

## ***Help with our fall recruitment drive!***

**Arise regional clusters are setting goals this fall for new member recruitment.** Our new strategic plan, adopted at the annual meeting, commits us to recruiting 140 individuals as new Associate Members this year, as we recruit 30 organizational members, for a total of 170.

**Do you have friends you can recruit as Arise Associates?** What about congregations or community groups? People can sign up at our website, or we can send you a stack of membership brochures. Just contact Jamie Keith, our new development director, at (800) 832-9060.

## **Tax reform leads agenda –**

# **Members commit to a full plate**

**Representatives of 52 Arise member groups voted at the annual meeting to tackle five issues in 2002.**  
(Listed in order of votes received.)

- 1 tax reform**
- 2 landlord-tenant issue**
- 3 public transportation**
- 4 moratorium on executions**
- 5 constitutional reform**

Two more issues, **child care** and **unfair lending practices**, received substantially fewer votes, but the group voted to add them to the action agenda as well. In fact, the annual meeting occurred during a special session of the Legislature, and the only Arise issue in play was an unfair lending practice, the payday loan issue. *[See story on Page 4.]*

Our membership includes strong bases of support for each of the issues. That doesn't mean we expect easy wins in a Legislature fractured by election year politics. On the other hand, 2002 also offers *opportunities* in the election campaign. There is a head of steam building, from sources as diverse as editors and the Business Council, behind a campaign to give one basic message to every candidate for state office: "If you claim we don't need more money for state services, we won't support you."

## **POVERTY QUIZ**

***What percentage of Alabama adults are still on welfare?***

Less than a third of 1%. In January, 2001, there were 9,411 left on Family Assistance – less than 0.29% of adults in the state.

## ***Looking for leads in all the tough places***

**We just need 12 votes.** The Knight Plan for income tax reform gained 51 supporters in the Alabama House last spring, but it takes 63 votes for passage. Winning the last 12 may take as much effort as it took to win the

first 51 – especially since we have fewer leads in the remaining districts.

**We don't have much time.** Since 2002 is an election year, the legislative session starts a month early – in January. We plan to use our remaining weeks this fall to build an infrastructure of support in 13 swing districts where we know few people and another 10 where we know a good many, and we need your help in finding good leads. If you know someone in the swing districts listed, please call the ACPP organizer for that district.

## Priority districts for the Knight Plan

Call **Stan Johnson** if you know good leads in these legislators' districts:

**Bill Dukes** Decatur

**Craig Ford** Etowah County, including Gadsden

Call **Nathan Morgan** if you know good leads in these legislators' districts:

**James Hamilton** Lauderdale County, including Rogersville and outskirts of Florence and Sheffield

**Richard Laird** Clay, Randolph, Chambers Counties, including Ashland, Wedowee

**Allen Layson** Pickens and Tuscaloosa Counties

**Jimmy Martin** Chilton and Shelby Counties, including Clanton, Montevallo, and Calera

**Frank McDaniel** Marshall and DeKalb Counties, including Albertville and Boaz

**Mike Millican** Marion and Winston Counties, including Double Springs, Nauvoo

**Neal Morrison** Cullman

**Johnny Mack Morrow** Franklin & Colbert Counties, including Russellville and Red Bay

**Charles Newton** Butler, Crenshaw, and Lowndes Counties, including Greenville

**James Warren** Baldwin, Conecuh and Monroe Counties; Bay Minette, Evergreen, and Monroeville

Call **Pres Harris** if you know good leads in Selma, home of **Rep. Ed Maul**

**We have a different strategy for another ten swing districts.** These are places where we have lots of Arise members; instead of looking for a few leads, we need to be able to generate a *quantity* of calls, letters, and e-mails. These representatives take the position that our schools have enough money. We have to maintain that Alabama's income tax is unfair, that most of their constituents will see a tax cut under the Knight Plan, and that our schools need \$290 million in additional revenue.

