

### Upcoming Events

EDAA Summer Conference  
**DATE:** July 30 - August 2  
**LOCATION:** Point Clear, AL  
**INFO:** edaa.org

SE4A Conference  
**DATE:** August 27-August 30  
**LOCATION:** Asheville, North Carolina

Annual AARC Conference  
**DATE:** October 8-October 11  
**LOCATION:** Orange Beach

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# Celebrating Older Americans 2023

May is known as Older Americans Month, a time to recognize older adults' lifetime of work, devotion to family, and commitment to the community.

On May 10, 2023, NARCOG hosted the Annual Older Americans Month Luau at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion. The Luau was free to seniors 50 and older from Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties.

Every sponsor brought an activity for the seniors to participate in, including cornhole, beach volleyball, putt-putt, and more. DJ K Rock provided fun music to get everyone up and dancing. Seniors were also able to enjoy a large photo booth with props as well as a 360-video camera provided by DJ K Rock. Oliwia's Shaved Ice provided almost 500 snow cones, and NARCOG provided popcorn and lunch.

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# Pop-Up Shop USDA Grant

The Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center, Inc. (The E-Center) is excited to announce that their 2023 USDA Rural Business Development Grant was awarded! This project will offer Pop-Ups, coaching, and education for rural entrepreneurs. This project will bring exciting services, including those provided successfully in other communities, in addition to new offerings which will benefit new partner communities.

The E-Center provides counseling, coaching, mentoring, ed-

ucation, networking, community events, business courses, and other services. The grant allows them to further their services, and expand regional impact, as part of overall economic development efforts for the region. The E-Center provides services to those in Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan County.

The business counseling, business plan development, training and coaching services offered through this new project will include:

Business plan revision; ob-

taining a business license; interviewing potential customers; and other options depending on the situation.

The two communities this grant will execute Pop-Up Shops in are South Vinemont, located in Cullman County, and Somerville, located in Morgan County. The outside "Pop-Up" event will support existing businesses in the area.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**Robby Cantrell | Executive Director**

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## Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)

Within each Alabama Area Agency on Aging is an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). The NARCOG ADRC assists with questions on aging, disabilities, and caregiving. This program, known as One Door Alabama, provides free information, counseling, and access to programs and services provided by the Alabama Department of Senior Services, state agencies, and federal programs.

The Information and Referral

Specialists, Deann Saint and Cynthia Smith, and ADRC Supervisor, Julie Campbell, will assist individuals by screening them for programs and services, assisting with the application process, answering questions, and referring applicants to other agencies that can better suit their needs.

A variety of services are offered through One Door Alabama. Services can include in-home services, prescription drug coverage,

caregiver support, long-term care advocacy, legal assistance, senior employment, food assistance, nutrition and wellness programs, Medicare and Medicaid counseling, transportation, and support services. Different services may require different eligibility.

Individuals can reach ADRC at 256-355-4515 or visit [narcog.org](http://narcog.org) for more information on the services offered.



Julie Campbell



Deann Saint



Cynthia Smith

### May Anniversaries

**Jan Kennedy**

RN Clinical Coordinator  
May 5th - 1 year of service

**Tamaya Plott**

Case Manager II  
May 7th - 10 years of service

**Monica Shannon**

Personal Choices Case Manager  
May 18th - 8 years of service

**Ronette Gravitt**

Nutrition Coordinator  
May 21st - 10 years of service

**Linda Jones**

Nutrition Program Admin  
May 23rd - 1 year of service and 5 years SCSEP

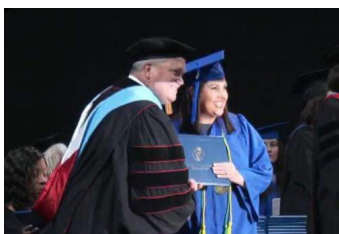
## FROM PAGE 1: Pop-Up Shop USDA Grant

Business 101 is their flagship entrepreneurship education class. It will provide attendees with a strong foundation to help them understand various key aspects of starting and then growing a business through its course. Sessions will target interested entrepreneurs and include the following:

- Entrepreneurship: Personal Goals and Finances

- Business Management: Financial Information and Business Success
- Legalities: Legal Entities and Intellectual Property
- Business Planning: Market Research
- Forming a Marketing Plan
- Business Financials: Start up and Ongoing Costs
- Financial Statements and Cash

- Flow
  - Website Essentials and Relevance of Social Media
  - Financing, Crowdfunding & SBA
- The Micro Business Initiative will stand up three independently operating businesses in one of their two partner communities.



