

August 12 Luncheon Vestavia Hills Superintendent Dr. Todd Freeman & Vestavia Hills City Manager Jeff Downes

Dr. Todd Freeman is beginning his eighth year as superintendent of Vestavia Hills City Schools and is the 2026 Alabama Superintendent of the Year. From 2013 to 2018, Dr. Freeman was superintendent of Sylacauga City Schools in east Alabama. Prior to that, he spent twenty years in Auburn City Schools as a social studies teacher and coach, high school principal, and executive director of operations and services.



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Jeff Downes became the city manager for Vestavia Hills in July 2013 after retiring from the City of Montgomery, Alabama, where he spent the last decade of his 26-year career there as an executive level leader and carried the title of deputy mayor. He possesses a wealth of experience and understanding of municipal government and is especially adept at connecting people to promote community and economic growth. He espouses New Urbanist philosophy for creating quality living spaces in urban development, and economic development is a primary focus of his efforts in Vestavia Hills.



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LUNCHEON SPONSORS

Vestavia Hills Methodist Church

Vestavia Hills Methodist Church (VHMC) is proud to announce the completion of its newly renovated Student Ministry Center, designed to enhance spiritual growth and community engagement for youth in the Over the Mountain area.



This renovation reflects our dedication to creating meaningful spaces where students can grow in their faith journey. The redesigned space features modern worship facilities, collaborative learning areas, and technology upgrades that support both spiritual development and social connection. We hope the new Student Ministry Center will serve as a beacon for youth ministry in our community for years to

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United Community Bank

United Community has been providing customers with a secure and trusted place to bank since 1950. We operate on the philosophy of providing exceptional banking services while caring deeply for the communities we serve. To the best of our ability, we are serving customers in today's environment while also looking ahead to anticipate future needs. We do not have significant concentration, either by industry or by size. We have always believed in diversification, which helps provide stability in times of economic uncertainty.



United Community Bank proudly serving customers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina,

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Dear Chamber Members,

July was truly a month to remember in Vestavia Hills. Our annual I Love America Night was a stunning success, with attendance of nearly 7,000. What an incredible evening to come together and celebrate our patriotism, our families, and our shared sense of community. From the live music and family activities to the unforgettable fireworks show, the night reminded us just how special it is to live and work in Vestavia Hills.



A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our event sponsors, our partners at the City of Vestavia Hills, and the many city workers, police officers, and volunteers who helped bring the evening to life. Your support and dedication are what make events like this possible and meaningful for our entire community.

Now, as summer winds down, we look forward to all the excitement August brings. It's a time of fresh starts and new opportunities. In the words of philosopher John Dewey, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." At the Chamber, we recognize the critical role education plays in shaping not just students but our community's future.

We're proud to kick off August with several exceptional Chamber events that highlight the partnership between the city, our schools, and our citizens.

First, our Municipal Candidate Forum in partnership with the Vestavia Voice will give residents the opportunity to hear directly from the candidates running for Mayor and City Council. This is a chance to ask questions, engage in civic dialogue, and make informed decisions about our city's leadership. We hope to see you there.

Second, our August Chamber Luncheon will feature Dr. Todd Freeman, Superintendent of Vestavia Hills City Schools, and Jeff Downes, City Manager of Vestavia Hills. They will share insights on how the city and school system work together to support excellence in education. It's a great opportunity to learn more about what makes Vestavia's schools among the best in the state.

Another awesome event is happening in the Rocky Ridge Business District, hosted by the Rocky Ridge Merchants. Chalk the Hills is a great family event and the last celebration before school routines begin. What a fun way to unwind and get creative before structure and schedules become the new norm.

And don't forget, we have several exciting ribbon cuttings on the calendar this month. New businesses are opening and existing ones are growing. Be sure to check our website and come help us celebrate these milestones that continue to drive economic growth and community pride.

Thank you, as always, for being part of the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce. Whether it's celebrating together on a summer night or learning together at a luncheon, your involvement is what makes this Chamber so vibrant.

See you soon,

Keri Bates
Board Chair, 2025

Hello and Happy August!

As summer begins to wind down, we're gearing up for a busy and exciting season filled with events, opportunities, and celebrations. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the Chamber and business community. Here's what's happening this month—and what you won't want to miss!

