

Alabama Grocer

2024, ISSUE 2

Alabama Grocers Association

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*Enriching Education and Career Development
in the Grocery Industry*

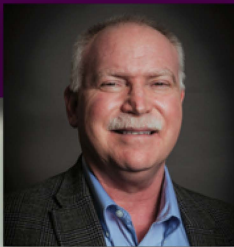


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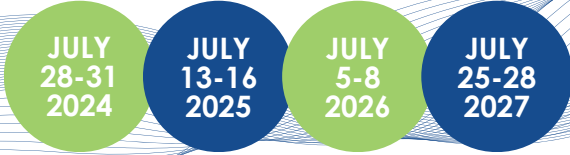
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FEATURES



Chairman’s Message

Planning for the upcoming 2024 Annual Show.

President’s Message

2025 Summer EBT secured.



2024-2025 AGEF Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to our 2024-2025 AGEF Scholarship Winners!



2024 NGA Fly-In For Fair Competition

The AGA collaborates with the NGA in Washington, D.C.

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LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR 2024 ANNUAL SHOW



BOB CRAWFORD
President
United-Johnson Brothers of
Alabama

As we head into our summer months, the AGA is busy with planning for the 2024 Annual Show.

This year, the convention will be held July 28-31 at the Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort in Destin, Florida. As always, it will be a great time for all members to spend quality time together. Highlights will include business sessions with industry leaders, an incredible exhibit hall, Best Bagger Competition, dinners and entertainment. Casino night is back this year! Please make sure that you get registered today.

In other summer time news, the AGA supported the bill that would allocate \$10 million dollars to support EBT in Alabama from the

state's 2025 Educational Trust Fund budget. This would provide food assistance to low income families with school age children to help combat food insecurity during the summer months.

In closing, summer months are a great time for all of us to focus on building the AGA membership. I encourage all current members to reach out to someone you know personally and talk to them about our association and what joining can do for them. Non-member grocery retailers, manufacturers, brokers and wholesalers can all benefit from joining. The benefits include lobbying legislative efforts on key bills and issues affecting the food industry, our annual convention, funding \$1.4 million dollars to member scholarships, and building

great relationships that help strengthen our industry. Please have a safe and prosperous summer and as always, thank you for your support of the Alabama Grocers Association.

Sincerely,

Bob Crawford
Chairman
Alabama Grocers Association

MARDI
GRAS Party

Annual Show
Bringing Grocers to the Table

JULY 28-30, 2024

SANDESTIN GOLF & BEACH RESORT

A graphic of a blue signpost with a lantern at the top. The signpost has three signs. The top sign says 'MARDI GRAS Party' in yellow and green. Below it is a QR code. The middle sign says 'Annual Show Bringing Grocers to the Table' with the AGA logo. The bottom sign says 'JULY 28-30, 2024'. The base of the signpost says 'SANDESTIN GOLF & BEACH RESORT'.

2025 SUMMER EBT SECURED IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Ellie Taylor
President/CEO
Alabama Grocers Association

2024 was an incredibly hard legislative session with difficult and serious issues such as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Gambling; IVF; and School Choice that dominated the legislative landscape.

One of the bright lights in the session was the \$10 million allocation in the Education Trust Fund to the Alabama Department of Human Resources for implementation of the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT) program. A broad coalition of organizations including the Alabama Grocers Association, actively lobbied to ensure Summer EBT was part of the 2025 budget.

Summer can be the hungriest time of year for families with school-age children. When the school year ends, thousands of Alabama children from households with low incomes lose access to the school meals they rely on. The Summer Nutrition Programs, such as SUN Meals/Summer Meals, offer free meals and snacks to children of all ages during the summer at nearby schools, parks, and other neighborhood locations. These programs are designed to replace school meals during the summer break and are crucial in reducing childhood hunger. Additionally, they often include educational and enrichment activities.

Despite these benefits, Summer Meals reach only a fraction of the children who rely on free and reduced-price school meals during the school year.

For example, during the summer of 2022, Alabama's summer feeding programs reached only 6% of the children who qualify for free and reduced meals during the school year. This means 94% of children who rely on meals do not have access to them over the summer. In fifteen counties there is no access to Summer Meals at all. Additionally, Alabama has recently seen a decline in the number of summer feeding sites.

In December 2022, a bipartisan US Congress created a new, permanent program for States and certain Indian Tribal Organizations to provide food dollars to low-income families with school-age children over the summer months. In December 2022, a bipartisan US Congress created a new, permanent program for States and certain Indian

Continued on page 7

Tribal Organizations to provide food dollars to low-income families with school-age children over the summer months. This program, officially called Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT), will help close the summer hunger gap when kids are on summer break and not getting nutritious school meals.

