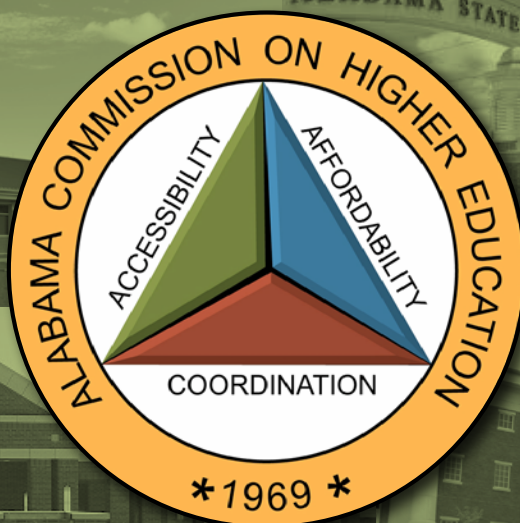


# MOVING FORWARD



## 50th Anniversary Edition

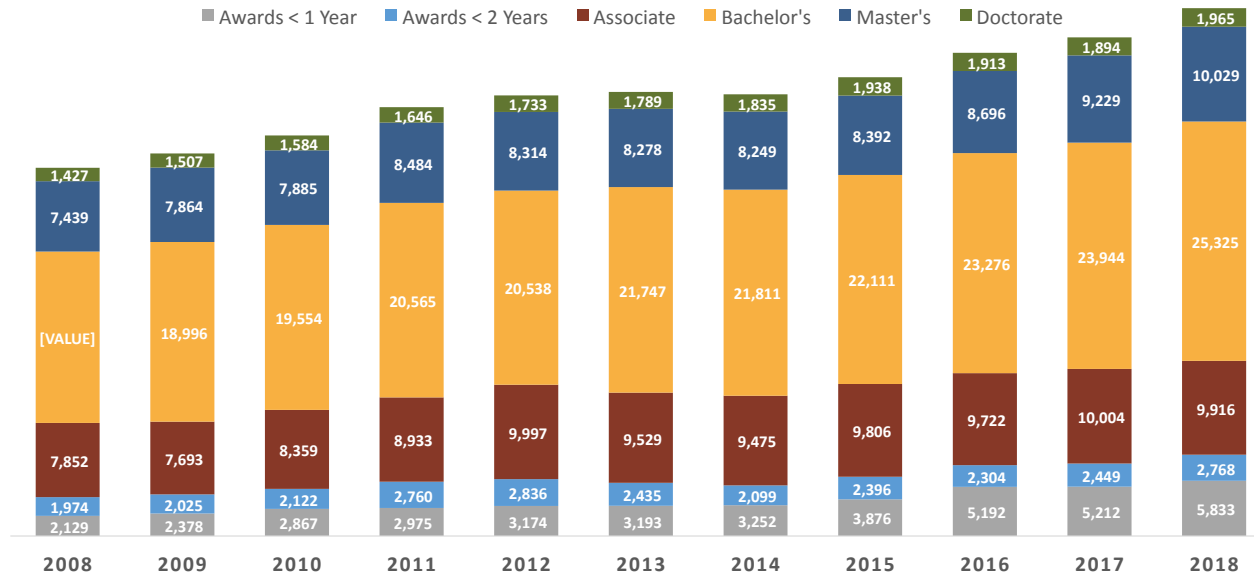


# MOVING FORWARD

## Historical Degree Production by Award Level Alabama Public Institutions 2008 - 2018

NUMBER OF DEGREES/CERTIFICATES AWARDED

■ Awards < 1 Year ■ Awards < 2 Years ■ Associate ■ Bachelor's ■ Master's ■ Doctorate



SOURCE: Alabama Student Unit Record Data System.