August Chamber Luncheon Tuesday, August 12, 2025

- *Networking begins at 11:30 AM*
- *Buffet opens at 11:45 AM*
- **Location:** Vestavia Country Club
- **Guest Speakers:** Dr. Todd Freeman & City Manager Jeff Downes

Topic: *Healthy Tensions – The Nexus of Innovation in Vestavia Hills*

Join us for great food, networking, and thoughtful insights into the future of our City.



Michelle Hawkins

Municipal Candidate Forum Tuesday, August 19, 2025

- *Reception: 5:30 PM | Forum: 6:00 PM*

Location: Council Chambers, Vestavia Hills City Hall

Hear directly from your local candidates in a respectful, informative setting.

Moderator: Chris Stewart – Play-by-Play Announcer for UA football and men's basketball on the Crimson Tide Sports Network (CTSN).

Ribbon Cuttings & Open House

We're thrilled to celebrate with several new Chamber members this month! Join us to show your support and connect with fellow members.

- **Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming Ribbon Cutting Thursday, August 14 at 4:00 PM** 3056 Healthy Way, Suite 140, Vestavia Hills, AL 35243
- **Vestavia Dental Open House Thursday, August 21 at 5:00 PM** 2496 Rocky Ridge Road, Vestavia Hills, AL 35243
- **Ya Boi Fitness Academy Ribbon Cutting Monday, September 22 at 12:00 PM** 1014 Montgomery Highway, Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

Adopt A School – Sponsor Opportunity

Our **first Adopt A School** event of the year 2025-2026 is happening this August at **Vestavia Hills High School Freshman Campus!** This year, we're offering a *year-long sponsorship opportunity*—have your business name and logo featured at **every Adopt A School event** throughout the school year. Contact the Chamber to become a sponsor: **205-823-5011**

Vestavia Hills Shares Card is Back!

The **Vestavia Hills Shares Card** is a collaborative fundraiser between the Chamber and Vestavia Hills City Schools. Over 50 participating businesses are offering exclusive deals now through **May 2026!** Grab yours and start saving! Visit vestaviiahills.org to purchase

Stay Connected With Us!

Follow the Chamber for updates, events, photos, and member highlights:

Facebook: facebook.com/VestaviaHillsChamber

Instagram: [@vestaviiahillschamber](https://www.instagram.com/vestaviiahillschamber)

LinkedIn: [Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce](https://www.linkedin.com/company/VestaviaHillsChamberofCommerce)

As always, it is my honor and joy to serve all our Vestavia Hills Chamber members.

Warm regards,

Michelle Hawkins
President

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During his time in Vestavia Hills City Schools, the school system has renewed its accreditation, implemented a revised strategic plan, and opened three new schools. The school system has also broken numerous records that include test scores, college scholarship offers, and career and technical education credentialing. Last year, the school system launched a K-12 academic initiative that will provide new opportunities for profound learning in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Dr. Freeman holds a bachelor's degree in education from Jacksonville State University, a master's in education from Auburn University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from Valdosta State University.

Dr. Freeman, his wife, Rachel, and two sons, Samuel and Jacob, are residents of Vestavia Hills. Rachel is a former elementary school teacher and now provides group fitness instruction. Sam is a sixth grader at Louis Pizitz Middle School and Jake is a fourth grader at Vestavia Hills Elementary Dolly Ridge. Dr. Freeman is a member of the Vestavia Hills Rotary Club and Civitan International, and he and his family attend Shades

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Upon engagement as Vestavia Hills' city manager in 2013, Jeff quickly established a dynamic of cooperation that led to movement on a number of projects that had been slow to progress. His leadership and facilitation have overcome challenging obstacles and have gained critical support for many efforts including the Community Spaces Plan and preceding recreational facilities improvements, development projects in areas throughout the city's geography, and investments in infrastructure improvements. Within the City of Vestavia Hills organization, he has overseen the restructuring of several departments and strengthened the value of its vendor relationships through increased partnership and innovative programs. He has embraced technology and social media as tools to build consensus in the community and enhance City services to the public.