Summer EBT, which will provide benefits to families to purchase food at retail

locations, bridges that gap, particularly among our most vulnerable and rural communities. Summer Meals combined with Summer EBT is an effective recipe to meet children's nutritional needs during the summer. Summer EBT will allow for more access to nutritious food and convenience for the family.

Summer EBT benefits will come in the form of pre-loaded cards that families can use to purchase groceries.

Beginning in the summer of 2025 for Alabama, families will receive \$40 per eligible child, per month. These benefits work together with other available FNS nutrition assistance programs, such as Summer Meals, SNAP, and WIC, to help ensure kids have consistent access to critical nutrition when school is out. The federal government provides 100% of the money for food assistance, which equates to \$62.7 million for the state of Alabama to over 545,000 children.



THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE SO-SO



PATRICK McWHORTER
Legislative Representative
The McWhorter Group

This year’s session was a mixed bag for the AGA, so I broke it down into the good, the bad and the so-so.

The legislature finished its 30th and final day of the 2024 regular session on May 9th . The legislature finalized both state budgets for 2024, sending a record \$3.3 billion to the General Fund and \$9.3 billion to the Education Trust Fund. This year’s session was a mixed bag for the AGA, so I broke it down into the good, the bad and the so-so.

THE GOOD

- **HB73** – Rep. Phillip Pettus – caps real property tax assessments annually. The business community was successful amending

this bill in the Senate before final passage, and the House agreed to their amendments. We were not successful in lowering the maximum annual increase to 5%, but we removed the arbitrary panel of tax collectors and assessors working with the Dept. of Revenue and extended the “sunset” (expiration) to 2026. Legislators will have to vote to extend or make it permanent. Signed by Governor Act #2024-344.

- **HB 144** – Rep. Danny Garrett, the education budget, received final approval and includes \$10 million to fund startup costs for summer EBT for 2025. Under this program, about 545,000 children would receive \$40 per month for three months over the summer in federal funding. Signed by Governor Act #2024-428.

- **HB205** – Rep. Prince Chestnut – requires all retail establishments from banning cash as a payment source. Died in Commerce and Small Business Committee.
- **HB230** – Rep. Margie Wilcox, removes the annual reporting requirement for foreign and domestic corporations. Signed by the Governor. Act #2024-213.
- Both **HB236** and **SB62**, to remove the sales tax from feminine hygiene products and baby products failed to receive a final vote and are dead.
- **HB262** – Rep. Brock Colvin permitting the sale of alcoholic beverages in unincorporated areas of Marshall County if approved by the County Commission has been signed by Governor. Act #2024-254.

Continued on page 9

- **HB358** – Rep. Anthony Daniels – establishing employer tax credit and childcare provider tax credit, received final approval, and was signed immediately by Governor. Act #2024-303.
- **HB441** – Rep. Danny Garrett – Growing Alabama Act, the Alabama Jobs Act and the governing definitions and power granted to Innovate Alabama rely on the federal definition of New Market Tax Credit census tracts for eligible projects. The federal map of census tracts will change on September 1, 2024, making some communities that are currently eligible for state incentives ineligible. This bill allows existing communities to still qualify for the named initiatives and incentives. Act 2024-441.

- **SB53** – Sen. Arthur Orr – eliminates the eligibility to work for persons of 14 and 15 years of age. Act 2024-352.
- **SB119** – Sen. Robert Stewart – increase penalties for child labor law violations. Signed by Governor Act #2024-285.
- **SB231** – Sen. Arthur Orr – would condition an employer’s eligibility for economic development incentives upon the employer refraining from certain practices relating to employee representation by a labor organization. Act 2024-340.
- **SB247** – Sen. Steve Livingston – Alabama Workforce Transformation Act – merges and consolidates duplicative workforce development agencies, programs, and funding

into one single state agency. Act #2024-115.

- **SB258** – Sen. Keith Kelley, brings AL commercial driver’s license requirements into conformity with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations. Act#2024-245.

THE SO-SO

- **SB259** – Sen. Minority Leader Bobby Singleton. Once again, our Ready to Drink (RTD) legislation failed because soft drink wholesalers and beer/wine wholesalers would not compromise on franchise language.
- **HB151 & HB152** – Rep. Chris Blackshear, would have created a constitutional amendment and enabling legislation for a state lottery and legalized gambling was caught between many different competing interests including Alfa,

Continued on page 10

different competing interests including Alfa, Poarch Creek Indians, etc. The Senate wiped out a package the House spent a year researching and preparing, and in the end failed to adopt a compromise package by one vote. So no lottery – again.

