

AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

MAY 2023

Important Dates

*Online Media Campus
Selling Advertising Amidst
Economic Uncertainty*

1-2 p.m. May 18, 2023

Speaker: Ryan Dohrn
Click [HERE](#) to register.

*APA Summer
Convention*

June 23-25, 2023

Perdido Beach Resort
Orange Beach, Alabama
Click [HERE](#) to register.

APA Summer Convention has an all-star program

AL.com wins two Pulitzer Prizes

Woods named editor-in-chief of The Crimson White

Have you explored Earn Your Press Pass?

Three North Alabama papers change hands

Proposed APA bylaw amendment to be presented at the Summer Convention

AL.com awarded \$32,000 grant to report on Alabama paroles, prisons

America's Newspapers releases 2023 local newspaper study

NNA asks Postal Regulatory Commission to stop hammering newspapers with rate surcharges

APA/ANAS NEW Address:

2180 Parkway Lake Drive
Hoover, AL 35244



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Alabama Newspaper Advertising Service
Inc.

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APA Summer Convention has an all-star program

Some years we struggle to fill the program slots for our conventions with an all-star cast. This year, we have landed the best-of-the-best in all of our programs. We will be back at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, June 22-24.



The hotel deadline is Monday, May 22, 2023. Make your hotel reservations [HERE](#) or call 251-981-9811. *Reference booking code 18438 for the APA block at special rates starting at \$265 per night (regular rates are \$600+ per night). Please do not wait to reserve your room. The hotel is fully booked and will fill remaining rooms in our block the day of the deadline.

Here's the lineup:

• Thursday welcome event:

Join us in trying something new as we take **"The Fun Boats!"** for a private 2-hour sunset dolphin cruise 6 – 8 p.m. out of San Roc Cay Marina. Snacks and beverages provided. PBR will provide shuttles to San Roc Cay beginning at 5 p.m. Additional cost of \$50 per person. Available to the first 72 registrants.

• Friday afternoon programs and events:

Richard Brown of The Daily Beast and a News Media Alliance Rising Star will share strategies for your sales team using six sales tactics you need in 2023.

Marianne Grogan, President of Coda Ventures, LLC will give an overview of Coda's recent APA market study and tell

you how you can use this data to grow revenue.

End the day with fellowship and libations at our opening reception on the beach deck sponsored by Alabama Power. Dinner on your own.

• Saturday programs and events:

Enjoy a continental breakfast and hear from **Jeremy Gulban, CEO of CherryRoad Media**, about his expanding media company, including valuable knowledge about how they've grown and future plans. CherryRoad owns and operates 64 newspapers in 10 states, including The Clayton Record in Alabama.

Join Richard Brown for a program and discussion about leveraging creative content to help unlock a sustainable future for your newspaper - for advertising AND editorial staff.

Kevin Slimp, newspaper champion and guru, will join us for morning programming on more effective advertising to drive ad sales and again for the luncheon to speak about the positive future of newspapers.

Kevin will also be available Saturday afternoon for one-on-one consultation sessions with members interested in exploring ideas to increase sales and reader engagement. Let us know if you are interested.

Celebrate the winners of the **2023 APA Media Awards** with a reception and banquet Saturday night. Let's celebrate all of the good work accomplished this year!

Visit our convention website at <https://alabamapress.org/summer> to register with APA, or a registration form is attached so you can complete and mail to the APA office by Monday, June 12.

Please contact Jaclyn at the APA office (205-871-7737) if you have any questions or need additional information. We look forward to seeing you in Orange Beach!

AL.com wins two Pulitzer Prizes

AL.com was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes recently, one for a year's effort exposing and stopping a predatory police force and a second for a year-long exploration of how the myths Alabama tells itself about the past still shape the state today.

John Archibald, Ashley Remkus, Ramsey Archibald and Challen Stephens won the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Local Reporting for an investigation of predatory policing in Brookside, an investigation that led to removal of police

officers, changes in state law, dismissal of court cases and people freed from jail.

Columnist Kyle Whitmire won the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Commentary for the series State of Denial. Throughout 2022, Whitmire explored larger questions: What made Alabama the way it is, and why can't the state snap out of it? State of Denial seeks to show how 150 years of whitewashed history and a rigged political system have left the state stunted.

