications arts students from Alabama A&M University (AAMU) have been invited by the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade to work behind the scenes producing a real-time film documentary about the pageantry of the 2015 Tournament of Roses Parade and Rose Bowl football game, according to organizers.

The documentary, "Huntsville to Hollywood" ([www.Huntsville2Hollywood.com](http://www.Huntsville2Hollywood.com)) marks the first time Film and Digital media arts students from a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) have been offered the opportunity to produce a film about the inner workings of America's premier New Year's celebration event.

Most of the students come from disadvantaged and even impoverished backgrounds, and MAIA founder and CEO Leon Burnette says they need financial

support to reach their goal of \$30,000 by November 15. Personal and corporate donations, along with the Crowdfunding site Indigogo.com, will be used to raise expenses for these 12 up-and-coming film arts students from Alabama, as well as the five adult chaperones who will accompany them safely across the country.

"Most of these students have never flown on an airplane, stayed in a luxury hotel, or eaten in a fancy restaurant," Burnette says. "I am delighted to coordinate such a life-altering experience and possibly career-changing opportunity."

While their pathways may not be clear to any of the 12 students now, they are part of the film production crew going from Huntsville to Hollywood! While the focus remains on producing the Rose Bowl documentary, the crew will enjoy visits to Hollywood TV studios and movie sets and tour media technology companies. They will talk to

educators at local universities about graduate school opportunities, and they will interact with accomplished music and film executives who will give them career advice and tips for success. In addition to the Rose Bowl documentary, the students will produce a personal video travel log of the group's adventure from start to finish. Since each of them are currently active in community service projects, they will continue their community work by volunteering with an inner city youth organization located in South Central Los Angeles.

MAIA is a nonprofit youth development and educational organization, committed to developing the mental aptitude, confidence-building, and creative skills of 'at risk' youth and young adults in Alabama.

"We are constantly searching for opportunities for underserved and at-risk youth interested in the arts, design, and music; as well as the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)



fields," says Burnette. "We hope people will come out to support us in a financial way since every young person deserves a chance to experience all that life has to offer, regardless of the circumstances under which they were born."

For more information, or to donate to the Huntsville to Hol-

lywood student video project, contact Leon Burnette at (256) 525-1203, [MAIA@Huntsville2Hollywood.com](mailto:MAIA@Huntsville2Hollywood.com) or visit our website at [www.Huntsville2Hollywood.com](http://www.Huntsville2Hollywood.com) or [Http://igg.me/at/Huntsville2Hollywood](http://igg.me/at/Huntsville2Hollywood)

## Dental Health and an Ounce of Prevention



I have been a practicing dentist in Huntsville, Ala., since 1976. I am a native of Washington, D. C., and a product of Howard University's College of Dentistry.

I was first introduced to the concept of preventive maintenance while serving in the military motor pool at Fort Knox, Ky. Uncle Sam figured out that the best way for military equipment, like tanks and other combat vehicles, to perform successfully in the heat of combat was to conduct ongoing preventive maintenance inspections. In other words, we fixed the vehicles they broke down.

In introducing this concept into our dental practice many years ago, we conducted a very thorough oral examination, looking for signs of cancer and, when discovering suspicious lesions, performed a biopsy and sent the tissue samples to the laboratory for microscopic examinations.

This is one of the keys to good health overall: an annual examination with your family physician, as well as your six-month checkup with your dentist. In speaking with a health care associate last week, she indicated that one of her family members

discovered a sore on his tongue that was diagnosed as a rapidly growing cancer, requiring his whole tongue to be removed.

It is plausible that the surgeon was not able to remove all of the cancer cells leading to a death that could have possibly been prevented if early detection had occurred.

The moral of this episode is that a good number of people--Black, White, Asians and Hispanics--die needlessly due to failure of routine preventive medical dental examinations. When we con-

sider America's love affair with cigarettes and alcohol, we should be more 'preventive' conscious!

I will continue the concept of preventive maintenance in subsequent editions as we travel on the road of good health and happiness in the lovely metropolis of Huntsville.

*by Eugene H. Scott, Jr.  
BS, DDS*

# ANTHONY DANIELS

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# ANTHONY DANIELS

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Anthony Daniels believes that when we do what is right for the community as a whole, we all win. Therefore, we need to send a bridge-building leader with the experience and vision to move our new west Huntsville district forward. Anthony has worked tirelessly in our community as a civic leader, educator, and small businessman. We need someone like Anthony on our side to attract quality, good-paying jobs and fight for our public schools.