- **HB65** – Rep. Barbara Drummond – regulation of retail sale of electronic nicotine delivery devices. Failed in the Senate. We have collaborated with allies on this legislation the

past several years, but it always runs into problems in the Senate.

- **HB66** – Rep. Chip Brown – additional labeling of seafood products required. We were able to collaborate with the sponsor and allies to reduce the requirements of this act substantially. Signed by Governor. Act #2024-339.
- **SB191** – Sen. Sam Givhan, allows the ABC to own their warehouse buildings. Signed by Governor. Act # 2024-357.

- **SB309** – Sen. Steve Livingston – require ABC state stores to collect full local sales taxes on retail sales. Signed by Governor. Act #2024-333.

THE BAD

- **HB388** – Rep. David Standridge, imposes a tax on all vape products, but with no method of collection or remittance. Signed by Governor. Act #2024-445.
- **SB23** – Sen. Jack Williams, bans the sale of “fake meat.” Signed by Governor. Act #2024-252.



As always, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick McWhorter at 334-221-0220 or patrick@themcwhortergroup.com if you have questions or concerns.



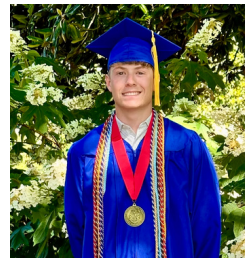
The Alabama Grocers Education Foundation’s newest event, Fund the Future is set to be a thrilling and charitable affair, offering attendees the chance to win big while supporting a great cause. The event will feature raffle packages with exciting themes such as Golf, Sports, Stock the Bar, and Travel. Attendees will have the chance to participate in games like Head or Tails for a shot at winning diamonds and Rock, Paper, Scissors for the opportunity to win rare bourbon bottles including Thomas Handy and George T. Stagg varieties. The event proceeds support the Alabama Grocers Education Foundation's scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs, furthering education and career development in the grocery industry.

Voices of Gratitude: Scholarship Recipients Share the Impact of Winning the AGEF Scholarship



“Winning this scholarship means so much to not only me, but also my family. Being awarded this scholarship will alleviate some of the financial cost for my family and me. My education has always been a main priority of mine, so to be able to take it as far as possible while lessening the burden of the cost of a higher education will allow me to do my best with less worry.” - Braewyn Arceneaux, recipient of the Parent Scholarship from Rouses Enterprises LLC.

“I am incredibly grateful and honored to have been given the opportunity to apply for and receive this scholarship from the AGEF. This scholarship will help me pursue my academic goals which is something I value greatly.” - Thomas Neely, recipient of the Parent Scholarship from Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED, Inc.



“Winning this scholarship means the world to me, as this will help me reach my goals at UNA. It gives me the confidence and security to chase my career dreams. I will be forever grateful for this scholarship!”
- Ellissa Burks, recipient of the Student Scholarship from Hoppers Family Market.

For more information about our Foundation, please visit <https://alabamagrocers.org/foundation/>.

Together our impact is great!



FOOD INDUSTRY FINEST LUNCHEON

OCT. 30, 2024
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
THE CLUB



**RETAILER
OF THE YEAR**

Kamal Constantine
Piggly Wiggly Gulf Coast



**WHOLESALER
OF THE YEAR**

Charles Weathington
UNFI



**VENDOR
OF THE YEAR**

Don Richardson
Coca-Cola Bottling
Company UNITED



PROPERTY TAX RELIEF COMING TO HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESSES



PAUL DeMARCO
AGA General Counsel
Parsons, Lee & Juliano, PC

There will be a lot of debate about both the best and worst bills passed during the last session of the Alabama Legislature.

There are plenty of nominees that could be considered.

Alabama property owners would probably give the award to a new law that will cap annual property tax appraisals at no more than 7 percent each year. The legislation, that will apply to all residential and commercial property, will require lawmakers to renew the cap again in five years. The bill faced a lot of debate and underwent opposition requiring multiple amendments from municipalities and county commissions.

Through the years, property taxes in Alabama have increased by double digits, putting property owners in more debt with the annual appraisals by local governments. Yet, the new tax relief was a long time coming after tax appraisals were moved to go effect annually.

Of course, the law will help the average residential property owner. For businesses though, this is a gamechanger. Commercial property taxes have dramatically increased, thus squeezing the budgets of companies already struggling through inflation and burdensome regulations. With the cap on property taxes, hopefully the cap will mean there will be more dollars that can be used to reinvest in their business.

There will be several exceptions to the new cap for tax appraisals, but overall, this is good news for the wallets and pocketbooks of Alabamians considering

the effect on family incomes from rising cost across the spectrum. There were other bills this past session that would have raised cost on the average Alabama family, so state representatives and senators should be commended for getting this bill passed. While this bill is now law, legislators need to be preparing for what they can do again to help Alabama business owners in this tough economic environment.