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prizes

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"It's humbling to be recognized in this way," said Kelly Scott, editor in chief and vice president of content at AL.com. "We're honored and in awe of the other journalism recognized today across the country."

AL.com journalists have won four Pulitzer Prizes in the past five years. John Archibald also won the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 2018 for his opinion columns. Challen Stephens and Ashley Remkus won the Pulitzer

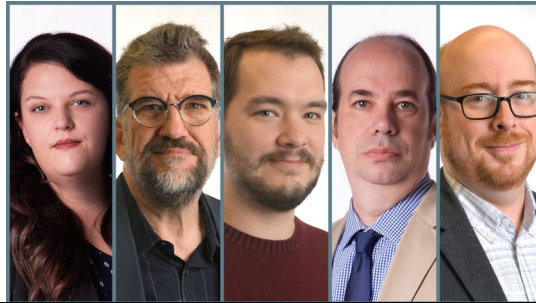
Prize for National Reporting in 2021 for work on the severity and prevalence of injuries from police K-9s, reporting done in collaboration with three other news

outlets. AL.com columnist Roy S. Johnson was also a finalist for commentary in 2021.

"This is local journalism at its best – and local journalism is the heartbeat of this country's journalism in general," Scott said. "It's about the stories journalists tell in the communities and states across the country. We're proud to be doing the work that changes lives, laws and minds here in Alabama."

"We're proud to represent Alabama on the national stage."

Ashley Remkus, John Archibald, Ramsey Archibald, Challen Stephens, Kyle Whitmire



Woods named editor-in-chief of The Crimson White

From The Crimson White

After serving in multiple positions at The Crimson White and as the current editor-in-chief of Nineteen Fifty-Six Magazine, Ashlee Woods, a junior majoring in news media, will take over the helm of The Crimson White beginning in May.

The Delaware native is the first Black woman in the Crimson White's history to hold the position.

"Ashlee brings a wealth of experience to the position," said Monique Fields, the Office of Student Media's associate director of editorial and The Crimson White's advisor. "Ashlee envisions a student-run newspaper that serves the campus and the surrounding community, and she will leave an indelible mark on it. She has a bright future ahead of her, and I look forward to working with her as a student journalist and colleague."

Initially, Woods started her collegiate career in 2018 as a political science

major set on law school and potentially a presidency.

It wasn't until she decided to take the spring 2020 semester off that she switched to news media. Then in May 2020, Woods found her footing at The Crimson White as a sports staff reporter.

Her talent for writing and her gift for talking about sports, which she's nurtured

from a young age by arguing with her brother so much that her mother told the siblings they should start a podcast, allowed her to flourish quickly.

Woods served as the spring 2021 assistant sports editor and 2021-22 sports editor, where she continuously made her mark in the collegiate sports world, appearing on the Paul Finebaum show six times, covering sports for The Tuscaloosa News as a fall 2022 intern, and training and recruiting contributing writers and her CW successors.

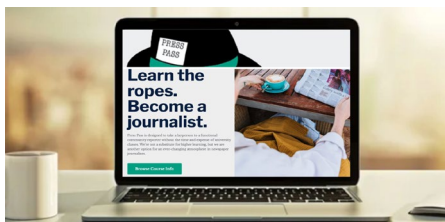
Woods has won multiple awards for her writing prowess, including the UA Student Media Planning Board's 2022 James E. Jacobson award for writing and fourth place for sports game story in the Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker for "2022 Story of the Year," an award which Fields said she wasn't surprised to see Woods win because she has a strong writing voice.



Have you explored Earn Your Press Pass?

Free On-Demand Video Training now available to APA members

The APA Journalism Foundation is again sponsoring tools to aid APA newspapers in the fight to recruit and train people to their newsrooms.



In 2021, the Foundation enlisted the help of retired publisher and journalism

professor Steve Stewart, and APA General Counsel Dennis Bailey to produce seven tip sheets to provide ready-made training for new hires. See Tip Sheets attached.