Arise caucuses in Birmingham and Montgomery have not yet chosen their priority districts. Here is the list so far:

**Blaine Galliher** Etowah & St. Clair Counties; Gadsden

**Victor Gaston** Mobile

**Mac Gipson** Prattville

**Jim Haney** Madison County

**Mike Hill** Montevallo, Shelby County

**Mike Hubbard** Auburn

**Tim Parker** Tuscaloosa

**Chris Pringle** Mobile

### **Who do you call?**

#### **ACPP organizers are assigned geographically:**

**Pres Harris** covers Auburn, Selma, Montgomery, Wilcox County. [presarise@aol.com](mailto:presarise@aol.com) (334) 832-9060

**Stan Johnson** covers Birmingham, Decatur, Gadsden, Huntsville. [stan@stanjohnson.com](mailto:stan@stanjohnson.com) (205) 833-3301

**Nathan Morgan** covers the Wiregrass, Calhoun County, Florence, Mobile, Tuscaloosa, and lots of rural areas. [Nathanarise@home.com](mailto:Nathanarise@home.com) (205) 394-3923

## **Arise stops payday loan roller coaster**

by **Karen Brown**, Arise Policy Analyst

Fasten your seatbelts. Hands inside the coaster. The roller coaster ride is about to start.

Sen. Gerald Dial's Senate Bill 30, the bill to legalize payday loans, passed the Alabama Senate 27-4. Rep. Betty Carol Graham's HB 118, the House version, passed the House Banking & Insurance Committee, which ignored requests by Reps. James Buskey and William Parker for a public hearing. (Buskey and Parker were absent; they were meeting with Chief Justice Moore.) Arise, AARP and the Alabama Consumer Finance Association were present, but did not get to testify against the bill. The coaster just dropped 100 feet.

After complaints by Parker and Buskey, a hearing was set for two days later (the coaster is now creeping upward); the committee voted to reconsider the bill, but then voted again to give it a favorable report. The coaster drops another 100 feet. Reps. Haney and Buskey voted no.

As the special session (and our roller coaster) glides to a halt without the bill coming to a floor vote, we can raise our hands and scream: Our members' lobbying efforts caused a growing number of representatives,

including Jim Carns, John Hawkins, Perry Hooper, and Chris Pringle, to agree that it is a bad bill.

## **Alabama falling behind**

In a September Census report on poverty, the disturbing news for Alabama was its \$2,582 decline in median income, a drop of 6.8% from a year earlier. Only three states lost ground on income: Alabama, Washington, and Louisiana.

Alabama median household income for 1999-2000 dropped to \$35,267.

“This may mean that states like Washington and Alabama were the first to feel the effects of the economic downturn,” said Mary Weidler, Arise Policy Analyst. She pointed out that during the same period, Alabama’s unemployment rate rose by two-tenths of a percent while the national rate fell by three-tenths of a percent.

Bureau of Labor Statistics data from the same period showed slower employment growth in Alabama in each of four major sectors. For example, employment in Alabama's service sector grew 2.9%, compared to 3.8% in the U.S. The manufacturing sector saw a 2.3% drop in Alabama, compared to 0.9% in the U.S.

In the national Census data, median income rose for women and racial and ethnic minorities. The only workers to see a decline were men with full-time employment, who saw a \$362 drop.

“The Alabama income loss helps to explain why Alabama's tax collections are down,” said Weidler. “What worries us is the possibility of a downward spiral for education in this state. If our investment in human capital drops, we could see median income decline further, and that could mean that education funding drops even more. We can’t afford to let our schools slide down that slippery slope.”

Arise is promoting an income tax reform plan, sponsored by Rep. John Knight, which would increase education funding by \$290 million.

## **Special session coming?**

Legislators may return to Montgomery for a special session in November. Their task: to find a short-term solution to the education funding crisis.

Gov. Don Siegelman says he is not willing to impose proration again this year after last year's painful 6.2% cut. However, the state constitution gives him no choice if tax revenues fall short. It puts the "no new taxes governor" at odds with the "education governor."

