



President's Communique

Dr. Ken Kitts

October 31, 2023

Colleagues: Happy Halloween! I hope this note finds you well on this crisp and beautiful fall day. Please see below for important updates on our campus community.

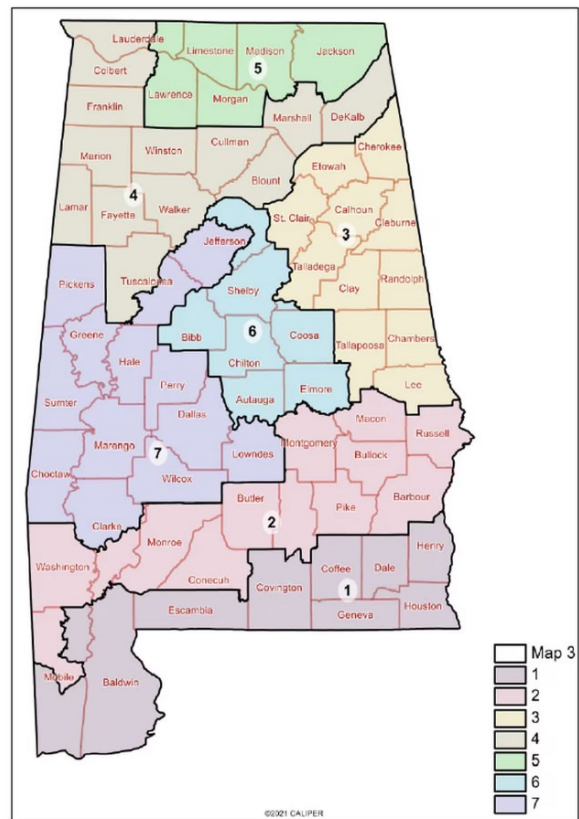
New Fundraising Campaign: On September 29, we used the occasion of homecoming to announce the public phase of the most ambitious fundraising campaign in our 193-year history. The new "Shine On, Gold" campaign is a university-wide effort that carries with it the ambitious goal of bringing \$100 million in new private support for UNA. Our fundraising efforts have been gaining unprecedented momentum over the last few years, and I am proud to report that our "quiet phase" efforts for the new campaign have already netted over \$60 million in new gifts and commitments. That's an amazing figure for a university of our size, and it gives us confidence about reaching our objective. To put this in some perspective, the \$100 million goal is four times greater than the amount we targeted, and reached, in our first fundraising campaign that began in 2013. Philanthropic success at this level is a marker of excellence in its own right. It supports my point that UNA is beginning to emerge as a university that is qualitatively different from its peers. I encourage you to visit the "Shine On, Gold" web page (<https://www.una.edu/shineongold>) to learn more about the campaign and our fundraising priorities. The members the Executive Council and I look forward to working with each one of you as we strive collaboratively to meet our institutional goals for this historic campaign.

Enrollment: Officials in Enrollment Management froze the registration data for the Fall 2023 census last Friday. The final tally for the semester includes a record headcount of 10,529, which represents an increase of 3.32% over last year's mark of 10,191 students. Credit hour production for this fall is 100,527 hours, which represents an increase of 2.87% over last year and also stands as the first time in history that our CHP has crested the 100,000 mark. These are great outcomes that signal the continuing growth of our institution and our expanding appeal to students from the different sectors that make up higher education enrollment.

Executive Council: I sent notice to campus last week regarding the selection of Minnette Ellis for the permanent post of Chief Diversity Officer. I know you join me in congratulating Minnette on her appointment to this important position. With that task behind us, we can now turn attention to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs search. I have already started working with faculty and staff leaders to build a search committee broadly representative of campus and reflective of the scope of the responsibilities for this position. I plan to announce that committee's composition next week, after which we will schedule an organizational meeting to discuss the posting of the position and the search timeline. Dr. Katie Kinney is serving our campus well as interim provost and will continue in that role while this search process unfolds.

Construction Updates: Workers have encountered an unexpected delay with the demolition of LaGrange Hall due to the location of underground power lines. Abatement work on the interior of the building continues. We want to minimize the disruption to pedestrian and vehicular traffic and hope to have these issues resolved soon so that we can complete the demolition process. AVP Cindy Conlon will provide additional updates on this project as they become available. Work on the new Computing and Mathematics Building remains on schedule with anticipated competition in the late spring of 2024.

Congressional District: When I shared my last communique in September, the final decision on Alabama’s congressional districts was still pending. On Thursday, October 5, a panel of three federal judges ordered the state to adopt “Remedial Plan 3” as its official map. Significantly, this map leaves all parts of the UNA campus in the Fourth Congressional District represented by Congressman Robert Aderholt. This newly configured district has expanded to the east and now includes all of the City of Florence plus the western two-thirds of Lauderdale County. These areas are joined by all of Colbert, Franklin, Marion, Winston, and Cullman Counties as well as several other counties to our south. The Fifth District, represented by Congressman Dale Strong, will pick up the eastern third of Lauderdale County plus Limestone, Morgan, Madison, and other counties that make up the greater Huntsville metropolitan area. Lawrence County will also remain in the Fifth. Combined, the Fourth and Fifth Districts encompass our service area and include most of the major feeder high schools that account for a majority of our incoming students. The map to the right provides additional detail on the new district boundaries in Alabama.



**New Alabama Congressional Districts:
October 2023**

New Strategic Plan: Efforts to produce our new strategic plan for the University are on track and nearing completion. Under the leadership of co-chairs Dr. Jessica Stovall and Dr. Laura Williams, a twenty-member task force has been at work for over six months listening to stakeholders, gathering data, and identifying themes that will serve as the basis for our new organizational roadmap. We anticipate bringing the plan – entitled “Pride in the Gold Standard” – before the Board of Trustees for consideration in December.

Important Dates:

- October 30 Registration Period Underway for Spring 2024
- November 22-24 University Closed for Thanksgiving
- November 29 Fall Classes End (Study Day on Nov. 30)
- December 1-6 Final Exams
- December 6 **Santa Party** at the President’s Home
- December 8-9 Winter Commencement Ceremonies
- December 11 Winter Session Classes Begin
- December 20 Christmas Break Begins

Dena and I thank you for all you do for the University of North Alabama. Roar Lions!