



Jon Mason  
Director

## SERVE ALABAMA IS HONORED TO BE A PARTNER IN THE NEWLY FORMED ALAVETNET

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On Tuesday, December 10, 2014 Governor Robert Bentley signed an executive order creating the Alabama Executive Veterans Network (AlaVetNet) to address ways to better provide services for Alabama service members, veterans and their families.

“Alabama is a strong pro-military state, and it is important to help our military members whenever we can,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “Alabama ranks as the third highest state in the nation in the number of people deployed to support the Global War on Terrorism. These brave men and women will return home to their families, and we owe it to them to help ease their return into their communities. AlaVetNet will work to address ways to streamline the access of services for military members, veterans and their families in key areas. Because of the sacrifice of those who serve our country, we can continue to live in a free society.”

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## ALAVETNET (continued)

The adjustment of returning service members into communities can have long-lasting and challenging implications for them and their families. Many veterans suffer from physical and psychological disabilities, including traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder and other debilitating health conditions. The services provided to veterans and their families are critical to help overcome some of the implications from deployment.

AlaVetNet will study and evaluate all services in the state directed at improving the well-being of service members, veterans and their families in the key areas of education, employment, health, homelessness, and legal assistance. The goal of AlaVetNet is to use existing resources available and explore opportunities to expand the services. The committee will develop a long-range plan for a unified, statewide system for the delivery of services aimed at helping those who served in the military.

Alabama Department of Mental Health Commissioner Jim Reddoch and Veterans Affairs Commissioner Retired Rear Admiral Clyde Marsh will serve as co-chairs of the commission. Seventeen other members from state agencies and organizations have been appointed to serve on the commission.

“Our service members and veterans can experience many different mental health issues as they begin to adjust from deployment,” Alabama Department of Mental Health Commissioner Jim Reddoch said. “AlaVetNet will work to help better coordinate mental health services available. We owe it to our service members and veterans to show thanks for all they have sacrificed for our country. I am honored to be a part of this initiative because of the meaningful role it will play in the lives of our military men and women and their families. The network being created by this executive order is the result of a policy group working together for the past several years, and special thanks are due to Acquanetta Knight at the Department of Mental Health and Bob Horton at the Department of Veterans Affairs for keeping this project moving forward.”

“AlaVetNet is a great initiative that will help bring together resources that may fall outside the scope of some state agencies and that generally fall through the cracks,” Retired Rear Adm. W. Clyde Marsh, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs said. “With the expertise of the agencies that comprise this network, we can connect the dots and direct resources to meet the needs of our service members, veterans and their families.”

AlaVetNet is expected to present a formal plan to the Governor by June 30, 2014.

## SERVE ALABAMA COMMISSIONER HI-LIGHT ERIC JONES



Eric Jones is the Director of the Elmore County Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security Office. He received his B.S. degree in Environmental Science from Auburn University Montgomery. He was among the first group of people to be awarded Certified Local Emergency Manager for the State of Alabama in 2007. He has been active in emergency services over the last 18 years as he has served as a volunteer and career Firefighter I/II, EMT-Basic and Hazardous Materials Technician. He is active in the Alabama Association of Emergency Manager's (AAEM) where he is currently serving as Past President. He has previously served as the AAEM President, President-Elect and 3 terms as the Area Director for his Region and has served on a number of committees. He currently serves as a member of the Elmore County 911 Board, Vice Chairman of the Elmore County EMS Board, Chairman of the Alabama Disaster Recovery Committee and member of the International Association of Emergency Managers. He is also a very involved member of Santuck Baptist Church. He is a devoted family man. He and his wife Debbie have 2 children, Matthew and Hannah.

### OUR VISION

Serve Alabama, The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Volunteer Service works to increase an ethic of service and volunteerism in the State of Alabama, strengthen the capacity of Alabama's faith and community-based organizations, and promote collaboration among individuals and organizations striving to meeting some of the greatest needs in our state.

## SERVE ALABAMA STAFF HI-LIGHT NATIONAL SERVICE DIRECTOR CHRISTINE WILLIAMS



Christine currently serves as the National Service Director for Serve Alabama and is responsible for managing the AmeriCorps State Portfolio and overseeing the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF) Grant.

Before becoming employed with Serve Alabama, Christine was an AmeriCorps member in Nashville where she worked with senior citizens. She earned her certification as an exercise instructor and Tai Chi instructor. As an AmeriCorps member she assisted seniors to become healthier, safer and happier people by designing activities to keep them active and healthy. Following her term of service as a member, she was selected to become a part of a national leadership development initiative as an AmeriCorps Leader for the state of Tennessee. Shortly before completing her Leader's term, she became an AmeriCorps program director for TenneSenior Service Corps at Vanderbilt University.

She returned home to Alabama to join the Alabama State AmeriCorps team by accepting the Training Officer position. After a few months as the Training Officer, she was promoted to the AmeriCorps State Program Officer.