Now, through a partnership with Kansas Publishing Ventures, the APA Journalism Foundation is offering a FREE on-demand video training journalism crash course for your newsroom. Click [HERE](#) to see a video to learn more.

Earn Your Press Pass is not designed to replace journalism school, but will allow you to recruit people within your community and have ready-made training to get them started with professional training.

There are 48, 20-minute modules available. The course outlines basics like newspaper jargon, interviewing skills, editing, simple photography, etc.

Course instructor Lindsey Young is uniquely qualified to teach the course with over 10 years of high school instruction under her belt before joining her and her husband's company, Kansas Publishing Ventures, full time in 2016. Lindsey has the teaching background and the practical newsroom know-how that makes for a perfect training partner for newsrooms.

If you are interested in signing up, please send your name, newspaper and email address to felicia@alabamapress.org.

Three North Alabama papers change hands

The owners of the Southern Torch, a weekly newspaper in Rainsville, have purchased The Fort Payne Times-Journal, the Jackson County Sentinel in Scottsboro and the Sand Mountain

Reporter in Albertville.

Southern Torch, Inc. also owns the southerntorch.com daily news website, and FM radio stations WKEA 98-3 Wild Country & WMXN 101-7 The Torch.

The newspapers were sold in 2019 to Patrick Graham by long-time owners, Southern Newspapers.

Proposed APA bylaw amendment to be presented at the Summer Convention

The APA Board of Directors approved an amendment to the bylaws to allow online-only news publications that have been published as printed (weekly or daily) newspapers in Alabama for at least five years to be a member in good standing of the Alabama Press Association.

Bona-fide news publications shall have a dedicated website and ownership of the domain name. They shall bear a fixed title

and publication time stamp. Social media pages and groups do not qualify as online news publications.

"This is the first step in the process of updating the APA bylaws to recognize the changes in the landscape of our industry," APA Executive Director Felicia Mason said. "While print remains our core membership, there are quality news sites devoted to local and state news coverage in our state

that do not have a print product."

Mason said the committee will continue to examine ways APA can include non-traditional news sources in our association."

A copy of the proposed changes is attached/enclosed. The membership will vote at the membership meeting on June 24, 2023 during the Summer Convention in Orange Beach.

AL.com awarded \$32,000 grant to report on Alabama paroles, prisons

By Dennis Pillion / dpillion@al.com

AL.com is one of five recipients nationwide of the 2023 Lipman Center grants to fund reporting on inequalities and misconduct in the American criminal justice system.

The grants are awarded each year by the Ira A. Lipman Center for Journalism and Civil and Human Rights and the Columbia Journalism School.

AL.com journalists John Archibald, Ivana Hryniw and Ramsey Archibald, working with investigative editor Challen Stephens, will use the \$32,000 grant to fund reporting on the Alabama parole system, which does little to alleviate overcrowding in the state's troubled prison system. The funding will cover costs for data acquisition, analysis, and visualization, additional staff, Freedom of Information Act requests, travel or other reporting needs.

"We're grateful for the financial support and partnership," said Kelly Ann Scott, editor and vice president of Alabama Media Group. "Local journalism is at the heart of American journalism – and this kind of support enables news organizations like ours to dive deep into an issue that matters here in Alabama."

"The prisons and parole conversation in our state affects families, lives, policies and politics – we're eager to tell that story."

Members of the grantee selection committee were Columbia Journalism School Dean Jelani Cobb; Nina Alvarez,

CBS Assistant Professor of International Journalism; David Hajdu, Professor of Journalism; and Dolores Barclay, project manager of the Lipman Center and adjunct associate professor of journalism.

We are thrilled to support AL.com's timely and crucial investigation into a horrific injustice in our criminal justice system that needs to be told," said Cobb, dean of Columbia Journalism School and Henry Luce Professor of Journalism. "AL.com has a proven record for its meticulous reporting and inspired writing,

and we are excited to see the outcome of this project."

AL.com received a Lipman grant in 2021 that helped fund the reporting of Banking on Crime, a series that examines policing for profit and the criminalization of poverty in Alabama. The series includes AL.com's award-winning investigation of predatory policing in the small town of Brookside, reporting that freed people from jail and prompted Alabama legislators to pass new laws.