Siegelman says he has experts working on a solution. One likely source is the corporate income tax, which was restructured in 1999 with a top rate of 6.5% to replace the revenue lost when the franchise tax was declared unconstitutional. However, the restructured tax brought in 30% less revenue than expected. Were the estimates flawed by mistake or by design? Is it simply a matter of the economy not doing well? Answering these questions is a first step toward crafting a solution. Siegelman is unlikely to call a special session until a proposed solution is completed.

## **Mark your calendar!**

**Jacksonville** tax reform seminar sponsored by Arise and the AAUW, 6:30 Th Nov. 1, Room 1103A, JSU Library

**Arise health caucus** 10:00 Fri Nov 2, Greater Birmingham Ministries

**The Alabama Cooperative Baptist Fellowship** will feature Arise, A+, and Voices in a program on children's poverty at its annual meeting 3:00-8:30 Mon Nov. 12, at First Baptist Church, Huntsville. The public is invited.

**Mobile** Arise cluster 7 pm Tu Nov 13 in Meeting Room 1, Providence Hospital

**Montgomery** Two Arise issue previews, both 6:00-7:30 pm at Jubilee Community Center:

**Mon Dec 3:** tax reform, housing, transportation

**Mon Jan 14:** moratorium, constitutional reform, child care

### ***A few words from Kimble –***

**We know where we're going** (...at least through 2004!) Our members put the finishing touches on our strategic plan at the Annual Meeting, concluding a year of work by our board. The work was funded by an organizational development grant from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation. Some highlights:

**Clusters:** By 2004 we will double the number of Arise regional clusters from seven to 14, targeting areas like Northwest and Southeast Alabama.

**Membership:** By 2004 we will grow from 140 to 210 member groups and increase giving by groups and individuals from \$77,000 to \$141,000. By 2004 we will organize 1,000 citizens for advocacy, twice what we have now. These 1,000 "Associate Members" will have done one of the following: sign up to act on e-mail alerts; report that they have written or called a policymaker in the last year; contribute financially; or attend a Lobby Day or other meeting with a legislator.

**Staff:** By 2004 we will add a development director (*done!*) and a fourth organizer.

**Legislative wins:** By 2004 we will achieve 3 issue wins.

**Racism:** The board identifies racism as a huge barrier to our success. By 2004 we will recruit board members from the Latino and disabilities communities, and we will continuously, explicitly address the connections between racism and poverty in Alabama.

***With peace,***

***Kimble Forrister***

## **BUDGET REPORT**

This is how Arise Citizens' Policy Project's income and expenditures compared with the budget for 7/1/00 to 6/30/01. Note that most member *groups* give to Alabama Arise, our 501(c)(4) partner, not to ACPP. (They gave \$44,230 to AA.)

<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
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Grants	\$ 318,866	\$ 316,033
Mbr groups	14,549	6,150
Individuals	37,636	36,667
Other	3,250	264
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$ 374,301</b>	<b>\$ 359,115</b>

Personnel	\$ 213,819	\$ 168,031
Ofc exp	48,291	35,530
Travel	22,721	18,797
Contracts	53,525	49,791

**Total expenditures**      **\$ 338,356**      **\$ 272,149**

*An audited review is available.*

**ACPP budget, 7/01 to 6/02**

Grants	\$ 231,831
Member groups	6,000
Individuals	42,000
Other	4,450
Grant carryover available	96,688

**Total available**      **\$ 380,969**

Personnel	\$ 249,879
Office expenses	55,485
Travel	26,145
Contract expenses	49,460

**Total expenditures**      **\$ 380,969**

## **Many thanks to our contributors!**

**These contributors gave to ACPP between March and June,** the end of our fiscal year. Their contributions helped us reach \$20,544 by the end of June, half of the \$40,000 we need to match the Ford and Mott grants.

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