## ANTHONY DANIELS—A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

**Jobs:** Anthony Daniels is a small businessman with a proven track record of meeting payroll and creating good jobs for Huntsville residents. A vote for Anthony Daniels is a vote for real-world experience that is so desperately needed in Montgomery.

**Education:** Education is Anthony Daniels' passion. As a former elementary school teacher, Anthony believes that a quality education for all of our students can positively impact our community. He understands that valuing the hard work of public teachers and adequately funding classrooms are essential to making our neighborhood schools work for everyone.

## ANTHONY DANIELS—A LEADER IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Anthony Daniels has demonstrated his willingness to affect positive change in our community.**

- ★ Received bachelors degree in elementary education and a masters degree in special education.
- ★ Serves as Chief Operating Officer of Premiere Dental.
- ★ Formerly taught 4th grade at University Place Elementary School and 3rd grade at Academy for Science and Foreign Language.
- ★ Co-Founder of First Book Alabama, a non-profit organization aimed at providing books for young children from disadvantaged communities.
- ★ Appointed to Mayor Tommy Battle's Green 13 Council.
- ★ Served as Chairman of the Green 13 Council's Transportation Team.
- ★ Serves on the Committee of 100 Young Professionals
- ★ Board Member National Accreditation for Teacher Education
- ★ Former Committee Member on High School Dropout Prevention
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# Huntsville Happenings!

by Gary T. Whitley, Jr.



Each week so far I have used this space to share information about events happening in Huntsville that I highlight for the readership to consider attending. This week is no different.

Upcoming this week in Huntsville are the **Taste of Huntsville** on Thursday, October 16th at VBC South Hall from 5:30-8 p.m., and the final **Downtown Street Food Gathering** on Friday, October 17, from 6-9 p.m. on Church Street.

Ticket information and a list

of participating restaurants for The Taste of Huntsville can be found on their website at [www.huntsvillehospitality.org](http://www.huntsvillehospitality.org). Proceeds from The Taste of Huntsville will benefit Court Appointed Juvenile Advocate (CAJA) of Madison County and Family Services Center – two deserving entities working to advance the quality of life for citizens in Madison County. Please support The Taste of Huntsville so that you can sample some delectable delights while also supporting two worthy causes simultaneously.

The final Downtown Street Food Gathering will serve as a tail-gate party to kick-off the UAH Hockey season. As always, there will be ten or more food trucks downtown on Church Street for enjoyment with family and friends. UAHuntsville Chargers Hockey will face-off against Bowling Green at 7 p.m. inside the Propst Arena at the VBC.

Gather your family and or friends and head downtown on Thursday and or Friday to enjoy the latest Huntsville Happenings.

## Faith and Spirituality

*The Forgotten Factors in Successful Aging*

by Linda Burruss

Older/mature adults are a homogenous group and the same can be said in the spiritual realm. When you talk about how an individual might respond to spiritual issues differently in late life, that raises a lot of questions because everyone's spiritual walk is, to a certain degree, very individualistic. Those aging adults, who, in whatever way they do it, maintain an active spiritual life, do in fact have a more successful aging experience.

One component of successful aging is active engagement in life. And many people who are deeply spiritual are motivated out of that spirituality to do good works. And so they engage in a variety of things that perhaps people who are not so spiritually inclined would do, and therefore they're more actively engaged in life. (Dr. Michael Parker, UAB Comprehensive Center for Healthy Aging, April 29, 2013, AgeWell.com, UAB Center for Aging). <http://www.agewell.com/spiritual/04-parker-forgotten-factor.aspx>

With advancing age, what happens that may lead to a re-thinking, a re-evaluation of one's life and what has guided a person religiously or spiritually? Very simply, the aging process -- the experience of moving into and through different developmental phases -- affects the spirit and therefore one's spiritual life.

Naturally, that which moves the spirit and that which brings us deep meaning and satisfaction and enlivens us at 45 years of age may not be what nurtures our sense of wholeness and spiritual wellness at 93. The process of aging at every life stage brings



about changes in one's spiritual life. Whether we are engaged in a relatively comfortable aging process or a difficult one, it is likely that we will be engaged in the important process known as "life review," a time of reflection upon the successes and failures of our life. (Rev. Jennifer L. Brower, *Faith, Spirituality and Aging*, Frontline, November 21, 2006). <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/livinggold/etc/faith.html>

People with a strong personal faith and who regularly attend religious services generally have lower blood pressure; are less likely to suffer from depression; have a greater sense of well-being; have stronger immune systems; and live longer--23% longer, according to a long-term study by Dr. William Strawbridge and other researchers published in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 1997. Religious faith seems to increase the ability of older people to cope with illness, disability, loss, and their own mortality, according to a study published in 1992 in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Dr. Harold G. Koenig, and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality and Health at Duke University. <http://www.virginianavigator.org/vn/spirituality-religion-and-healthy-aging/article-155.aspx>