## Continuing Higher Education

NARCOG extends sincere congratulations to three hard-working team members who received diplomas earlier this month. These individuals—Melanie Brown, Brittany Yarbrough, and Deann Saint—go above and beyond every day to ensure they are serving the community to the highest of standards.

Deann Saint, currently an Information and Referral Specialist, received her Associate of Science from Calhoun Community Col-

lege. Saint has received a transfer scholarship to Athens State University, where she will begin working on her Bachelor's. She is studying to get a Bachelor's in Psychology.

Melanie Brown, currently the Regional Ombudsman for Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan County, received her Master's of Social Work at the University of North Alabama.

Brittany Yarbrough, currently a Medicaid Waiver Case Manager,

received her Master's of Social Work at the University of North Alabama. Yarbrough has recently been promoted to the NARCOG Hospital to Home Coordinator and will begin training in June.

Director of Administration, Kim Dove, says "on behalf of the entire NARCOG team, we proudly celebrate Deann, Melanie, and Brittany's hard work, success, and college accolades. Congratulations, graduates!"

# Accelerate Business Growth Fund

NARCOG supports the growth of local businesses and economic diversification with the Accelerate Business Growth Fund, which is a locally controlled source of capital used to finance start-up and expanding businesses whose projects will result in job creation, leverage private sector investment, and reduce unemployment in Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties.

Chase Grisham, owner of The Grisham Group, received a loan from the Small Business Fund in

August of 2022 to help expand his real estate business. This loan was unique in that this building was originally a fire station, which Decatur Fire & Rescue Engine Company 5 had called their home since 1960. On Facebook, Grisham comments, "we are very honored to be a part of such a historic building.. to the brave fireman who spent long nights and many, many years in this station, we salute you, and we promise we will do everything to keep the history of this amazing building intact!"

NARCOG is excited to see Grisham expand his business for himself and his associates. This project was made possible with a traditional loan with a 7-year term and a competitive interest rate from NARCOG, with River Bank providing the remaining funds.

Anyone interested in learning more about our Accelerate Business Growth Fund can call Josh Robinson at 256-355-4515 or visit [narcog.org/serving-communities/business-growth-fund](http://narcog.org/serving-communities/business-growth-fund).



## Senior Center Pallet Gardens

It is understood that healthy living isn't only exercising but also making good food choices. A diet rich in vegetables and fruit can have a variety of positive effects on individuals, including lowering blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart disease, lowering the risk of digestive problems, having a positive effect on blood sugar, and more.

Currently, NARCOG partners with 22 nutrition centers within Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan County. These centers offer nutritious, hot lunches Monday through Friday, as well as meals for homebound individuals. Picnic lunches are offered on days

that the center may be closed for an event or holiday.

To continue to promote healthy lifestyles, NARCOG is providing pallet gardens at the request of nutrition centers. NARCOG has provided all the materials and plants for a successful garden. Individuals at the centers help construct the pallet garden with support from NARCOG team members. Each garden receives two tomatoes and two sweet pepper plants, as well as Marigolds for natural insect repellent.

Nutrition centers interested in pallet gardens can call Kylie Bolyard at 256-606-4352.



## Planning Department Events and Deadlines

**June 6, 2023**

Cullman County Rural Planning Organization Meeting

**June 7, 2023**

Lawrence County Rural Planning Organization Meeting

**June 7, 2023**

Morgan County Rural Planning Organization Meeting

**July 10, 2023 - July 13, 2023**

Auburn EDA University Center/ Intensive Economic Development Training Course Week 1

**July 19, 2023 - July 21, 2023**

Alabama Transportation Planners Association (ATPA)

**July 24, 2023**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grant Application Submission Deadline

**July 29, 2023 - August 3, 2023**

Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA) Summer Conference

**September 11, 2023 - September 13, 2023**

Auburn EDA University Center/ Intensive Economic Development Training Course Week 2

## Help Improve Broadband Map

The Federal Communications Commission has recently released an interactive map of the country that shows where Internet service providers say they deliver broadband. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) has since analyzed the map and noticed errors in the map of Alabama, including:

- Addresses missing, especially in rural areas
- The map overstates the availability of service at other locations.