After about two years, she accepted a position with the State of Georgia-Department of Community Affairs where she provided training and technical assistance to regional downtown revitalization managers, assisted communities with start up-completion with Leadership Development Programs, supported the Regional Advisory Council (Board) and the Georgia Academy for Economic Development (regional leadership program.) She coordinated and marketed state resources in her assigned eighteen county region. She worked closely with municipalities, county governments and chambers of commerce in the above activities.

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Christine returned home again as an employee of the State of Alabama serving as the AmeriCorps State Program, Training and Disability Officer. When a great opportunity became available at the State of Alabama Department of Finance Executive Planning Office, to develop and launch the SMART Governing Initiative, she became an Administrative Analyst for the department and assisted in developing policy & procedures, web based reporting system and was responsible for the coordination of the annual training for all state agencies. The SMART Governing Initiative was designed to improve Alabama Government by requiring organizational planning, linking plans to budget requests and appropriations, and creating meaningful performance measurements.

As stated above Christine currently works with Alabama State AmeriCorps where she oversees two grants, the Volunteer Generation Fund and the AmeriCorps State Grant for the State of Alabama. She manages, monitors, trains, facilitates and provides technical assistance to about twenty AmeriCorps Program Directors and more than three hundred AmeriCorps members across the state of Alabama. She also plans, coordinates and participates in state, regional and national trainings in national service, volunteerism and volunteer management.

Christine has a diverse back ground which includes the US Army Reserves where she served as a combat medic for almost eight years, program management, training and facilitation, grants management, volunteer recruitment and training, event planning, healthcare field and mentoring/coaching young and professional women.

Christine is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Public Service Sorority. She was selected to participate in the 2010 American Express Leadership Academy, and most recently was named in the Top 100 of 3000 nominees for the John C. Maxwell Leadership Award. The finalist will be announced in February 2014 in Orlando, Florida. Christine is also active at her church, Global Impact Church in Opelika, where she serves as the church administrator and as a board member since 2010. When she is not occupied with work or ministry she enjoys spending time with her family and friends (especially her 102 year old dad), reading and listening to music. Christine attended the University of Alabama and Auburn University Montgomery. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree from Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama.

## AMERICORPS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team in Butler County began a New Year with twenty-six members, a first for this program. Members serve in all six (6) schools including Greenville High School. Mr. Douthitt, Superintendent of Schools, introduced the 26 members individually to a standing ovation from parents, students and faculty members present at the regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting on October 18, 2013.

The AmeriCorps Instructional Support Team believes in supporting our community. In the **MONTH OF OCTOBER**, members participated in the fourth annual Butler County Schools **“PARENT Extravaganza”** with over **859** individuals participating, **15 VIP’s** (i.e. Dr. Craig Pouncey, ALSDE Chief of Staff) along with five (5) Alabama Teach for America teachers joining us. Next, AIST took a trip down history lane and entered the fifth annual **OLD TIME FARM DAY**, a place where you can visit a blacksmith, see how cane syrup was made and witness horse and mule plowing. Our members and staff participated in corn shelling, milking a cow, no kidding, and assisted with the pedal tractor race. AIST members **along with 50 non-AmeriCorps volunteers** were exhausted after a day on the farm helping facilitate **over 768 visitors** in one day. *The trilogy of MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY* events ended on October 31, 2013 with the first ever **HALLOWEEN IN DOWNTOWN GREENVILLE**, Sponsored by the Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce. The “Main Street” was closed to traffic for “Trick or Treating” while **over 1500** citizens representing children, youth, parents and senior citizens walked around having fun. The joy of the night was having everyone dancing and singing in the street with local live bands and ending the night with a dance performance inspired by **The ADDAMS FAMILY** by Sonja’s School of Dance students.



AIST members and staff served double duty for the **MONTH OF NOVEMBER** beginning with **VETERANS DAY** assisting the US AIR FORCE Flight Command students from Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama. The Greenville Area Boy Scout Troop #45, Greenville Middle School Builder's Club and BETA CLUB joined us in a major CLEAN-UP on GMS Campus. They painted picnic tables, trimmed the shrubs, spread pine straw around flower beds and in general a good cleaning of the gym and locker rooms. Later in the month, SAFE HARBOR, Children's Advocacy Center in Greenville, Alabama, once again prepared **over 1,000 THANKSGIVING** box lunches for the community with 24 AIST members assisting. The Greenville High School Jr. ROTC, Fort Dale Academy's BETA Club members were also on hand to give us a boost of support.

To wrap up the YEAR OF 2013, Saturday, DECEMBER 7, 2013, W. O. Parmer Elementary School and Greenville Elementary School sponsored a CHRISTMAS BAZAAR with items made by local artisans and the students of both schools. All proceeds will go to buy a security system for both schools. AIST members were on hand to help with student activities and to man the concession stands at each campus. Over **700 supporters of public school** and Greenville citizens came out on a cold rainy Saturday to support this effort.