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America's Newspapers releases 2023 local newspaper study

America's Newspapers has released results from the 2023 Local Newspaper Study, the first national research project dedicated to how readers consume local news and advertising in nearly a decade.

"America's Newspapers is committed to meeting the needs of our members

local newspapers make."

The national study of 5,000 respondents was conducted by the independent research firm Coda Ventures, and provides compelling evidence of the importance, relevance and vitality of today's newspapers in the

study for Alabama in 2022. The results were very positive for our state.

Marianne Grogan, president of Coda Ventures, LLC, will be at the APA Summer Convention to share with delegates how the customized information from your market can translate into sales.

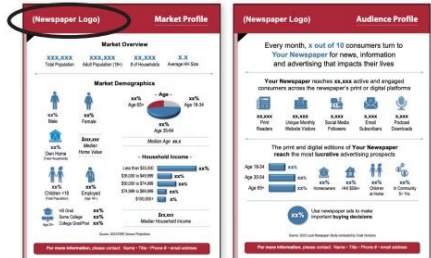
America's Newspapers

and of the industry," said Dean Ridings, CEO of America's Newspapers. "We are proud to present the 2023 Local Newspaper Study, a project dedicated specifically to measuring the difference

American media landscape.

An overview of the study is available [HERE](#) or in the May edition of Editor & Publisher (starting on page 66).

Coda Ventures provided a market



NNA asks Postal Regulatory Commission to stop hammering newspapers with rate surcharges

From NNA

National Newspaper Association Chair John M. Galer recently asked the Postal Regulatory Commission to stop adding a 2% surcharge onto postage rate increases as part of its efforts to bring Periodicals mail back into being a profitable product for the Postal Service.

Galer, publisher of The Journal-News in Hillsboro, Illinois, also expressed support for a new postage discount for marketing mailers. Under USPS' current proposal, saturation shopper publications (sent to every address or every residential address at marketing mail rates) will receive a 10% discount if they mail packages under 2 ounces that contain at least four different advertisers' messages. The mailings will have to be sent at least 10 times a year.

USPS plans to implement another postage increase in excess of 8% for most newspapers' Periodicals mail on July 9. That change will push the increases since

January 2021 to more than 30% over rates charged before the PRC changed the postal rate rules in 2020. Among the charges are a regulatory 2% surcharge for every mail class that does not produce enough revenue to cover USPS costs.



"This surcharge is adding insult to injury," Galer said. "In the history of newspapers and magazines in the mail, they have rarely covered all

postal costs. A small exception was in 2006 just after USPS implemented an extraordinarily large increase — and before iPhones came out. That lasted just a couple of years. Since then, Periodicals have been under water.

"Subscribers, who are the ultimate payers of these rates, simply cannot keep up with the ever-rising postage costs," he continued. "The Commission may have thought that these aggressive charges would somehow change that equation, but it has not and it will not. The surcharge provides USPS with very little revenue, but it is hurting newspaper subscribers. We think it is time for the PRC to change its rule."

The Postal Service is required to seek PRC review of its semiannual postage increases. Typically, the PRC approves the increases.

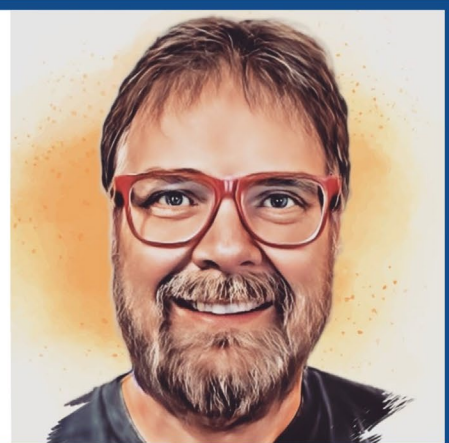
Read NNA's letter [HERE](#).

KEVIN SLIMP, NEWS GURU

Kevin Slimp will be offering one-on-one sessions to discuss reader engagement and sales strategies for your publication(s), on **Saturday, June 24** at the APA Summer Convention.