Federal agencies will use this map as a guideline for where to distrib-

ute billions of dollars in grants to. With the current state of the map, Alabama will receive less than its fair share of funding.

Individuals can help by challenging the map with individual addresses. Individuals will look up their addresses on the interactive map and confirm the accuracy of their locations and service availability. If errors are found, individuals should submit a challenge.

Cities and counties can submit bulk challenges if they can gather address-level details.

Information on what's included on

the map and how to submit challenges can visit <https://help.bdc.fcc.gov/hc/en-us> or scan the QR code.



# Town of Eva Receives CDBG Funds

The Town of Eva was recently awarded \$100,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development funds to help expand the town's sewer system on Eva Road.

The CDBG project will install 1,100 feet of sewer line, as well as three

pump stations to serve the businesses in the industrial park.

This project will allow a local company, J and J Fiber, to expand their company and hire at least 10 new low to moderate-income employees as well as retain 20 jobs. This project will serve the company as

well as the Town of Eva by expanding the opportunity to attract businesses.

"I am pleased to award these funds, which make possible the extension of a much-needed sewer line to the Eva Industrial Park, which will, in turn, bring new business and

jobs to the area," Governor Kay Ivey commented. "This investment will also have long-term benefits for local economic development"

The NARCOG Planning and Economic Development team prepared the CDBG grant application and will administer the funds.



## Upcoming and Past Aging Events

The NARCOG Aging team has been busy with many events this past month, whether hosting or attending.

On May 19, NARCOG attended Community Action's Health Screening Event at Turner-Surles Community Center to share information on services offered to the aging community and individuals with disabilities, as well as transportation services. Many organizations across the North Alabama Region were in attendance; including the Red Cross Mobile Unit taking blood and Alabama A&M's Mobile Health Clinic providing free wellness checks and vaccines. This event targeted the elderly and the underserved; however, anyone in the community was welcome to attend.

On May 25, the Alabama Cares Coordinator, Dana Dobson, held a Memory Café for caregivers and their loved ones at Rhodes Ferry Park. Guests decorated birdhouses and enjoyed picnic refreshments. The Memory Café is designed to make people with dementia feel comfortable and successful, as well as offer caregivers a much-needed break.

Starting June 7, Wellness Coordinator, Stephanie King, will lead a new Aquatics Class. This wellness program is open to the public and is suitable for every fitness level. This program's goal is to reduce pain, reduce inflammation, improve strength, improve flexibility, and increase social interaction. The free Aquatics Program will be held every Wednesday at 10:15 AM,

starting June 7, at the Aquadome Recreation Center in Decatur.

On July 21, NARCOG is co-hosting a Health Fair for Morgan County seniors 50 years and older. This is a sponsored event with many organizations throughout North Alabama attending. Sponsorship money will be used to fulfill wish lists made by senior centers in Morgan County. Wish lists can consist of anything the center may need, including games, supplies, workout equipment, and more. Leftover sponsorship money will be used to benefit the NARCOG Foundation. Organizations interested in attending as a sponsor may call Kylie Bolyard at 256-606-4352.

## From PAGE 1: Luau

This event was possible due to these sponsors: Amedisys, Alabama Mountain Lake Tourism, Blue Cross Blue Shield, CenterWell, Cigna, Cooks Museum of Natural Science, Decatur Morgan Hospital, Hospice of the Valley, Humana, North Alabama AHEC, Peoples Bank of Alabama, Redstone Federal Credit Union, Riverside Senior Living, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Viva Healthcare.

"After planning this event for months, it is great to see it finally take place! This event wouldn't have happened without our generous sponsors, as well as our amazing team here at NARCOG,"

Outreach Coordinator Kylie Bolyard comments. "We showered our seniors with love and fun, and we believe they truly enjoyed themselves. I had guests asking me to make this a monthly thing! We can't wait to do it bigger and better next year."

The 2023 Luau had a record-breaking attendance of just over 500 seniors, as well as NARCOG staff and sponsors.

The 2024 Luau will take place on May 15, 2024 at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. This event is free to seniors in Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties.

