



AUBURN  
UNIVERSITY

Outreach

## RURAL HEALTH INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER ISSUE #9: September 2025

### A Fresh Season Ahead: RHI's Fall Highlights



#### AU RHI partnership with VitAL

RHI partnered with VitAL at the University of Alabama to connect with Chambers County members about suicide prevention. VitAL aims to improve the lives, substance use, trauma-related challenges, and mental health of Alabamians. VitAL works with organizational stakeholders across 67 counties to ensure education and resources to those who need them most.

[Read More](#)



#### Getting to Know Mental Health with RHI

Auburn's Rural Health Initiative recently started a collaboration with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. This program focuses on mental health awareness. The various sessions will provide individuals with the opportunity to engage in a range of topics, utilizing available resources, and thereby strengthen the community. The sessions will take place in Tallapoosa County during September, October, November, and December.

[Read More](#)

#### Bobcat Day 2025

Bobcat Day, an annual event hosted at the Boligee Center on Labor Day weekend, brought together 32 graduating classes. Each class set up tents on the adjoining football field. More than 600 people were in attendance, exuding school spirit!



Classes participated in tent competitions by decorating for the chance to win awards! Many who attended traveled in style, in luxury RVs. There were many great food options, such as grilled burgers, ribs, chicken, specialty crab legs, and a wide variety of beverages.

Huge shoutout to Ms. Iris Sermon, Administrative Support Associate for Greene County, and her contribution to Bobcat Day. Ms. Sermon distributed informational flyers and shared resources about our OnMed Stations. She also transported guests in a 6-seater mule ATV. Thank you, Ms. Sermon, for creating strong bonds with many of the individuals from the class tents and promoting community healthcare resources!



## AU RHI Delivers Telehealth Carts Supporting Rural Healthcare

Auburn University's Rural Health Initiative (AU RHI) distributed telehealth carts to several rural Alabama counties on September 8th and 9th. The carts were delivered to Barbour, Bullock, Macon, Elmore, Coosa, Clay, and Chambers County for Randolph County's carts. The telehealth carts will enhance healthcare and connect patients to providers, while reducing the need for long-distance travel. AU RHI is continuing its mission to promote accessible healthcare in rural communities, changing lives.

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## AURHI Health & Wellness Locations

### Chambers County

*Chambers Community Health and Wellness Center*

*404 9th Ave SW, LaFayette, AL 36862*

Mon–Fri: 8 AM–8 PM | Sat: 1 PM–6 PM

(334) 459-0173

Ms. Leah Sledge [Ins0007@auburn.edu](mailto:Ins0007@auburn.edu) (334) 864-9373

Ms. Debra Ward [warddeb@auburn.edu](mailto:warddeb@auburn.edu) (334) 459-0173

### Greene County

*Boligee Community Center, 17404 County Road 20, Boligee, AL 35443*

Mon–Fri: 9 AM–6 PM

Ms. Iris Sermon — (334) 844-5442 | [ics0017@uburb.edu](mailto:ics0017@uburb.edu)

## Hale County

Akron Public Library, 207 1st Ave South, Akron, AL 35441

Tue: 8 AM–5 PM | Wed & Thu: 8 AM–12 PM | Fri: 5 PM–8 PM

Ms. LaTarsha Tubbs — (334) 844-4017 | lct0012@auburn.edu

## Sumter County

Gainesville Municipal Complex, 10900 State St, Gainesville, AL 35464

Mon–Fri: 8 AM–6 PM

Ms. Shakeria Williams — (334) 844-5029 | ssw0046@auburn.edu

## Wilcox County

Elijah Tracey Shaw III Community Center, 17349 AL-5, Catherine, AL 36728

Regular Hours:

Mon/Wed/Fri: 9 AM–1 PM | Tue/Thu: 1 PM–6 PM

Shanicqa Davis — (334) 844-3011 | smd0122@auburn.edu

For more information, visit [auburn.edu/outreach/ruralhealth](https://auburn.edu/outreach/ruralhealth).

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### Chambers County Health and Wellness Center

Location: Chambers Community Health and Wellness Center, 404 9th Ave SW, LaFayette, AL 36862

- Every Wednesday – Free Blood Pressure Screenings
- October 7, 2025 (1–4 pm CST) – Free Hearing Screenings
- October 21, 2025 (1–4 pm CST) – Free Hearing Screenings
- October 25, 2025 (9–11 am CST) – Free Speech Screenings



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