

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CLA OUTREACH CENTER ASSISTS WITH DELIBERATIVE FORUMS AROUND THE STATE

The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts is partnering with the David Mathews Center for Civic Life and five communities around the state on a project that will get people talking and making decisions---through deliberative forums---on issues related to public education.

The project, funded by a \$50,000 grant from the Mathews Center, is led locally by community partners—including local libraries, chambers of commerce, community foundations, local schools and churches, and county extension---in Anniston, Chatom, Collinsville, Elba and Prattville.

The first forum will be based on the National Issues Forums issue book “Preparing Today’s Kids for Tomorrow’s Jobs: What Should Our Community Do,” followed by other similar topics on education. In a deliberative forum, citizens weigh carefully the attractions, weaknesses, costs and consequences of differing perspectives on how to approach an issue. Most importantly, citizens identify acceptable and unacceptable tradeoffs among the differing approaches. By identifying what is acceptable and unacceptable, citizens create common ground for potentially more effective action on the issue.

"We are delighted to participate in a project that brings together so many diverse partners to think and talk about issues that are important to communities and to their future," says CMD CAH director Jay Lamar.

The Mathews Center is a non-partisan, tax-exempt entity for the purpose of fostering public deliberation and innovative community decision making. CMD CAH, outreach office of the College of Liberal Arts, is dedicated to strengthening the bonds between the academic community and the general public through quality programs in schools, towns and communities around the state.

For more information on the project, call 334-844-4946.

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