**\$3.2 MILLION**  
increased federal  
student aid since FY 2018

**86%**  
increase in state  
need-based aid  
since FY 2017

**Sponsored  
statewide summit  
on student success**

Worked with the Council of College  
and University Presidents, provosts  
and legislative leadership in the  
development of accountability  
measures for higher education

**30**

Professional development  
workshops for faculty  
and institution leaders on  
campuses around the state

**THOUSANDS SAVED**  
each year through Network of  
Alabama Academic Libraries

**\$2 MILLION**

Textbook savings to students  
through the Open Educational  
Resources Grant Program

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## 2019 Commissioners





## // Executive Director's Message //



**Dr. Jim Purcell**

### 2019: A Very Good Year for Higher Education

Collaboration and accountability have been the focal points this year for the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE). As the state higher education coordinating board, ACHE has worked with the Council of College and University Presidents (COP), along with strong support from the provosts,

to develop accountability measures to assess campus performance.

I look forward to working with the Council of College and University Presidents on future accountability goals that will embrace student success throughout Alabama's higher education community.

ACHE's Consolidated Budget Recommendation for FY 2019-2020 was aimed at getting higher education back to pre-recession levels. Governor Ivey's budget proposal to the legislature included significant increases in state support for all of the state's institutions. A record \$1.8 billion higher education budget was passed by lawmakers. The public two-year colleges received approximately \$35 million more than last year's budget, with the public four-year universities getting an \$80 million increase.

More students are getting the financial help they need to pay for college thanks to the service provided by ACHE's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Project. High school counselors and career coaches may log onto: <https://fafsa.ache.edu/Data/Summary> to check status reports of FAFSA applications. During the past year, an additional 1,301 Alabama students have received Pell Grants totaling approximately three million dollars.

A partnership between ACHE and the Alabama Community College System has

resulted in savings of more than two million dollars for students through the Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Project. An alternative to print textbooks, an OER is developed using a wide variety of educational resources created with a license that encourages their free use via the Web. Grants were awarded to 23 institutions to incorporate OERs into the curriculum.

There is an acute teacher shortage in math and science throughout the state's public high schools. ACHE responded by sponsoring legislation that was enacted to create the Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP).

AMSTEP is available for students who graduated with a degree in math or science education in the spring of 2018 and forward. It provides up to \$30,000 for federal student loan repayments for math or science teachers in Alabama's public high schools. An AMSTEP application may be found at: <http://ache.edu/StudentAsst.aspx>

The past two years have seen additional funding for financial aid. The Alabama Student Assistance Program, based on financial need, has increased 86% and the Alabama Student Grant Program, which provides tuition assistance for Alabama residents enrolled in specified Alabama colleges and universities, has increased 46%.

## // Chairman's Message //

Fifty years ago the Alabama Legislature enacted legislation that created the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) as the coordinating body for the state's public two- and four-year higher education institutions. Throughout its tenure, ACHE has facilitated long-term higher education planning, worked with institutional leaders and lawmakers on key education issues, and proposed higher education budgets to address and promote the effectiveness of the state's institutions.

Since 1979, ACHE has been charged with approving new academic programs and monitoring their effectiveness. Many programs have been in response to the growing workforce demands in fields such as cybersecurity, data science, healthcare, and business analytics. ACHE's current program review process is designed to ensure program viability, reduce unnecessary duplication of offerings, and support institutions in fulfilling their unique missions.

Affordability always has been an important part of ACHE's mission. ACHE has taken a lead in affordable learning initiatives, which focus on reducing costs for students and stretching available financial aid dollars. More money is now available to qualifying students through the state's financial aid programs.

Building on the past and planning for the future will continue to make ACHE a vital part of the success of Alabama's higher education community. Robust conversations with campus leaders must be ongoing to better align institutional priorities with those of the state. When these conversations are done well, the results advance the state's higher education priorities and the institution's long-term goals.

It is a privilege to lead the Commission at this historic moment, and I look forward to its continued success in serving the state of Alabama.



**Charles E. Sanders**

# ACHE Partnerships

ACHE partners with numerous groups to provide a state-level framework for institutions and other education stakeholders to respond to the needs of the citizens of Alabama. Through these partnerships, education policy is developed.

## ACHE Joins National Alliance

Alabama has joined Complete College America, a nationwide network of states, regions, and institutions focused on boosting student success and college completion. As an Alliance member, Alabama has identified game changer strategies aimed at increasing college completion rates and shortening time to graduation.

"We are addressing every barrier to obtaining a higher education degree," said ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell. "The Commission is committed to providing the resources necessary to unlock opportunities for all students. Alabama's membership in Complete College America will provide another tool for student success."