Alabama State Representatives and Senators get plenty of criticism, so praise is in order for the Alabama Legislature when they get it right. While the law does not go into effect until October, there is reason for Alabama taxpayers to celebrate.

Paul DeMarco is a former member of the Alabama House of Representatives and serves as the general counsel of the Alabama Grocers Association.

A GIG NEW WORLD



MICHAEL SANSOLO

Retail Food Industry Consultant

As if retailers didn't have enough trouble finding interested and qualified workers, a major new wrinkle in the job market has just made the entire process way more difficult.

And it's an issue you need to understand quickly because in many ways, it's near impossible to see.

In years past existing businesses had a certain advantage when a newcomer came to town. Because of the realities of site selection and building, you'd frequently find out about a new entrant well in advance as the new company would seek zoning approvals and start a construction project.

But in the new work of electronic commerce, that small advantage no longer holds as now a new electronic commerce competitor can enter your market without giving any notice. Suddenly they are just there.

The same holds true for the job market. Again, in the past you'd see other stores posting help wanted signs or even ads on job sites. But now, thanks to Internet based companies, there is no such notice. And that's a big reason why the job market has gotten so much tougher. Today's job seekers can build a full schedule or even create a second job (or side hustle) by signing on with companies such as Uber, Lyft, Door Dash and more.

Those jobs offer unusual flexibility allowing workers to set their own schedules and determine how hard they wish to work day-by-day or week-by-week.

In many ways, this entire movement of gig or task workers is going unnoticed, but it shouldn't. According to latest estimates nearly 70 million Americans are now employed in the Gig Economy, adding to the worker crunch you're likely feeling due to historically low unemployment rates. And industry estimates suggest the number is only going to grow in years to come. And just as with so much else today you need to find new and creative ways to compete.

Remember, that compensation isn't limited to salary and benefits. Compared with gig jobs you likely don't require staffers to use their own vehicles on the job and you might have some lesser-known benefits that add to the compensation package.

Continued on page 15

In addition there are now easily adapted smartphone applications that can help your company offer more flexibility in scheduling or even provide gig-like work opportunities for folks seeking a few more hours or a side hustle of their own.

But understand the challenges of this new world. Unlike Door Dash and others, you need a clear sense of the staffing you will have at any given hours so you need pair greater flexibility with clear messaging on the store's needs. Here again, though, the challenge comes with opportunity.

For example, many two-income households may also have child-care needs. The long hours supermarkets feature mean couples might be able to work schedules so that both partners can hold jobs, just at different times of the day, meaning someone is always home with the children.

You might even find workers in your own stores and companies who would love to get some extra hours and might find a way to do just that with you, possibly in a different role than their regular job.

The Gig Economy offers many benefits to the countless millions now involved and you need understand that as well. Gig workers run the gamut of ages from teen-agers looking for some part-time work to senior citizens simply looking to augment their retirement income.

But a large number of gig workers are also economically stressed, which means they need to receive their compensation far faster than in the past. Many gig companies and even some brick and mortar operators now offer workers the chance to get paid daily, in some cases within minutes of ending their shift. That might be a challenge for traditional payroll systems, but again it may be an essential change to

compete for these many workers.

The truth is that none of this is science fiction or future predictions. The challenges and realities of gig economy jobs already exists, but it's simply grown exponentially during the Covid pandemic when shopping patterns changed so radically and home delivery of all types of products became standard for many shoppers.

No matter what the size of your company, these are challenges you need to understand and address both at the front lines and at headquarters. Attracting today's workers, much as it is with attracting shoppers, requires a level of targeted activity like never before.

And as it is with so many things today, what was good enough in the past is no longer good enough. Just as you shoppers can find it so easy to take their money to a competitor's stores or website, your staffers can take their time and expertise to a wide array of operators, many of whom you have never seen or heard of.

CONSUMERS' HABITS SHIFT ON GROCERY SHOPPING



JENNIFER HATCHER
Chief Public Policy Officer
Food Marketing Institute

Consumers habits shift as they maintain a positive outlook on grocery shopping.

As we approach the summer months when Americans will be shopping for barbecues, July 4th celebrations and other outdoor activities with families and friends, it stands to reason that they will continue keeping a keen eye on food prices and finding ways to maximize the value they get from their primary grocery stores. The good news is that despite the inflationary environment over the past 18 months, shoppers continue to enjoy food shopping as much as ever.

FMI's newest annual survey, U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends 2024: Finding Value, provides a crucial snapshot of consumer behavior and sentiment amid ongoing concerns about the impact of inflation on the cost of groceries.

