

## SiO2 Material Science Makes Auburn Shine

The U.S. government has recognized the unique SiO2 materials science company in Auburn, Alabama. The RSA was one of the three original investors in technology for packaging biological pharmaceuticals and vaccines.

SiO2 and the U.S. government announced an agreement worth \$143 million to help fund manufacturing of SiO2's patented materials science, which is a combination of a microscopic and thin – undetectable to the naked eye – pure glass coating for biological drugs and vaccines.

The SiO2 vials have permeation properties like glass and provide shelf-life and stability. They can withstand 1,500 pounds of direct force and have a stability range of -196°C to 121°C, with a seal integrity down to -80°C.

A solution to COVID-19 is being sought around the world by over 170 top science and research companies, and SiO2's syringes and vials will provide the vehicle to deliver those products with its breakthrough packaging. SiO2 currently has 200 engineers, scientists, and technicians and expects an additional 200 within months. This patented packaging will provide safe delivery of drugs to the world for decades to come. ●

## The “Economic Terror” of 2020

BY DAVID G. BRONNER

We are slightly past halfway of 2020 and to be honest, it feels like a decade of problems thrown at the world in a mere six months. Unfortunately, our president enjoys conflict and turmoil over progress and a United America.

I have known President Trump for over 25 years. We have played golf twice, and sat beside each other during numerous public and private events – the Miss Universe pageant and the Elevated Acre Park dedication in New York City. Our relationship cooled when he built Trump Towers with illegal immigrants from Poland and abused contractors in the process.

Take his unusual management style, add to it the world's first pandemic in our lifetime, toss in legal protests (don't forget that is how women got to vote), some taken over by rioters – and here comes hurricane season.

How do these things affect and impact Alabama? When Alabama started to develop tourism 27 years ago, we had about \$1.8 billion in tourist revenue – most of that was from the beaches. Revenue grew to \$17 billion in 2019. **If a solution to COVID-19 is not found**, that could easily be cut by 50% to 75%. Thankfully, Pfizer, Inc. is betting \$1 billion on its solution in October.

Here are important points to ponder:

- This recession will likely be worse than the recession of 2008-09 [the Great Recession (G.R.)].
- U.S. Gross National Product in 2019 was +2.3%, 2020 will likely be -6% to -7%.
- Euro Zone GNP in 2019 was 1.2%, 2020 will likely be -8% to -9%.

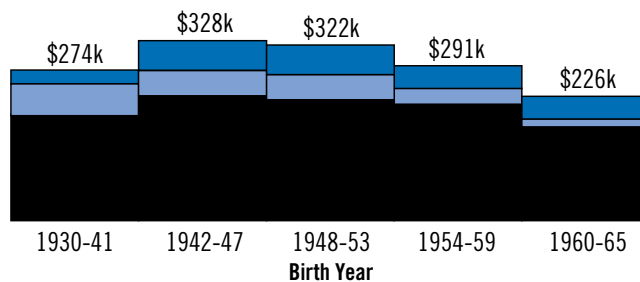
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### Nest Eggs

After a postwar boom, the nest eggs of typical Americans in their mid-50s have been shrinking.

Retirement assets at ages 51-56 for medium-wealth households, by birth year

- Defined contribution wealth (401(k)s, etc.)
- Defined benefit wealth (pensions)
- Social Security wealth



Source: Bloomberg



**Please, Do Not Cost Alabama Billions of Dollars!**

**Fill Out the Census!  
Get Every Person To Do It!**

# Grand National in Opelika

BY MARK FAGAN

**G**rand National opened in 1993 as the 4th site on the Trail. It is in Opelika on a pristine site near Auburn University and I-85. The complex is situated on 1,300 acres of woodlands and has 54 holes with 32 holes touching 600-acre Lake Saughatchee. The Opelika Water Board leased the land to the RSA (at no cost) for the golf complex, while the city of Opelika provided the two-mile-long entrance road and extended utilities to the clubhouse. Opelika then annexed the property into the city limits. Lake Saughatchee maintained its purpose as the primary drinking water source for Opelika and Lee County with none of its dimensions altered. It remained open for boating and fishing with golf holes connected by bridges high enough for boats to pass underneath.

There are two championship 18-hole courses (Lake Course and Links Course) and one 18-hole, par-3 course with tree-lined fairways and gently sloped terrain. The existing topography was preserved to maintain the natural attraction. There are four expansive bridges that cross the lake during play (800 feet, 600 feet, 500 feet, 80 feet). The Short Course has spectacular waterfront holes with two-thirds of

them flanked by water. There is a 35,000 sf clubhouse on a knoll overlooking the lake with water visible on three sides of the building. It has a golf shop, dining room, grill, and meeting rooms. The 15-acre practice range has a short game practice area.

