

ALABAMA CITIZENS ACTION PROGRAM

STAFF:

Joe Godfrey, Executive Director

Bill Day, Education Director for American Character Builders

Administrative Assistants: Cheryl Corley and Sharon Cook

PURPOSE:

The Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP), originally founded in 1937 as the Alabama Temperance Alliance, serves as Alabama's "moral compass." This ministry provides an outlet for churches throughout Alabama to fulfill Christ's command to His followers to be "salt and light" (Matthew 5:13-16).

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ALCAP Board approves division of ministry so the work can expand into more schools

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ALCAP splits ministry into two entities

By Grace Thornton
November 5, 2009

For years, Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) has housed two distinct missions under one "roof" — an education program for students and a lobbying arm to evoke change in the state Legislature.

But this year, that changed when ALCAP split its ministry into two separate entities, a move Executive Director Joe Godfrey said



allows more clarity and better potential for funding. The 501(c)3 nonprofit that was the former ALCAP is keeping the education component and changing its name to American Character Builders (ACB). It will continue to provide volunteer teachers to schools across the state to teach students to make good decisions about issues ranging from bullying to drugs. The new entity, a 501(c)4 organization, is

taking the name ALCAP.

"That new organization will be the one that continues to go to the Legislature and lobby, as well as consult with churches that are fighting wet/dry votes and other things of that sort," Godfrey said.

This change was in the works before Godfrey came on board as associate executive director in 2007, and it was made for two main reasons, he explained.

First — funding.

Gifts to ALCAP continue to fund the base budget of both entities, including staffing and office space,

(See REASONS on page 2)



ALERT! 2010 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature is expected to see another major push to legalize gambling

With the start of the 2010 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature almost one month away (scheduled to begin on January 12, 2010), indications are that the gambling enterprises, wanting to legalize electronic bingo/slot machines in Alabama, will be monopolizing the attention of

legislators. One suggestion that is being floated would call for a Constitutional Amendment that would be placed on a state-wide ballot, asking the people of Alabama to vote on stopping all gambling in the state. On the surface, such a vote sounds like a good idea. However, when con-

sidering the millions of dollars the gambling interests would pour into such a state-wide campaign compared to the small amount of money that might be "scraped together" by opponents...

(See "PLAYING FIELD" on page 2)



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and church giving to ALCAP is not affected by the new 501(c) 4 status, Godfrey explained. He remains executive director over both entities, though their boards will be divided come Feb. 2, 2010, ALCAP's next board meeting.

In the past, the education program's connection to the lobbying arm prevented it from pursuing some avenues of funding, so Godfrey said it is hoped the division of organizations will remedy that problem and make more options available. Those options like private funding and grants will come in handy for a project ACB has in the works — educational kits for ACB teachers or school-teachers to use.

“Currently we have 14 different modules, and we are wanting to turn those into kits that will have a teacher's guide, a DVD and student booklets,” he said.

This will help especially in geographical areas where ACB might not have as many volunteer teachers available, said Bill Day, ACB director.

“With this approach, we will be able to put into their schools something they could use, either teachers themselves or for substitute teachers, with material that is almost self-presenting,” he said.

ACB is aiming to have the first four kits — on the most popular topics of drugs, tobacco, alcohol and bullying — ready for distribution by fall 2010.

“We want to have them made top quality, professionally produced, so to do that, we are going to have to raise some substantial monies,” Godfrey said.

The second benefit of the division is the clarity that comes with ACB's new name.

The education program's name change gives it a more recognizable name for its ministry, as well as casts a vision for the future, he added.

“We envision that someday we could make this material available outside of Alabama. There's the possibility of it becoming a nationwide resource,” Godfrey explained.

That's exciting, Day said, because many other states don't have resources like this available at all and “what we are doing here has been very successful.”

There's also talk of eventually making the material available to colleges' Baptist Campus Ministries or churches' student programs for ministers to teach.

“We are even looking at the possibility of repackaging this into a corporate context,” Godfrey said. “Many companies require affiliates to have some sort of drug education program for employees, and we could potentially provide that.”

For now, the ministry is focusing on its ongoing mission and producing the first set of kits. But the future looks bright for ALCAP and ACB, Godfrey said.

“PLAYING FIELD” (continued from page 1)...

...the “playing field” will not be level. Such a campaign will not be a fair fight.

Besides, the people of Alabama already voted! We live in a representative republic and we have elected House Members and Senators to go to Montgomery and

make decisions on issues that impact the lives of our citizenry. If the people of Alabama are going to vote on every issue that the legislators are afraid to tackle, then we do not need a state legislature.