To manage higher prices, today's grocery shoppers navigate purchasing decisions through a more expansive understanding of value, with increased attention to quality and optimizing purchases for relevance and waste reduction at home. Even channels strongly positioned around offering low prices are often evaluated in terms of criteria that are not just about price, but also include the quality or healthfulness of their product selection or their shopping experience.

This is not to say that price is irrelevant to the value equation – 91% of shoppers concerned with rising prices

have made some changes to their shopping habits to achieve better price value. While half of shoppers say they are looking for more deals, 32% are buying fewer items and fewer are cutting back on key food categories or attributes such as organic (15%) or fresh items (14%).

Consumers are also recalibrating where and how they shop to align their purchasing habits with whatever method works best for them and their families. Despite a decade-long trend toward mass retailers, 40% of shoppers now choose supermarkets as their main store, compared to 32% opting for mass stores. This is in part due to a shift toward convenience and one-stop shopping as well as the wider selection that supermarkets tend to offer. And while frequent online shopping has almost completely returned to pre-pandemic levels, shoppers also increasingly value digital touchpoints.

Continued on page 17

Fifty percent of shoppers use digital coupons, surpassing the 37% who use physical coupons. Additionally, 37% of grocery shoppers now use their mobile phones to compare prices across stores, a 28-point increase from 2016. This suggests an opportunity for retailers to think strategically not only about how they replicate physical shopping experiences online, but also how they integrate digital experiences in their brick-and-mortar stores. Even as consumer habits continue to shift to find the best value, shoppers tell us they still enjoy shopping for food.

FMI's newly launched U.S. Grocery Shopper Sentiment Index – which accounts for shoppers' collective feelings and attitudes toward grocery shopping as well as their feelings about their current primary store – finds that grocery shopper sentiment reached a post-COVID-19 pandemic high in 2023 (of 72 out of 100) and continues to remain elevated (70 out of 100 currently),

with more than half of shoppers surveyed expressing positive feelings toward grocery shopping. This strong score, achieved at the virtual peak of price inflation, suggests that higher prices have done little to degrade the overall experience and outcomes shoppers encounter when grocery shopping.

Additionally, Americans continue to prioritize eating meals with family and cooking at home. Eighty-eight percent say they believe eating together is at least somewhat important; within that number, 31% say it is very important and 32% say it's extremely important. Furthermore, 43% of adults say they "like" or "love" cooking, which is similar to levels reported for the past five years.

The data also indicates enjoyment varies across generations. Millennials and Gen Z say they 'love' or 'like' grocery shopping more than Gen X or Baby Boomers do. The research shows that where and how consumers shop for food also differs depending on age –

it's not just that younger shoppers have more comfort with online grocery shopping; younger shoppers are also more likely to have shifted their trips away from supermarkets and toward mass and other channels.

Ultimately, food shopping remains a labor of love – if not always a labor of love. Understanding why can illuminate opportunities to better serve value-seeking grocery shoppers. While offering savings and deals continue to be important to shoppers, additional opportunities can be found by recognizing the role of food engagement and experience for American consumers as they navigate today's food shopping challenges.

To download the U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends 2024: Finding Value report, visit www.fmi.org/grocerytrends. In addition to this report, FMI released reports on [Online Shopping](#) and [Eating & Cooking](#). These reports are part of a five-part U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends series this year.

AGA WISHES TO RECOGNIZE OUR DIAMOND & FOUR STAR SPONSORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE 2023 AGA ANNUAL SHOW

DIAMOND SPONSORS



FOUR STAR SPONSORS



AGA NEW MEMBERS



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Julie Patrick
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EXHIBIT HALL THEME

MARDI GRAS Party

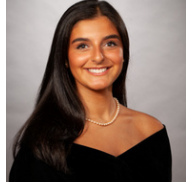


Annual Show
Bringing Grocers to the Table
JULY 30, 2024

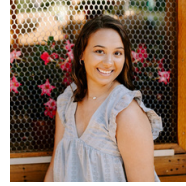
2024-2025 AGEF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Anna Agan
Parent Scholarship
Campbell's Snacks



Marisa Ajlouny
Student Scholarship
Buy-Lo Quality Foods



Anna Anderson
Bill Ragland
Memorial Scholarship



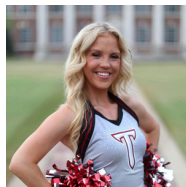
Braewyn Arceneaux
Parent Scholarship
Rouses Enterprises LLC



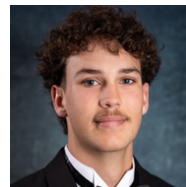
Ciel Arceneaux
Parent Scholarship
Rouses Enterprises LLC



Jackson Aultman
Student Scholarship
Buffalo Rock/Pepsi



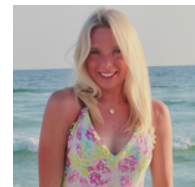
Kamryn Bailey
Parent Scholarship
Coca-Cola Bottling
Company UNITED, Inc.