To sign-up for one of these limited 30 minute sessions (which will follow the luncheon) please email jaclyn@alabamapress.org.

First come, first served.



Columns

Carefully screen columns by public officials



by Jim
Pumarlo

How will the Legislature deal with a record budget surplus, and what will it mean for taxpayer pocketbooks? Are there implications for public safety with the proposal to legalize marijuana? Which communities are the winners and losers in the proposed state bonding bill?

Minnesota lawmakers are addressing these and myriad other issues as they pass the halfway mark of this year's session. The list is representative of the topics debated and public policy crafted in legislative hallways everywhere.

Newsrooms should regularly check in with state lawmakers. It's an excellent way to review and interpret what actions – and nonactions – at the Capitol mean to your readers.

The issues often provoke additional explanation by lawmakers, supplementing other news coverage. Many politicians seize the opportunity by writing regular columns that can be informative and engage citizens in valuable community dialogue.

But editors ought to be wary, too.

Lawmaker columns were the subject of a recent online discussion on the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors hotline. In near unanimity, editors emphasized that these reports deliver substance and not just PR.

The advice is especially important during election season as incumbents regularly use columns to their advantage over challengers. They strategically try to place commentaries to supplement – and maybe even replace – paid advertising. Al Cross, director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, offers excellent advice:

"I have long suggested that publication of such columns should be based on newsworthiness and reader interest, and sometimes might be better used as the seed of a story about an issue the legislator mentions. And I have always believed that if a legislator is on the ballot for the next election, the newsworthiness bar should be raised very high, and that no such columns should be published within 60 days of an election, unless it's an introductory column from a legislator elected in a recent special election."

Read: Self-serving columns should be

dead on arrival.

Elected and appointed officials at all government levels frequently press editors for a regular column in the name of advancing dialogue on pertinent topics. The request is not surprising. What public official has not pledged to open the lines of communication?

Here are some ground rules when contemplating and screening regular contributions:

- Columns should elaborate on issues facing a particular entity. They should not be a stage to respond to comments expressed through editorials, letters to the editor or other story comments. Those replies should be handled through normal channels such as letters to the editor.
- Columns should be a voice for the specific authors – for example, in cases of local government, the superintendent, city administrator or county administrator. If elected officials from those bodies wish to comment, they have the standard avenues available to all readers.
- Columns should be subject to standard review and editing. That does not mean censorship. The authors should have free reign to express opinions so long as they are within guidelines.

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If it's 10:08, it must be a watch ad



Ad-libs
by John Foust

Legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden once said, "It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."

That's certainly true in advertising.

Consider the nuances of photography. For example, the next time you run across an analogue watch ad in a newspaper, magazine or store poster, check out the photo. Whether it's Rolex or Timex or another brand, there's a good chance that the time is 10:08. Or in rarer cases, 1:52. That's because the placement of the hands creates a v-shape at the top of the watch face, which is where most timepiece makers place their logos. This v-shape frame sets the brand name apart from everything else on the face.

Watch manufacturers – and other smart advertisers – know how to photograph their products. They realize that a photo makes an instant impression on an audience. And they understand the

overall impression is heavily influenced by those vital details that coach Wooden talked about.

When we hear the phrase "photo bomb," we think about children jumping around in the background of wedding photos or family pets intruding on serious family poses. Mishaps like that are obvious and can be re-shot or corrected in commercial photos. It's the little things that often create problems, because they can be missed in the design or editing process.

I remember seeing a photograph of a group of several people in a full-page ad. It was a generic image which probably came from a stock photo library. Although all of the people were looking toward the right side of the ad, it was clear that they had been looking to the left in the original shot. One of the subjects was wearing a shirt which featured a large slogan in words that were backward. The photo had been "flopped" to create a mirror-reversal across a vertical axis. The result was a photo of people looking in the desired direction, but with a distracting detail that had slipped through the editing cracks. Just think how easy it would have been

to start out with a different picture or eliminate the words altogether.

In extreme cases, I've seen flopped cars with backward logos. That kind of mistake is sure to make an advertiser cringe – or even reconsider the decision to run more ads in that publication.