In addition to the pressure that the gambling interests are expected to put on the legislators during the 2010 Regular Session, the 2010 elections will

undoubtedly see gambling money flowing into the campaign coffers of candidates for legislative offices, judicial positions and constitutional officers, including the gubernatorial race and the race for Lt. Governor. The faith community needs to be ready to research the candidates and where they stand on the gambling issue before going to the polls to vote!



Bills to watch in the 2010 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature

Representative Dwayne Bridges is already being attacked for a bill he plans to introduce which will cut off funding for any state-supported university—such as the University of Alabama, Birmingham (UAB) and the University of Alabama, Huntsville (UAH)—which offers benefits to same-sex partners of employees. Representative Bridges should be commended for his stand and ALCAP encourages everyone

UAB and UAH to offer benefits to “same-sex” partners of employees

in the faith community to contact your individual House Member and Senator and ask him/her to support this bill when it is introduced!

During the 2009 Regular Session, an organization that calls itself “Free the Hops” finally succeeded in getting their “gourmet beer” bill passed and signed into law. This law raises the level of alcohol permitted in a container of beer from 6% to 13.9%. We anticipate that this organization will be back, pushing for passage of other bills that will loosen the restrictions on beer and alcohol. Call your legislators and ask them to oppose all alcohol

expansion bills that might be introduced in 2010.

Representative Robert Bentley has already pre-filed three separate pro-life bills. Call or write your legislators and ask them to support Representative Bentley’s pro-life bills (HB39, HB40 and HB41).

Do not forget that, besides contacting our legislators, we should be lifting them to the Lord in prayer! God answers prayers and we need to ask Him to minister to and guide those who serve us in these leadership roles.

“Every feature of a slot machine...is calibrated to increase a gambler’s ‘time on device’....

Electronic Gambling Machines are addictive

Natasha Schüll, an assistant professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), writes: “It’s important for [people] to understand how these machines work. Every feature of a slot machine—its mathematical structure, visual graphics, sound dynamics, seating and screen ergonomics—is calibrated to increase a gambler’s ‘time on device’ and to encourage ‘play to extinction,’ which is industry jargon for play-

ing until all your money is gone. The machines have evolved from handles and reels to buttons and screens, from coins to credit cards, from a few games a minute to hundreds. Inside, complicated algorithms perform a high-tech version of ‘loading the dice’.... The machines are designed to exploit aspects of human psychology, and they do it well. In the eyes of the gaming industry, this may look like success, but it

comes at great expense for gamblers. “The rise in slots gambling, fueled in large part by these technological developments, has led to much higher rates of gambling addiction. This is evident at Gamblers Anonymous meetings in Las Vegas, where the vast majority of participants are machine gamblers.” [Quote from *The Washington Post* Sunday, July 6, 2008]

Municipal Options increasing

With the passage of HB175 during the 2009 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature and the override of the Governor’s veto by two votes in the House and one vote (after three attempts) in the Senate, municipal options in dry counties are on the rise. The law that was passed allows for a municipal option in a dry county in communities with a population of 1,000 or more.

The old law required a population of 7,000 or more. Already, ALCAP has met with church and community leaders from Hamilton, Guin and Winfield; from Hanceville, Vernon and Grove Hill; and we have had numerous phone conversations and written a host of e-mails in an attempt to assist these leaders in organizing to

fight these wet-dry votes. If you would like assistance from ALCAP in organizing to oppose wet-dry votes in your community or county, please contact our office. Phone: 205.985.9062 E-mail: jgodfrey@alcap.com





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Matthew 5:13-16KJV

13Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

“Alabama’s Moral Compass”



“Merry Christmas!”

With the “PC (Politically Correct) Patrol” trying to convince everyone to say “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas,” ALCAP is unashamed to be identified as a distinctly Christian ministry! Therefore we want to wish all of you who are a part of our ALCAP network and family a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!

If you would like to help our ministry with year-end contributions, please use the enclosed envelope to send in your financial gift. With the changes described in the first-page article concerning the ALCAP/ACB (American Character Builders) division, we ask that **churches, denominations and other non-profit organizations continue to make your checks payable to ALCAP or the Alabama Citizens Action Program.** However, if you, as an indi-

vidual, want to receive a tax deduction for your gift, you will need to make checks payable to American Character Builders.

You can also go online to **www.alcap.com** and click on the **PayPal** button to donate. You will be given a choice of PayPal buttons—one button for ALCAP and another for

American Character Builders.

Thank you for your continued support! Remember that ALCAP is the first line of defense for your local church! Through our lobbying efforts and the American Character Builders school programs, we are attempting to stop people from getting enslaved to addictive and destructive behaviors before they start!

If ALCAP and American Character Builders were not at work, there would be more lives destroyed and more homes broken by alcohol and other drug use, and by gambling and other addictive behaviors!



“Wise men still seek Him!”

ALCAP needs YOU! And, YOU need ALCAP!