Once again, when this community needs an EXTRA HAND, "Who are they going to CALL?" – AMERICORPS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM members who will appear with smiles on their faces to lend a helping hand.





## 2014 Alabama Nonprofit Summit

Get ready, save the date, and make your plans to attend the **2014 Alabama Nonprofit Summit to be held on April 22nd and 23rd at the Montgomery, Alabama Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center!** The Summit will feature inspiring keynotes, quality training, networking, and...FUN! Join top nonprofit leaders in Alabama as, together, we "reach across" for solutions, strategies, and collaboration in addressing the common issues for every nonprofit's success. Event and registration information will follow soon. AAN members will receive significant registration and event discounts. Get ready to REACH ACROSS!



# January 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Years Day	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Martin Luther King Day and Robert E. Lee's Birthday	21 MLK Reports Due by 10:00 AM	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Email Intent to Apply for Ameri-Corps State Formula Grants	

Serve Alabama offices will be closed on January 1st and January 20th.

**\*Registration deadline extended\***



**Be Ready Camp** is an innovative and unique program that promotes citizen preparedness and participation to sixth graders in Alabama using multiple approaches to learning. Be Ready Camp uses instructional techniques that expand traditional classroom instruction with tool kits, hands-on learning, exercises, take-away materials, and the use of technology to a diverse audience of sixth graders. Incorporated in Be Ready Camp are multiple means of assessment that allows diverse learners to demonstrate their knowledge.

**Be Ready Camp** is a five-day full immersion residential camp located at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

Intertwined throughout Be Ready Camp is the involvement of personnel with homeland security responsibilities at the local, state, and national level. The capstone of Be Ready Camp is a full scale mock disaster exercise incorporating the camp participants with first responders and citizens.

- WHO** Open to all Alabama 6th Graders in the 2013-14 School Year
- WHAT** The Nation's Premier Youth Disaster Preparedness Camp!
- WHEN** March 25-29, 2014
- WHERE** U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Huntsville, Alabama

## ***Building the Next Generation of Alabama's First Responders***

### **What is the Cost of Attending Be Ready Camp?**

Registration for Be Ready Camp is \$75, which includes lodging, meals, and a CERT backpack. It is the responsibility of the participant's parent/guardian to provide transportation to and from Huntsville, Alabama.

### **Who Sponsors Be Ready Camp?**

Be Ready Camp is supported by multi-agency coordination at the local, state, and national level with the involvement of Serve Alabama (The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Volunteer Service), the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA), and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) partnered with the U.S. Space and Rocket Center and the Madison County Emergency Management Agency.

The U.S. Space and Rocket Center has state of the art facilities and has extensive experience in hosting residential programs such as Space Camp, Space Academy, Aviation Challenge, and X-Camp.



**\*Registration deadline extended\***



## Who is Eligible to Attend Be Ready Camp?

All Alabama residents who will be in the sixth-grade during the 2013-2014 school year are eligible to attend Be Ready Camp. Included with all applications should be a note from a parent/guardian allowing the student to be eligible to attend Be Ready Camp.

## Curriculum

Be Ready Camp utilizes a modified Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training as its foundation and broadened to include additional lessons. Be Ready Camp curriculum includes: emergency preparedness, introduction to survival and first aid, developing an emergency kit, creating a family disaster plan, water survival, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, triage, career exploration, and terrorism awareness. Throughout each lesson, the participants have the ability to demonstrate their knowledge with hands-on demonstrations in addition to traditional assessment. The camp concludes with a mock disaster, where the youth perform victim search and rescue alongside professional responders in a realistic setting. The participants are tasked with bringing the message of preparedness and what they have learned to their families and their communities.

Parents are invited to graduation, held the last morning of the camp, to reflect on the events of the past week and to celebrate the newfound skills of the participants. At this ceremony, each student is recognized individually for their efforts by receiving a commendation by Governor Robert Bentley and are tasked to educate their community on the importance of preparedness.

## Selection Process

The selection process for Be Ready Camp is open to all Alabama residents who will be in the sixth grade by September 2013.

## Applicants must submit an essay answering the question:

### What does being part of a safe community mean to me?

Essay must be 300-500 words in length. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, and good paragraph structure apply.

Essay must be typed or neatly written in ink.

Please clearly label all submissions with name, address, telephone number, county and school.

## Submissions are due by January 31, 2014 to:

Be Ready Camp  
Eight Commerce Street, 10th Floor  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

## For more information, contact:

Brooke Mills  
Serve Alabama Disaster Preparedness and Response Director  
Phone: 334-954-7456  
Email: [bereadycamp@servealabama.gov](mailto:bereadycamp@servealabama.gov)





**Are you a homeless veteran?**

Would you like to find safe, sustainable, permanent housing?