Since relocating to Vestavia Hills in 2013, Jeff has become a sought-after member for several boards on the local, state and national level. His current list of board memberships are as follows:

- Alabama City/County Managers Association, Immediate Past-President
 - Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, Secretary
 - Local Government Health Insurance Board (Alabama), Vice President
 - Cahaba Solid Waste Disposal Authority, Vice President
 - Vestavia Hills Miracle League, Coach of the Red Tornadoes
 - The Exceptional Foundation, Board Member
 - United Way of Central Alabama, 2023 Campaign Co-Chair Community Division
- States Risk Retention Group,* Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Jeff graduated with honors from Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Administration and from AUM with a Master of Public Administration. He has served in many community groups: Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Weed and Seed Program, St. Bede Child Development Center Board of Directors, Health Services Inc., Hampstead Institute and Catholic Social Services. He is a graduate of Leadership Montgomery and Leadership Alabama. He also is proud to share that he earned the rank of Eagle Scout in his youth. Since moving to Vestavia Hills, he has joined the Vestavia Hills Sunrise Rotary Club and graduated with the Leadership Vestavia Hills Class of 2015. Jeff is married to the love of his life, Penny. Jeff and Penny, along with their children – Chad (Miracle League athlete), Sydney (nurse), Harrison (musician) and Alex (future teacher) — are long-time residents of the Liberty Park area of Vestavia Hills and are parishioners at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church.

August 12 Luncheon

Reservations must be made by 4:00 PM Thursday, August 7, 2025 and cost \$25. Late reservations will cost \$30. Make your reservation by visiting www.vestaviiahills.org or by calling 823-5011.

Please Note:

- Reservations that are made and not cancelled by 4:00 pm Thursday, August 7 must be paid for, as we must pay for the number reserved.
- Please pay online or call the office with a credit card prior to the luncheon, or we can send you an invoice afterwards.
- **Please make every effort to make your reservation on time. The number of reservations we have by the deadline is the number that we and the Vestavia Country Club prepare for.**

Please remember the Vestavia Country Club policy of NO JEANS in the ballroom where we hold our monthly luncheons.

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come.

You are invited to join us for two upcoming events in celebration of our newly renovated Student Ministry Center!

- Summer Worship Night: Join us on Wednesday, August 6 for a ribbon cutting at 4:15 pm and dinner at 4:45 pm. We will kickoff the new school year with a blessing of the backpacks and prayers for all students and teachers as they begin a new year. Please register for the dinner for you and your family at: <https://vhmc.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/2334> (use code Chamber) Come experience our newly renovated student ministry space while we pray together for a blessed school year.
- Dedication: Join us on Sunday, August 10, 3:00-6:00 pm for an afternoon of fellowship, prayer, and worship as we dedicate this incredible new facility. This will be an open house with tours, a prayer of dedication, a reception, and a Student Ministry Kickoff Event for 6th-12th graders in our community.

For more information about Student Ministry programs or to schedule a tour of the new space, please contact our Directors of Student Ministries, Kyle Chickvara (kchickvara@vhmc.org), Charlie Steele (csteele@vhmc.org), or Peyton Ward (oward@vhmc.org).

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South Carolina and Tennessee, along with a national SBA lending franchise and a national equipment lending subsidiary (Navitas). Locally we have three offices in the Birmingham Metro area: Vestavia Hills, Downtown Birmingham/Highland Ave and Meadowbrook/Hwy 280. United Community offers a full range of banking, wealth management, and mortgage services for consumers and businesses.

United Community is an 11-time winner of the J.D Power award for outstanding Customer Satisfaction with Consumer Banking in the Southeast and #1 in Trust and People. Recognized for the ninth consecutive year by Coalition Greenwich Best Bank awards, receiving five Middle Market Banking and Small Business Banking awards, including national honors for Overall Satisfaction in 2025. We are named one of American Banker's "Best Banks to Work For" for the eighth consecutive year.

With 75 years of proven performance and the best bankers in the industry, United Community is one of the strongest and most secure banks in the Southeast. Whether it's business and personal banking solutions, real estate and mortgage lending, or advisory services, we are experts in getting you the financial support needed. We are consistently striving to better serve our Customer, our Communities, and Each Other.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please support our newest Chamber members and remember to 'Shop Vestavia Hills First'!!