Landon Bethune
Student Scholarship
Coca Cola Bottling
Company UNITED, Inc.



Lila Blackburn
Piggly Wiggly of
Red Bay Piggyback
Scholarship



Kaitlyn Bolas
Mary Lee Hardin
Memorial Scholarship
Bunzl Distribution



Lily Bradford
Parent Scholarship
Grocery Outlet



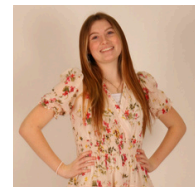
Sarah Brown
Piggly Wiggly Alabama
Distributing Piggyback
Scholarship



Christian Burks
Student Scholarship
Douglas Food Valu



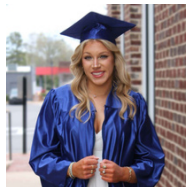
Elissa Burks
Student Scholarship
Hoppers Family Market



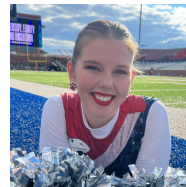
Catherine Burnett
James L. Smotherman
Memorial Scholarship
A & R Super Markets, Inc.



Jacob Burnett
Parent Scholarship
Byars | Wright



Amanda Bussey
Student Scholarship
Publix Super Markets, Inc.



Breanna Cales
Parent Scholarship
Rouses Enterprises



Lukas Carter
Parent Scholarship
Mitchell Grocery Corp.



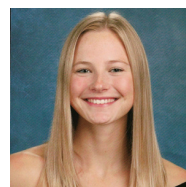
Elaina Collins
Parent Scholarship
Mitchell Grocery Corp.



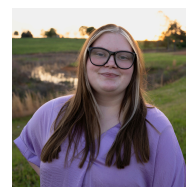
Halie Crawley
Parent Scholarship
Piggly Wiggly of Troy



Samuel Cunningham
Parent Scholarship
Buffalo Rock/Pepsi



Katelyn Elliot
Parent Scholarship
Mayfield Dairy Farms

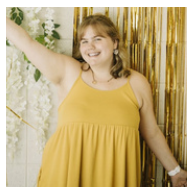


Abigail Garrett
Parent Scholarship
Piggly Wiggly



Hagen Hagood
Gateway Foods
Piggyback Scholarship

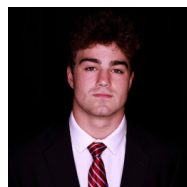
2024-2025 AGEF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS CONT.



Anna Ingram
Student Scholarship
Publix Super Markets, Inc.



Maycee Leblanc
Student Scholarship
Rouses Enterprises



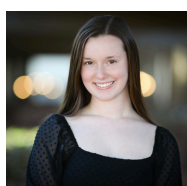
Michael Lorino
Parent Scholarship
Contri Brothers Gift
Baskets and Flowers



Kylie Lovett
Parent Scholarship
Walmart



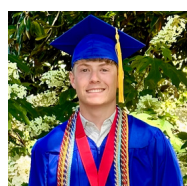
Hunter Medley
Parent Scholarship
Publix Super Markets, Inc.



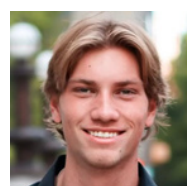
JoAnna Mitchell
Parent Scholarship
Mitchell Grocery Corp.



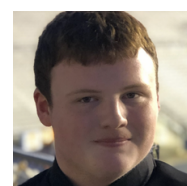
Caroline Moore
Parent Scholarship
Baker Foods



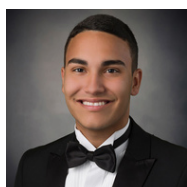
Thomas Neely
Parent Scholarship
Coca-Cola Bottling
Company UNITED, Inc.



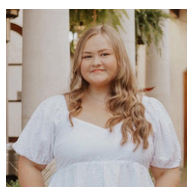
Maddox Padgett
Associated Grocers
of the South Piggyback
Scholarship



Ethan Parker
Jack Mitchell
Memorial Scholarship



Manuel Patino
Student Scholarship
Publix Super Markets, Inc.



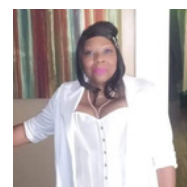
Kacy Porter
Parent Scholarship
Coca-Cola Bottling
Company UNITED, Inc.