Call 866-460-3827



## About Priority Veteran

### What is V.E.T.S. Housing?

It is a service coordination program for homeless veterans and their families to help them secure permanent, sustainable housing.

### What does 'homeless' mean?

The veteran (and family) does not have fixed, regular and adequate nighttime shelter or will lose nighttime shelter within a short period of time.

### Can families get help for a veteran?

Services are for veterans and their families. Veterans have to voluntarily agree to a Housing Stability Plan. Families can call V.E.T.S. Housing and encourage veterans to enroll.

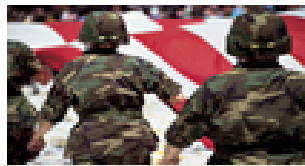
### Does V.E.T.S. Housing help with anything besides housing?

V.E.T.S. Case Managers help veterans connect with everything on the Housing Stability Plan that may include medical or mental health services, benefits enrollment, job training, job search, family counseling, financial coaching, etc.

### Do veterans get financial assistance from V.E.T.S. Housing?

V.E.T.S. Housing may cover the cost of some service(s) in the Housing Stability Plan if the veteran will be homeless if that service is not provided. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis.

V.E.T.S. HOUSING PROVIDES INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT LINKING HOMELESS VETERANS TO FEDERAL, STATE AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES SO VETERANS CAN LIVE SAFELY IN PERMANENT AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING.



### Who qualifies?

- Homeless Veterans
- Very low Income veterans based on average median Income
- Veterans who have not been dishonorably discharged

## ▶▶▶ What is Priority Veteran?

Priority Veteran, Inc., in partnership with the United Way of Central Alabama links veterans with VA, State and local resources to help with re-integration and household stability. Priority Veteran has a database of community-based resources statewide and can offer information and referral by phone.

Funding for Priority Veteran's program for homeless veterans is provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and is part of these programs: Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) and Veterans Empowered to Achieve Sustainable Housing (V.E.T.S. Housing).

[www.uwca.org/priorityveteran](http://www.uwca.org/priorityveteran)  
**Toll Free (866)460-3827**



## Priority Veteran Locations

- Birmingham: 3600 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South 35222
- Tuscaloosa: 1110 Dr Edward Hillard Drive 35401
- Tuskegee: 608 Dibble Street 36083

[www.uwca.org/priorityveteran](http://www.uwca.org/priorityveteran)  
**(866)460-3827**



## ELMORE COUNTY BREAKS GROUND ON NEW EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER



Serve Alabama Commissioner Eric Jones, the Director of the Elmore County Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (EMA/HS) Office, is interviewed at the groundbreaking of the new Emergency Operations Center on December 17, 2013. Funds for the new EOC were made available through an EOC grant from the U.S Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Congresswoman

Martha Roby and the Alabama Department of Homeland Security were very instrumental in assisting Elmore County with securing these funds. The Porch Creek Indians also provided funding for the project.



Seasons Greetings  
from  
Serve Alabama

## Stay Connected to Serve Alabama Through Social Media

Serve Alabama continues to grow on social media. For updates on news and opportunities for Alabama's faith-based and NGO community, join us on Twitter and Facebook today!

Check us out on Facebook at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Serve-Alabama/168607919865877>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Serve-Alabama/168607919865877#!/ReadyAlabama?fref=pb>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Alabama-Americorps-State/417021808369615>

Or Twitter

@ [www.twitter.com/servealabama](http://www.twitter.com/servealabama)

@ <https://twitter.com/ReadyAlabama>

@ [www.twitter.com/ALAmeriCorps](http://www.twitter.com/ALAmeriCorps)

### **Alabama State Service Commissioners**

Mr. Roderic Steakley—Chairman

Ms. Betty Ruth—Vice Chair

Ms. Sue Johnson, Secretary

Mr. George Casey

Ms. Pam Dorr

Dr. Johnny Green

Mr. Eddie Johnson

Mr. Eric Jones

Mr. Paul Kennedy

Mr. Matthew Little

Ms. Holly Lollar

Mr. Caleb Lundy

Mr. Danny Patterson

Representative Bill Poole

Ms. Candi Williams

Ms. Elizabeth Wilson

Mr. Frank Woodson

### ***Ex-Officio Members***

Ms. Jackie Bishop, *Corporation for National and Community Service*  
 Commissioner Nancy Buckner, *Alabama Department of Human Resources*  
 Represented by Fannie Ashley

Dr. Thomas R. Bice, *Alabama State Department of Education*  
 Represented by Karen Porter

Sallye Longshore, Director, *Alabama Department of Child Abuse Prevention*  
 Represented by Gregory Smith

Commissioner Jim Reddoch, *Alabama Department of Mental Health*  
 Represented by Kathy House