

UA's Books for the Black Belt to Make Donation to Perry County Schools

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TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — The University of Alabama's [Books for the Black Belt](#) program will donate more than 1,400 books Friday, Feb. 7, to school libraries in Perry County.

The program, under the aegis of the UA Center for Economic Development and in partnership with multiple UA colleges and organizations, plans to donate more than 5,500 books this spring to schools in Perry and Choctaw counties as well as Selma city schools.

Bob Weber, a staff member of the Center for Economic Development, and Chris Joiner, coordinator for [57 Miles for the UA Honors College](#), will lead a group of students to deliver the 1,400 books to schools. The delivery will occur between 9:30 and 10 a.m. at Francis Marion High School, 101 Hubbard Drive in Marion. In addition to the Marion drop-off, staff members and volunteers for the center plan to donate additional volumes to schools in Choctaw County later in February and in Selma later during the spring semester.

Groups at UA have worked, along with area businesses, libraries and churches, to collect books and donations over the past eight months, Weber said. The ongoing project has resulted in 5,500 books ready to be delivered, with more continuing to be donated.

Program volunteers have divided the books into three age categories – K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 – to hand out to the appropriate school libraries. Along with the book donations, Books for the Black Belt has raised more than \$10,000, largely from the contribution of the Alabama Panhellenic Association and other donors, which will be distributed to school libraries in the Black Belt.

School system superintendents in member counties decide how to distribute the books and monetary donations.

The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development serves as a gateway to The University of Alabama in providing economic development resources. The center, founded in 1987, provides community-based strategic

planning in support of local economic development efforts, primarily in the economically distressed parts of the state. The center's staff provides guidance to communities in leveraging other University resources and partners with the specific focus on community development and capacity building at all levels.

The University of Alabama, a student-centered research university, is experiencing significant growth in both enrollment and academic quality. This growth, which is positively impacting the campus and the state's economy, is in keeping with UA's vision to be the university of choice for the best and brightest students. UA, the state's flagship university, is an academic community united in its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all Alabamians.

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