The Alabama game changers are *15 to Finish, A Better Deal for Returning Adults, and Co-requisite Support*.



Complete College America Compact Signing

## Education and Workforce Partners

- Alabama Community College System
- Alabama State Department of Education
- Alabama Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- Higher Education Partnership of Alabama
- Alabama Department of Labor

- Alabama Department of Commerce
- Mobile Area Education Foundation
- Southern Regional Education Board
- State Higher Education Executive Officers
- Alabama Possible
- A+ College Ready
- Alabama Literacy Alliance

- Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama
- Regional and State Economic Development Agencies
- Alabama Workforce Council
- Forever Wild – Alabama's Land Trust Program

## Big Savings Through Library Consortium

The old adage "safety in numbers" may be slightly altered to "savings in numbers" when it comes to the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL).

More than three decades ago, ACHE worked with a core group of universities to establish the consortium that coordinates academic library resource sharing. The collective bargaining power of NAAL provides tremendous cost savings for its members. Education and research may be enhanced, primarily by negotiating with vendors for databases, e-journals, and e-books. According to Shelia Snow-Croft, NAAL director, "subscribing as a group

provides significant cost savings for all of our members."

Neil Snider, dean of libraries at the University of West Alabama, added that, "by the time NAAL had gotten started, we had gone through periods where we could absolutely not buy one thing."

This collaboration between ACHE and Alabama's higher education institutions has saved millions of dollars through the years.

"ACHE's support of NAAL has been key and will continue to be fundamental to the consortium's future success," said NAAL Chairman David Moore.



The Music Group Kong-Na-Mul

## International Partnership

The Alabama-Korea Education and Economic Partnership (A-KEEP) is a non-profit organization that provides multicultural diversity education programs to the students and professionals of both Alabama and Korea. This supportive role is beneficial in building relationships between the education community and international businesses in the state.

The growing diversified economic culture in Alabama has forged a partnership between ACHE and A-KEEP.

"The coordination role that ACHE plays in higher education is a great way to link colleges and universities with A-KEEP to address the

needs of the Korean business community," said ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell.

A-KEEP led a delegation of education officials to South Korea this year to discuss partnership options between the South Korean universities and Alabama higher education institutions.

A-KEEP began 2019 in a fairy tale setting. A *Korean Cinderella Story*, featuring The Music Group Kong-Na-Mul from South Korea, was performed in Opelika and Montgomery. The family-friendly performances celebrated the differences and similarities between the Korean and Western versions of this age-old fairy tale.







# Changing with the Times

Postsecondary learning has never mattered more than it does right now to individual Americans or to the nation. Labor experts and economists agree that 21st century jobs that offer a family-sustaining income require elevated knowledge and skills, the type of learning acquired through high-quality postsecondary education and training.

Alabama is striving to meet the demand for 500,000 additional skilled workers by 2025. In order to meet that goal, Alabama's economic engine will require new and innovative discussions among educators, industry and business leaders, students, and community representatives.

Through the efforts already in place, Alabama has received national recognition by being chosen as one of six states by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center

for Best Practices in producing a skilled workforce. Alabama participates in a policy academy that develops plans to identify and scale high-quality programs and policies to support and sustain work-based learning initiatives.

**LARGEST  
EDUCATION BUDGET  
(\$1.8 BILLION)  
IN A DECADE**

"As a member of the Work-Based Learning Initiative Committee, I have dedicated the resources of ACHE to gather and analyze data collected from business leaders, educators, students, and other stakeholders to establish benchmarks on our way to reaching the 2025 goal for skilled workers," said ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell. "Various forms of work-based learning should become a desired component for stackable certificates and degree programs. This will require resources and support for the

development of crosswalks to translate work-based learning into academic credit."

Over the next decade, Alabama's job growth is projected to be faster than labor force growth. Of the 790 single occupations in Alabama, health care, social assistance, and manufacturing are among the high-demand occupations which will continue to dominate employment in the state. Half of the state's fastest growing occupations are health-related.

**SECOND  
STRAIGHT YEAR  
OF RECORD  
STUDENT AID**

ACHE has been awarded two state-level grants related to workforce development. A grant from Credential Engine will help Alabama catalog and describe the state's current offerings that lead to an industry-recognized credential. Another grant from the Lumina Foundation seeks to address the achievement gaps for low-income and minority students.