Sometimes, there are legal reasons for what can and cannot appear in a commercial photo. You may have seen professional athletes in ads without any team identification. That usually means the athlete had agreed to appear in the ad, but the team or the league would not allow visible logos.

The point of all this is to think carefully about photography. Before and after a photo is taken or selected, there's a lot of detail work to be done. Make sure the legal angles are covered. Make sure there are no photo bombs. And make sure the photo casts a strong light on the advertiser.

In other words, make sure it meets the Wooden Requirement.

John Foust conducts training programs for newspaper advertising professionals. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com

Columns

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- Columns should not be a substitute for press releases from a particular body. For example, it's fine if a superintendent wishes to expand on a district's position on legislative funding proposals. But the first public statements appropriately belong in a news story.
- Columns should not be a tool to give officials and their organizations or political parties "good PR." Editors and reporters always welcome story ideas to be judged

on individual merits.

Aggressive reporting of local public affairs ranks among the prime responsibilities of the community press. Newspapers, especially in today's fractured media landscape, remain in the best position to provide the most thorough and credible coverage of governing bodies that make decisions affecting all aspects of citizens' everyday lives.

At the same time, newsrooms are stretched to dispatch reporters to every meeting or track down every story that might warrant coverage.

The bottom line is that newsrooms should have firm criteria for these columns. As soon as the first one is accepted, other individuals and organizations will demand similar treatment. Each request should be evaluated on whether it will enhance the knowledge and debate on issues important to your community.

Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He can be reached at www.pumarlo.com and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.

Help Wanted

Sports Reporter - Florence, AL

The TimesDaily is seeking a sports reporter to cover primarily high school sports, along with some college sports. We need an energetic, inquisitive and productive professional with excellent reporting and writing skills to provide articles, web updates, tweets and short videos, and compile statistics. This position will be coordinating with the copy desk for 2 newspapers, planning and providing daily budgets for each section, editing, filing wire and local stories to Blox. Must be able to proof pages, make corrections, have excellent communication skills to work with our copy desk hub. The job will require evening hours and weekends. The successful candidate will need a college degree or equivalent experience, a passion for journalism and a reputation for quality and integrity.

Send cover letter, resume and writing clips to Stacy Long, Sports Editor, TimesDaily 219 W Tennessee Street Florence, AL 35631, or email stacy.long@TimesDaily.com.

Sports Reporter - Athens, AL

The award-winning News Courier in Athens, Alabama, has an immediate opening for a sports reporter to join its newsroom. The News Courier prints Tuesday through Saturday and we also maintain an active web and social media presence. We also produce a number of niche products, including multiple glossy magazines.

The sports reporter will write a minimum of two or three bylined stories each day for

print and enewscourier.com. The sports reporter will also provide photos or graphic illustrations with stories as warranted.

The sports reporter will also be the editor of our annual BLITZ football publication, which publishes prior to the start of the high school football season.

The sports reporter's beat will be all aspects of community sports. The News Courier has nine high schools — seven public schools and two private schools — within our immediate coverage area, and each of those has a sports program. The sports reporter will also work nights and weekends as events warrant.

The sports reporter will be expected to assist in frequent updates to our website and social media outlets. This person may also be asked to assist with copy editing duties as the need arises, so attention to detail and familiarity with AP style are required. The News Courier will train as necessary.

Ideal candidates will possess a degree in communications from an accredited institution, but The News Courier will

consider five years of experience at a daily news publication in lieu of a degree. Candidate must have a clean driving record and dependable transportation.

CNHI is an equal opportunity employer and diverse candidates are strongly encouraged to apply for this position. Please email resumes, three writing samples and three photography samples to nicolle@athensnews-courier.com. Hard copies can be mailed to Nicolle Sartain c/o The News Courier, P.O. Box 670, Athens AL 35612 or dropped off at our office at 410 W. Green St., Athens, AL 35611.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.cnhi.com/job/the-news-courier-athens-alabama-6-sports-reporter/>

For more information on the above listed positions and others [CLICK HERE](#) to view the APA Help Wanted page - updated frequently.



Need to find good employees?

Send APA your information to place in AlaPressa and online.

jaclyn@alabamapress.org