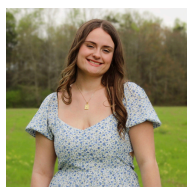
Joshua Potter
Parent Scholarship
Red Diamond



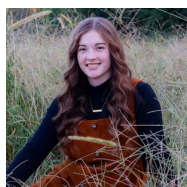
Brittan Sandlin
Student Scholarship
Sons of Parrish



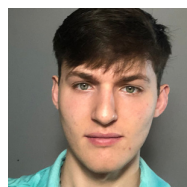
Wanda Shelby
Student Scholarship
Piggly Wiggly



Destiny Sitz
Mary G. Hardin
Memorial Scholarship
Johnson's Giant Food



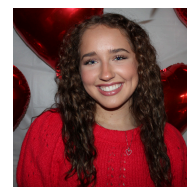
Kinsley Smith
Parent Scholarship
Bruce's Foodland



Taylor Smitha
Student Scholarship
Piggly Wiggly River Run



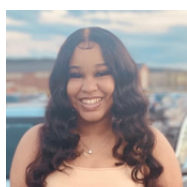
Jalen Vinson
Piggly Wiggly of
Red Bay Piggyback
Scholarship



Jaycee Vinson
Piggly Wiggly of
Red Bay Piggyback
Scholarship



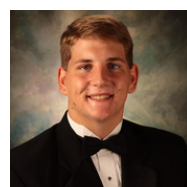
Jackson Wilkerson
Parent Scholarship
The Pictsweet
Company



Kylah Williams
Associated Grocers
of the South Piggyback
Scholarship



Lucy Wills
Parent Scholarship
Red Diamond



Jacob Woder
Gateway Foods
Piggyback Scholarship



Dawson Wright
Piggly Wiggly of
Red Bay Piggyback
Scholarship

2024 AGEF GOLF OUTING

The Alabama Grocers Education Foundation (AGEF) hosted their 31st Annual Golf Outing on Thursday, April 4, 2024, at Timberline Golf Club in Calera, Alabama. The event raised over \$58,000 for the AGEF scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs for Alabama Grocers Association (AGA) members and their dependents.

Because of the tremendous support of our members at this event, our 2024 AGEF Golf Outing set a record for the most money raised for our Foundation at our golf tournaments since 1993. AGEF has awarded over \$1.4 million dollars in scholarships to date.

The First Place Team of the Golf Outing was Designer Greetings. Don Francisco's Coffee's team came in Second Place, and Faribault Foods took home Third Place. Alex Johnson of Faribault Foods won The Longest Drive Award, and Eddie Parnell of Reynolds American was awarded Closest to the Pin.

The AGEF Golf Outing would not be as successful without the many companies that sponsored this event. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, UNFI. A special thanks to Greer's and Red Diamond for sponsoring our breakfast. Thank you to Alabama Crown Distributing Company, Byars | Wright, and Publix Super Markets, Inc., for sponsoring lunch. Thank you to DCR for sponsoring the beverage cart, and thank you to Bunzl Distribution for sponsoring the goody bags.

Additional Hole and Half Hole Sponsors of the AGEF 2024 Golf Outing include: A & R Super Markets, Inc.; AGA Health & Wellness Trust; Alabama Power; American Transport & Recycling; Associated Grocers of the South; Associated Wholesale Grocers; BIOLYTE; BK Sales LLC; Blue Bell Creameries; BTC Wholesale Distributors; Buffalo Rock/Pepsi; Bunzl Distribution; Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED; Designer Greetings; Don Francisco's Coffee; Faribault Foods; Federated Insurance; Food City; Gulf Distributing; Imperial Dade; Keurig Dr Pepper; Lewis Bakery; Merrill Lynch; Mission Foods; Mitchell Grocery Corporation; Organ Preservation Consultants; Piggly Wiggly Alabama Distributing Company; Red Diamond; Reynolds American; Tampico Beverages; United-Johnson Brothers of Alabama; and UTZ/Golden Flake. Thank you to the many companies who contributed products for the goody bags and our meals. Thank you all for your support.

"Thank you to all our members for supporting this great cause," said Tom Sayers, Publix Super Markets, Inc. "I look forward to us coming together to play a fun round of golf, while serving our communities and raising money for scholarships."

"Encouraging career development and furthering education in the grocery industry through our tuition reimbursement and scholarship programs would not be possible without the many supporters we have had today and since AGEF's inception," said Ellie Taylor, AGA President/CEO. "AGA is happy to be a small part of helping our members and their families advance their careers and education."

Please mark your calendars for the following 2024 events: AGA Annual Show on July 28th - 31st at Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort in Destin, Florida; AGEF Clay Shoot on October 10th at Selwood Farm in Alpine, Alabama; and the Alabama Food Industry Finest Luncheon on October 30th at The Club in Birmingham, Alabama.