# Taking Education to the **NEXT LEVEL**

Alternative credentialing has become more common in higher education because it provides individuals with new ways to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to potential employers.



In Alabama, there is a shortage of skilled workers to fill available positions and attract new business investment. Governor Kay Ivey has set the ambitious goal of increasing the number of Alabamians with degrees and credentials by 500,000 over the next six years. In May 2018, the cross-sector Educational Attainment Committee delivered its Success Plus strategic plan, which identifies the key priorities, objectives, and metrics needed to develop Alabama's human capital and increase attainment of valuable credentials. Over the coming year, the Governor's Office of

Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) will lead efforts to build career pathways across Alabama's 16 core industry sectors, which will include not only two- and four-year degrees, but also "credentials of value."

ACHE is an important partner in this work. As the entity charged with approving new programs at public higher education institutions, the Commission maintains information on all degrees, non-degree credentials, and short-term certificates offered across the state, and ACHE staff are working closely with the Alabama Committee on Credentialing

and Career Pathways (ACCCP) to develop the process for vetting credentials and ensuring their value in the marketplace. ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell serves as the President pro tempore of the GOEWT advisory council.

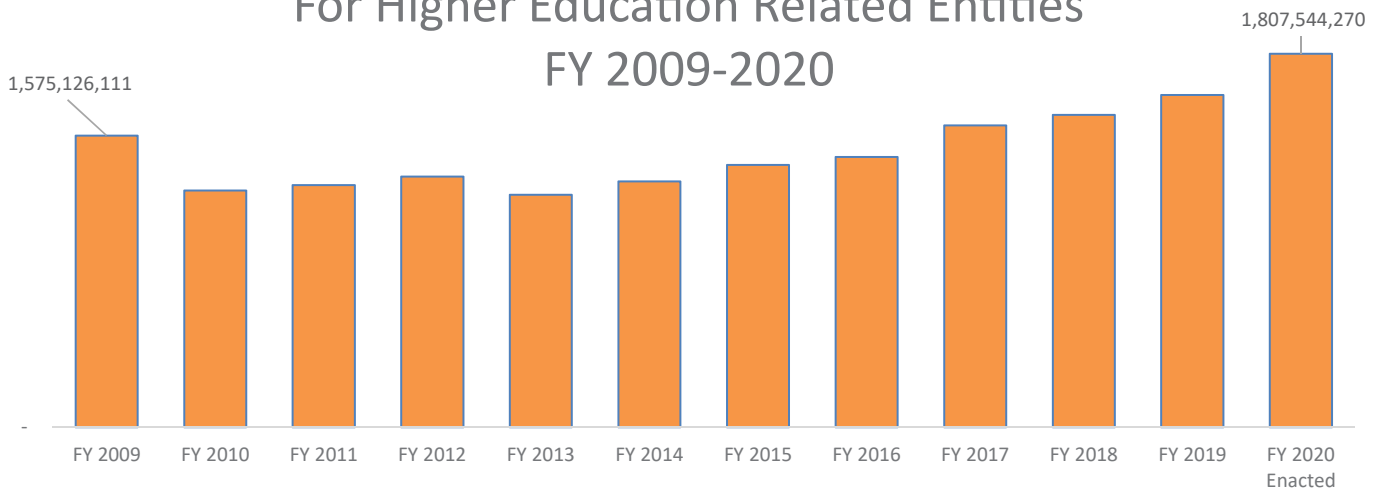


## **SUCCESS +**

# State Support for Higher Education

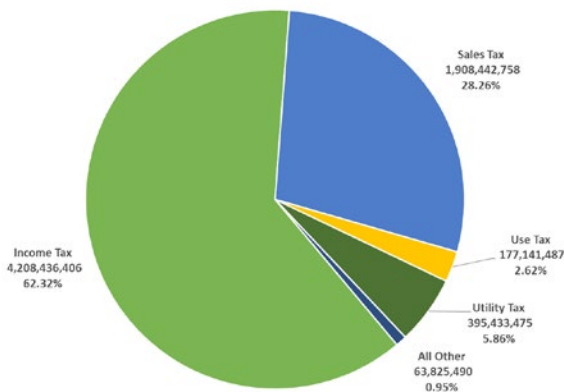
## Education Trust Fund Dollars For Higher Education Related Entities FY 2009-2020

**Largest level of state support in a decade**



## Education Trust Fund Net Receipts by Revenue Sources FY 2018

The Education Trust Fund (ETF) is the funding source for all public education, public libraries, and state education regulatory departments in Alabama. The ETF includes various revenue sources. The largest two are income taxes and sales taxes.