- ◆ Talon Hiring Solutions
Emily Fulton
Birmingham, AL 35216
(205) 427-3909
talonhiringsolutions.com
Category: Staffing Firm
- ◆ Crowne at Overton Village
Ashley Canant
2901 Crowne Ridge Drive
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243
(205) 970-0344
crowneovertonvillage.com
Category: Apartments/Condominiums
- ◆ Precision Aesthetics
Brittany Ragsdale
3118 Bellwood Drive, Suite 118
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243
(205) 587-7080
brittanyleighlashandskin.com
Category: Skin Care; Hair/Beauty Salon
- ◆ Precision Aesthetics
Dr. Polly Anna Barlow
3118 Bellwood Drive, Suite 118
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243
(205) 587-7080
precisionmedicaaesthetics.com
Category: Skin Care; Hair/Beauty Salon
- ◆ Trinity Counseling, Inc.
Molly Raymon
1025 Montgomery Highway, Suite 214
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(205) 822-2730
trinitycounselingbham.org
Category: Counseling
- ◆ The BOSS Company
Susan Seeber
1200 Corporate Drive, Suite G5
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 900-2677
thebossco.com
Category: Office Technology
- ◆ The BOSS Company
Andrew Burke
1200 Corporate Drive, Suite G5
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 900-2677
thebossco.com
Category: Office Technology
- ◆ DeMarco Legal Firm
Brian DeMarco
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(205) 541-1008
Category: Attorneys
- ◆ Ya Boi Fitness Academy
Eryk Anders
1014 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(210) 787-9422
yaboifitness.com
Category: Athletics; Fitness
- ◆ Ya Boi Fitness Academy
Ric Mayers
1014 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(256) 987-5148
yaboifitness.com
Category: Athletics; Fitness



Please join us to celebrate these businesses!

RIBBON CUTTING



VESTAVIA HILLS
METHODIST CHURCH

STUDENT MINISTRY CENTER

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2025
2061 KENTUCKY AVENUE
RIBBON CUTTING AT 4:15 PM
BRING YOUR FAMILY AND STAY FOR DINNER AT 4:45 PM
AND SUMMER WORSHIP NIGHT AT 5:45 PM



Scan here to RSVP for Dinner or visit
vhmc.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/2334

RIBBON CUTTING

WOOF GANG
VESTAVIA

Thursday, August 14, 2025
4:00 pm
3056 Healthy Way, Suite 140
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243

Join us to celebrate the opening of
Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming!

Open House



Vestavia Dental
— a life dental practice —

August 21, 2025
5:00 pm
2496 Rocky Ridge Road
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243

RIBBON CUTTING

YA BOI
KB
FITNESS ACADEMY

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025
12:00 PM
1014 MONTGOMERY HIGHWAY



THE PUBLIC IS INVITED AND
ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

VESTAVIA HILLS MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES RECEPTION AND FORUM

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025
5:30 PM RECEPTION
6:00 PM FORUM

VESTAVIA HILLS CITY HALL
1032 MONTGOMERY HWY
VESTAVIA HILLS, AL 35216

MODERATOR: CHRIS STEWART
UA PLAY-BY-PLAY SPORTS ANNOUNCER

FOR MAYOR
ASHLEY C. CURRY (I)
RICHARD CHEATWOOD

FOR COUNCIL, PLACE NO. 2
KIMBERLY COOK (I)
KARL JULIAN

FOR COUNCIL, PLACE NO. 3
BRIAN DEMARCO JACOB PUGH MICHAEL A. VERCHER

HOSTED BY
VESTAVIA HILLS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AND
VESTAVIA VOICE



VESTAVIA HILLS
CHAMBER of COMMERCE





Scaling Smarter A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

• AUGUST LUNCH & LEARN •

AUGUST 7TH, 11:30AM

TALKING SOCIAL X VESTAVIA HILLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SPONSORED BY:

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**NEED FINANCIAL RELIEF?
NEW EMPLOYEES?
INCREASED REVENUE?
APPLY FOR THE
JEFFERSON COUNTY
MICRO BUSINESS
ACCELERATOR TODAY!**



3 COMPONENTS:

- **Educational:** Modules led by UAB and Auburn professors covering topics from communications to finance to administration.
- **Hands On:** The Entrepreneur Lab gives participants the opportunity to work with the UAB Entrepreneurship Department—get personalized advice from experienced entrepreneurs.
- **Direct Mentorship:** Get connected with an industry professional in your field AND a financial advocate that prepares your for new capital.