2024 BUY ALABAMA'S BEST DAY ON THE LAWN

The Alabama Grocers Association (AGA), the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, and the Alabama Food Manufacturers and Producers Association (AFMPA) held a media briefing and sampling event for the Buy Alabama's Best campaign on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, on the Alabama State Capitol Lawn.

Speakers included Honorable Governor Kay Ivey; Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries Commissioner Rick Pate; AFMPA President Melinda Drummond; AGA Chairman Bob Crawford; Cause Marketing and Corporate Partnerships at Children's of Alabama Grace Graffeo; and AGA President/CEO and AFMPA Executive Director Ellie Taylor.

The Buy Alabama's Best Campaign formed in 2006 when four Alabama companies, the Alabama Grocers Association, and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries saw a need to identify products that were made in Alabama. Today, Buy Alabama's Best has grown to over 35 companies that are either headquartered in Alabama, or produce, manufacture, or make their products in our state.

Alabama food manufacturers and producers not only sell products in Alabama and employ Alabamians, but they also purchase vast amounts of raw farm products to make goods, paper, boxes and packaging. Alabama food product sales have a \$2 billion impact on Alabama's economy, tax base and along with the food service industries, employ one out of every four Alabamians.

Retailers throughout Alabama will be supporting this campaign in their stores with Alabama product displays, ads, signage, and special promotions. When consumers shop in their local grocery store, they can look for the Buy Alabama's Best logo under products to ensure they are buying the best products made right here in Alabama.

The Buy Alabama's Best Campaign is proud of their partnership with Children's of Alabama. Through this partnership, we have raised over \$855,000 for the charity through icon sales, donations, and grants.

Founded in 1911, Children's of Alabama provides medical care for ill and injured children. With more than 3.5 million square feet, it is one of the largest pediatric medical facilities in the United States. The Alabama Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders treats more than 90% of Alabama's children with cancer and blood disorders and is committed to finding a cure for more than 2,000 children each year.

"Thank you to our state leaders and community members who are such strong supporters of our Alabama companies," said Ellie Taylor, President/CEO of AGA and Executive Director of AFMPA. "We are proud of our local partnership with our neighbor, Children's of Alabama, because they have touched the lives of so many in our state."

For a complete list of Buy Alabama Best participating companies, visit www.buyalabamasbest.org.



NGA FLY-IN



Fly-In for Fair Competition

MAY 21-22, 2024 • WASHINGTON, D.C.

On May 21 and 22, 2024, the Alabama Grocers Association collaborated with the National Grocers Association at the Annual Fly-In for Fair Competition. Our members advocated for issues concerning SNAP & the Farm Bill, Swipe Fees, and Antitrust. We extend a special thanks to Patrick McWhorter of The McWhorter Group; Jay Mitchell of Mitchell Grocery Corporation; Wade Payne of Food Giant/Mitchell; and Brian Patterson of Piggly Wiggly Alabama Distributing Company for their attendance and advocacy efforts. It is crucial to inform our legislators about the significant role of the grocery industry and its impact on Alabama. The state's grocery sector employs over 500,000 individuals, contributes more than \$1.2 billion in state and local taxes, and has an annual economic impact exceeding \$12 billion.



TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

ALABAMA GROCERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Are you looking to grow your career through college courses and professional development?

Apply for the Alabama Grocers Education Foundation Tuition Reimbursement! Funds are available year round!



UPCOMING EVENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS



MARDI GRAS Party

Annual Show
Bringing Grocers to the Table

JULY 28-31, 2024
SANDESTIN GOLF & BEACH RESORT



ALABAMA GROCERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Fund the Future

A night of impact to further education and career development in the grocery industry

July 29, 2024
AGA Annual Show
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort



ALABAMA GROCERS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

AGEF CLAY SHOOT
October 10, 2024
Selwood Farm



FOOD INDUSTRY Finest

October 30, 2024
The Club
Birmingham, AL

 RETAILER OF THE YEAR Kamal Constantine Piggly Wiggly Gulf Coast	 WHOLESALE OF THE YEAR Charles Weathington UNFI	 VENDOR OF THE YEAR Don Richardson Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED
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AGA ANNUAL SHOW
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort

JULY 28-31 2024 **JULY 13-16 2025** **JULY 5-8 2026** **JULY 25-28 2027**

Bringing Grocers to the Table

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What You Need,

Fill Rate—97.5%

When You Need It,

On Time Deliveries—97.8%

For the Lowest Cost!

Willing To Compare

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For More Detailed Information Please Contact:

Billy Leverett
Vice President Of Sales
205-808-4821



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