## Split of ETF Appropriation FY 2019-2020

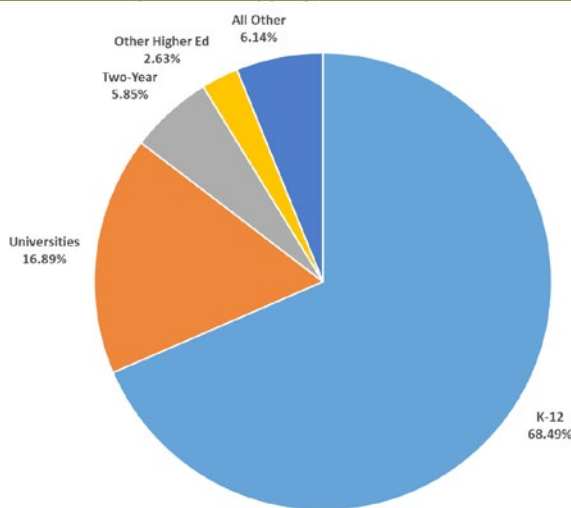
Previously, state funding for higher education institutions was appropriated in an incremental manner. Institutions would receive approximately the same base amount received the previous fiscal year. Allocations above the base amount were generally distributed with each institution receiving an equal percentage increase.

The FY 2019-2020 ACHE Consolidated Budget Recommendation (CBR), included a peer equity component. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was contracted by ACHE to develop statistical peers for each public higher education institution.

Statistical peer institutions were identified based on similar instructional mission, academic program mix, student characteristics, Carnegie Classification, enrollment and degree production. These components of the higher education environment are the primary drivers of cost.

Alabama institutions determined to be significantly underfunded in state support, less than 90% of their \$ per FTE peer average, were recommended for an adjustment to work toward alleviating this inequity over several years.

Less than nine million dollars, or half of one percent of the amount allocated to the colleges and universities, was directed to address funding inequities. The governor's proposed budget and the legislature's final version of the budget included the peer equity adjustment concept.





# Alabama Commission on Higher Education

## Awards Mini-Grants to Institutions for Innovation

Colleges and universities across the state have been the beneficiaries of mini-grants awarded by ACHE for special projects and innovation. Those included workshops on professional development, local scholarships, and research.

Institution	FY 2019 ACHE Special Projects
Athens State University	Workshops on Open Educational Resources and Multimedia and Instructional Design Center
Coastal Alabama Community College	Workshop on Open Educational Resources
University of North Alabama	Workshops on Open Educational Resources and Curriculum Development
Auburn University at Montgomery	Convening of the Alabama Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers for training on ACHE's FAFSA Completion Project
University of Alabama	Convening of higher education representatives from across the state to evaluate and make recommendations for expanding undergraduate research
Wallace Community College Dothan	Workshop on the development and funding of a local college scholarship fund
Trenholm State Community College	Convening of the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators for training associated with National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators credentials
University of Alabama at Huntsville	Convening of higher education representatives from across North Alabama to address local education needs
University of South Alabama	Convening of higher education representatives from across South Alabama to address local education needs
University of Montevallo	Professional development for schools of education deans on collaboration with local school districts to improve student outcomes

# ACHE Supports Student Achievement Throughout Higher Education



## Community College Program

You might say his career is part genetic, although Jake Martin says he has had to overcome an aversion to blood in his pursuit of a nursing degree. His mom and aunt, both nurses, along with a close family friend who is a physician's assistant, encouraged him to pursue the medical profession.

"I remember having to take a break, even when we practiced starting IVs on

mannequins in the classroom," recalls the 2018 nursing graduate from Wallace State Community College – Hanceville.