Applications close on August 4th

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Abby Shumate
abby@cara-now.org

OUR PARTNERS



Luncheon Business Spotlights

As a benefit of Chamber membership, you are welcome to choose two luncheons to have a booth to showcase your business. The Vestavia Country Club will provide covered 6 foot tables*-you just bring whatever information and items you would like to display! If you would like reserve your spots for 2025, please email katiew@vestaviiahills.org

2025 Dates:

August 12

September 9

October 14

November 18

December 9

Vestavia Hills Shares

The Vestavia Hills Shares Card is a fundraiser partnership between the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce and Vestavia Hills Schools. Shares Cards can be used to receive deals at local businesses now through May 2026!

\$30 Each



Scan here to purchase



Save the card to your phone's wallet or pick up a physical card at the Chamber Office

Sponsored by:



Piddlin Art & Antiques

Davenport's Pizza Palace

Member Notes

- Join **Chick-fil-A Cahaba Heights** for our first ever craft party, where the Chick-fil-A cows take over! Every purchase of a Kids' Meal during the duration of the event will be entered into a giveaway. The CFA cow will also be in attendance!
- Before the school bell rings, let's make some colorful memories—one brick at a time! Grab a seat, pick your paver, and let the creativity fly at **Andy's Creekside Nursery's** Brushes & Bricks Paint Party on August 5 at 10:30 am! \$10 per person includes one brick paver + all the paint & supplies you'll need. Open to ages 5 and up—grown-ups are definitely welcome to join in the fun. Wear something paint-friendly! Sign up at andysgardencenter.online/pages/brushes-bricks
- Join **Down Syndrome Alabama** on August 10 for Football Fashion & Fun at Vestavia Hills Civic Center! Tickets are available at <https://bit.ly/4nE0Stg>. This event lifts our people up with smiles and laughter all day long. You don't want to miss this fun, family event featuring our amazing Down Syndrome Alabama models strut the runway at 2:30, spirit hour and tailgate at 3:30, and a special showing of the movie Do Right: The Stallings Standard at 4:45!
- Sip your way through the Cahaba Heights Entertainment District on August 23 at the Cocktail Crawl! Participating Business will have Cocktails and Mocktails. Grab a Cocktail Passport and sip along with us! Fill it up and be entered to win a basket of local goodies!
- Read the latest issue of **Birmingham Christian Family** magazine online at <https://birminghamchristian.com/issues/>.
- **Birmingham Christian Family Magazine** will host its 6th Annual Celebrate The Family Expo on Saturday, September 13, 2025, at the Finley Center, Hoover Met Complex from 10am-2pm. This free event highlights the importance of family and provides an array of activities for kids of all ages including exhibitor resources and activities, live music, cooking demos, product samples and many freebies for the entire family. Free shredding will be available courtesy RecyclABILITY and The Arc of Central Alabama and free face painting by Painted Personalities. Special guests will include the Chick-fil-A Cows, Hoover Belles, and other popular mascots along with special music from Kevin Derryberry. Sponsor/Exhibitor opportunities are still available. To learn more please visit www.BirminghamChristian.com/registration

If you have any news or events you would like to put in the News & Views, email it to chamber@vestaviiahills.org.

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GOLD CHAMPIONS

VESTAVIA HILLS MAGAZINE



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Email: michelleh@vestaviiahills.org

Web: www.vestaviiahills.org

Tracy Thornton, Dir. Membership/Marketing
tracyt@vestaviiahills.org

Katie Woodruff, Communications Manager
Email: katiew@vestaviiahills.org

Upcoming Chamber Meetings

August 12

Monthly Luncheon, 11:30 am, Vestavia Country Club

August 21

Board of Directors, 7:45 am, Chamber Office

August 28

Business Development, 7:30 am, Chamber Office

Events

August 6

Ribbon Cutting: VHMC Student Ministry Center, 4:15 pm

August 7

Lunch & Learn: 11:30 am, Chamber Office

August 18

New Member Orientation, 5:15 pm, Chamber Office

August 19

Vestavia Hills Candidates Forum, 5 pm, City Hall

August 21

Open House: Vestavia Dental, 5 pm



News and Views

Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce

1090 Montgomery Highway

Vestavia Hills, AL 35216