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**Alabama A&M University**

Friday, Nov. 14, 2014

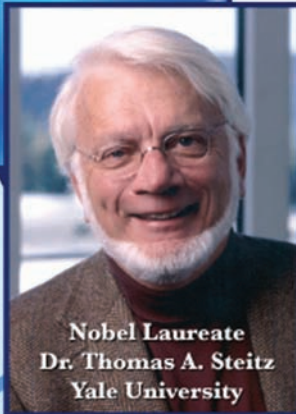
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*Followed by*

**Reception @ 5 PM**

Clyde Foster  
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**Nobel Laureate  
Dr. Thomas A. Steitz  
Yale University**

Prof. Thomas A. Steitz received the 2009 Nobel Prize for Chemistry, along with Venkatraman Ramakrishnan and Ada E. Yonath for their research elucidating the structure

and function of ribosome, a complex ensemble of numerous protein and RNA components key to the function of all life. Dr. Steitz is Sterling Professor of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, Prof. of Chemistry, and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator at Yale University. He received the 1980 Pfizer Award, 2001 Rosenstiel Award for distinguished work in basic medical research, 2001 AAAS Newcomb Cleveland Prize, 2002 Lawrence University Briggs Distinguished Achievement Award, Harvard University 2004 Westheimer Medal, 2006 Keio Medical Science Prize, 2007 Gairdner International Award, 2008 Palade Award, and is an AAAS fellow.

## Rosetta James Scholarship Foundation

# #94612

The Rosetta James Scholarship Foundation provides financial scholarship to undergraduate students who demonstrate sound academic principles; commitment to community volunteerism, civic engagement and unselfishness to assist others in  
Huntsville/Madison County.

The Rosetta James Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization with a 0% Administrative and Fundraising Rate (AFR). For additional information, contact (256) 536-9717 or write P.O. Box 17452, Huntsville, AL 35810.



## The Rosetta James Foundation

Huntsville, Alabama

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# Wil Haygood

*Washington Post*  
Journalist and Author of

## "The Butler"

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# Union Chapel Christian Academy Foundation, Inc.

## 2014 Educational Gala

The Third Annual Educational Gala hosted by Union Chapel Christian Academy Foundation, Incorporated, was recently held in the Boone-Lacy Fellowship Hall at Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church. The theme for the Gala was "Changing the Paradigm: Educational Excellence Through STEM."

At the event, corporations, fraternities and individuals were honored in recognition of their contributions in promoting STEM education, mentoring and inspiring students in pursuit of various disciplines and life-long contributions in education.

The honorees receiving the STEM awards were Delta Theta Lambda Education Foundation, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Civic and Community STEM Award; Future Research Corporation, Mr. Jesse W. Nunn, President, Corporate STEM Award; Dr. Paul B. Ruffin, Inspiring Young Minds to Succeed STEM Award; and LTC (Ret) James L. Lorder, Jr., Lifetime Achievement Award.



Master Keston Alexander Edwards

The highlight of the Gala was the students' testimonials on "My Educational Experience at Union Chapel Christian Academy" given by Master Keston Alexander Edwards, a third grade student, and Miss Katherine Ward, an eighth grade student. Both students gave rousing testimoni-



Atty. David Points, Dr. Paul B. Ruffin, Dr. O. Wendell Davis, Mr. Jesse W. Nunn and LTC (Ret) James L. Lorder, Jr.



Miss Katherine Ward

als that enticed standing ovations and applause from the guests. The showcasing of the significant achievements of Union Chapel Christian Academy and the presentation of the honorees were coordinated through a colorful video presentation.

Four hundred (400) guests attended the elegantly decorated event and enjoyed the delicious dinner catered by ARAMARK Campus Dining, Alabama A&M University.

Music for the Gala was provided by Miss Andriana Haygood, music instructor, and Mr. Daryl Lockhart, band instructor at Union Chapel Christian Academy. Mr. Van L. Strickland served as the Master of Ceremonies, and Mrs. Georgia S. Valrie was the Gala coordinator.

The members of the board of

directors of the Union Chapel Christian Academy Foundation, Inc., appreciate the contributions of its sponsors and other supporters who helped to make the Gala a success.



Mr. Wilbert Brown, Atty David Points, Dr. Paul B. Ruffin, Mr. Jesse W. Nunn, LTC (Ret) James L. Lorder, Jr., and Mrs. Georgia S. Valrie.

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