But, Martin has overcome his queasy stomach anxieties as he deals with life and death situations daily as a registered nurse in the Cardiac ICU at Princeton Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham.

Martin first contemplated meteorology, but a medical mission trip to Ecuador, prior to his junior year in high school, changed his thinking. "My first trip was taking care of children while their parents received medical treatment. I literally saw lives changed in every aspect and knew that I wanted to become a healthcare professional," said Martin.

ACHE approved the Associate of Science Degree in Nursing for Wallace State Community College - Hanceville in 2004. The community college program has since supplied the workforce with more than 1,400 registered nurses.

"ACHE works closely with all of our institutions to provide academic tracks

that will align students with workforce demands," said ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell. Alabama Department of Labor statistics project the state will need over 3,200 registered nurses annually through 2026, ranking nursing on the Hot 40 Demand Occupations for employment.

Martin has tremendous praise for his community college experience. "The teachers were knowledgeable and enjoyed teaching. The simulation lab and clinical rotations provided great hands-on patient care experience," said Martin.

"The small classes created a tight-knit atmosphere," according to Martin. "It was this comradery that instilled in us the passion and work ethic to tackle any challenge. I can easily recognize a Wallace-Hanceville nursing graduate. They do not hesitate to jump in and work hard."

This can-do spirit is a plus when dealing with the level of acuity among cardiac patients. "Every day at work is different for me," said Martin. "I love a challenge."

## Doctoral Scholars Program

"The human support system that I received from the Doctoral Scholars Program far exceeded any financial amount that I could have imagined," said AUM Assistant Professor of Social Work Dana K. Harmon. "I learned about the program at the beginning of my dissertation year at the University of Alabama, and immediately felt a true connection with other participating students."

Sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and administered by the Commission on Higher Education, the Doctoral Scholars Program is part of a nationwide initiative to produce more minority Ph.D.s, and to encourage them to seek faculty positions. Alabama has 138 graduates in the program, making it the leader among SREB states.

Harmon contacted Dr. Paul Mohr, ACHE's director of Special Programs, to

learn more about the program and the application process. To be admitted, a student must be a person of color pursuing a Ph.D. The program provides not only financial assistance and research funding, but also career counseling, job postings, and a scholar directory for networking and recruiting.

Harmon was awarded her Ph.D. in 2005, and began a career journey that has taken her to Washington, D.C. and Mississippi. "But, I always felt Alabama calling me home," said the Tuskegee native, who later became a visiting assistant professor of Social Work at the University of West Alabama.

Harmon now works as an assistant professor of Social Work at Auburn University at Montgomery where she combines her classroom and clinical expertise to give students a true picture of a career in social work. "I am committed to what the profession entails," said Harmon. "I have received so much



**Dr. Dana Harmon**

support throughout my life, my goal is to pour that support into the lives of my students which spreads to an even broader circle."





**Dr. Sarah Graves**

### **Academic Common Market**

Childhood adventures created more than just memories for Sarah Graves. "My dad would take me along on business trips and during breaks we spent hours perusing museums and art galleries," said Graves who is a Collections Information Specialist at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

Graves was one of the first two graduates to receive a Ph.D. in Museum Education and Visitor-Centered Exhibitions from Florida State University's College of Fine Arts.

She was able to add some affordability to her college education by taking advantage of the Southern Regional Education Board's Academic Common Market (ACM), a tuition-savings program for college and university students who pursue degrees at out-of-state institutions in fields that are not offered by an Alabama public in-state institution.

The ACM is administered through ACHE and has drawn accolades from participants who have saved money by participating in the program.

"Assisting students with financial and academic resources is a major focus of ACHE," said Dr. Paul Mohr. "Both the Doctoral Scholars Program and the Academic Common Market have successfully helped hundreds of students save money."

"My degree brings together the interests of both curators and educators through art history and education," said Graves. "It is this wide appeal that will continue to see the arts thrive."

Graves said her husband, Windham Graves, an assistant professor in Visual Arts at Alabama State University, says it best, "Art is the only thing that robots can never create."

**More information on the Academic Common Market and the Doctoral Scholars Program may be found on the ACHE website at [www.ache.edu](http://www.ache.edu) or by contacting Dr. Paul Mohr @ (334) 242-2209.**



