



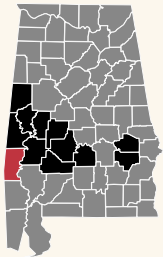
The Black Belt Bulletin

ISSUE 29 | FEBRUARY 26, 2024 | FOCUS ON HEAD START



SPOTLIGHT ON - CHOCTAW COUNTY -

Choctaw County is located in southwestern Alabama, between the Tombigbee River & the Mississippi border & is one of the 12 Black Belt counties serviced by BBCF. The City of Butler serves as the county seat.



CHOCTAW CO. HAS
A TOTAL AREA OF
921
SQUARE MILES



Choctaw County is named for its original inhabitants, the indigenous Choctaw Nation who were driven from the area by the US government between 1831-1833. The removal, known as The Trail of Tears, displaced 15,000 Choctaw during that time. Choctaw County was officially established in 1847 and thrived economically through the cotton and timber industries.



CHOCTAW CO. HAS
A POPULATION OF
12.7K

Choctaw County's demographics and racial distribution include a population that is 56% White and 42% Black (with multi-racial, Hispanic and Asians comprising the rest). Choctaw County's largest economic sectors include manufacturing, healthcare, retail, education, construction, agriculture, fishing and hunting, mining, quarrying,

and oil and gas extraction. Large employers in Choctaw County include Naheola Mill, Mid Star Timber Harvesting, and Gibson Oil Company.

Choctaw County has a long relationship with BBCF through both Community and Arts Grants and other programming to benefit education, healthcare, addressing issues of food insecurity, and supporting non-profits. Those living in Choctaw County can access the resources of the BBCF or donate to the organization through one of your local Community Associates.



Tony L. Cherry
BBCF Board Member &
County Commissioner,
Choctaw County

BBCF CHOCTAW CO. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATES:

Sammie Bourrage, Jacquelyn Bush, Teresia Cherry, Tony Cherry, Danielle Hampton, Marcus Hampton, Doris Jackson, Merrill Johnson, Kathy Levy, Tracy May, Coretta May, Africa McCoy, Larry Pogue, Jr., Bobby Ridgeway, Tammy Ruffin, Linda Turner-Gaines, Martha Wallace, Glenda Wooten

BBCF CHOCTAW CO. 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS:

(ARTS GRANTS & COMMUNITY GRANTS)

- ArtsRevive CDC
- Community Awareness & Prevention Programs
- Harvest Ministries
- Operation Save The Children
- Saiasi Foundation
- U Matter
- WR McGrew Outreach Development & Education Program

BBCF Head Start Sneaker Balls

Since 2017, BBCF has operated 6 Head Start programs for pre-school children in the Black Belt. These federally funded programs offer an early learning curriculum that emphasizes language, literacy, social skills, emotional well-being, health, nutrition, and family engagement.



HS Students all dressed up for the ball!

This month, BBCF Head Start launched "Valentine's Day Sneaker Ball" events for all its Head Start programs. According to Dr. Taquila Monroe, Head Start director, "the Sneaker Ball events are a way to advance the social skills of our students by introducing them to a semi-formal affair where they can utilize the courtesies and other social skills emphasized by our program."

These events include the entire family by offering a celebration where participants adorn their dressy outfits with their "best sneakers". Sidney Hardy, Head Start data coordinator and one of the event organizers offered, "the staff and parents came together to provide fun and fancy, localized events for each campus, complete with customized BBCF swag treats for attendees."



The Sneaker Ball events included themed snacks and treats for the kids, gorgeous and sparkly table decorations and healthy food options.

BBCF HEAD START
EMPLOYS OVER

70

TEACHERS AND STAFF



The Sneaker Balls were held for each of the following Head Start campuses:

- Easter Seals and Keith (2/12/24) at the Koutoure Kreations Event Center in Selma, AL
- FreeWill (2/13/24) at the FreeWill Head Start center in Camden, AL
- GP Austin (2/15/24) at the Linden City Gym in Linden, AL
- Choctaw (will be held on 2/29/24) at the Butler Civic Center in Butler, AL

BBCF Head Start is recruiting for the upcoming school year. If you or someone you know is interested in providing their child with the Head Start experience, please contact Ms. Judith Hardy, Family & Community Engagement Manager, at (334) 349-0372.



Group photo of families in attendance at the GP Austin Head Start Valentine's Day Sneaker Ball in Linden, AL.



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CHILDREN ARE ACCEPTED
INTO BBCF'S HEAD START
PROGRAM EACH YEAR