The RSA partnered with the city of Opelika and opened the Auburn Marriott Opelika Resort & Spa at Grand National in 2002. It has 221

guest rooms and 15 suites overlooking the lake and golf course. It has 15,000 sf of event space and a 96-seat amphitheater. There is a 4,200 sf pool complex with 3 saltwater pools, a splash pad, a splash pool bar, 5 cabanas, whirlpools, 2 waterfalls, and fire pits. There is an indoor pool, hot tub, fitness center, restaurant, sports bar, outdoor eating area, and tennis/pickle ball courts.

The RSA bought 700 acres of land along the access road to Grand National

for developing a recreational/retirement resort called National Village. In 2006, the Opelika City Council approved plans for 1,400 homes and condominiums divided into seven neighborhoods, a village center with retail shops, restaurants, loft condos, and green space with lakes and trails. The RSA partnered with Conner Brothers Construction to build

the houses. Residents are allowed access to the recreational amenities at the adjacent Marriott Resort. Almost 200 houses have been sold by mid-2020.

Grand National is Auburn University golf

teams' home venue. Major tournaments played there include the Nike Tour Championship, LPGA Tournament of Champions, NCAA Division I Championship, and the PGA Barbasol Championship (2015-2017). These tournaments were broadcast by tv to millions nationally and internationally and showcased Opelika and Auburn. ●

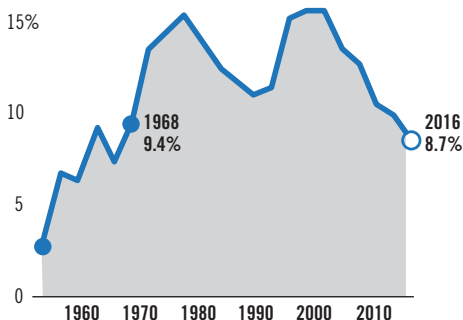


## The wealth gap

Several indicators demonstrate inequality.

### The black-white wealth gap is as wide as in the 1960s

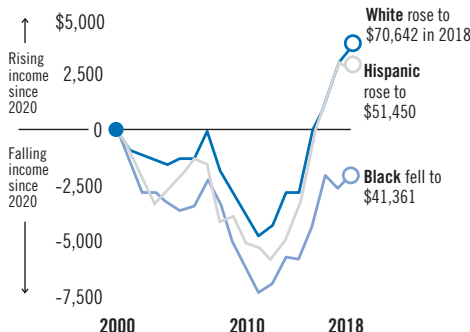
Median black household wealth as a percentage of median white household wealth



SOURCE: Historical Survey of Consumer Finances via Minneapolis Fed and University of Bonn economists Moritz Kuhn, Moritz Schularick, and Ulrike I. Steins

### Black Americans still earn less than they did in 2000

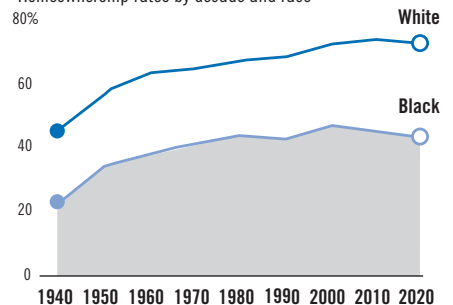
Change in median income since the year 2000, adjusted for inflation



NOTE: Shown in constant 2018 dollars; methodology changed in 2013 and multiple values have been averaged within each year when available; the white category doesn't include those of Hispanic origin  
SOURCE: Census Bureau

### Black homeownership is in retreat

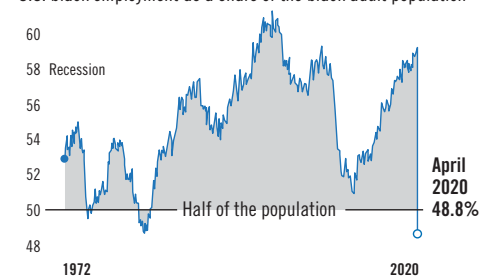
Homeownership rates by decade and race



SOURCE: Census Bureau

### Fewer than half of black adults are now employed

U.S. black employment as a share of the black adult population



NOTE: Seasonally adjusted  
SOURCE: Labor Department via FRED



## Alabama Success Stories

### Alabama Department of Senior Services

**T**he Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) is the state agency responsible for coordinating state and federal programs serving seniors and Alabamians with disabilities. ADSS strives to enhance and promote independence and dignity for Alabama's senior and disabled populations by meeting a variety of needs.

Alabama has 13 designated Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) responsible for administering the Senior Services programs and services available to older adults and people of any age with a disability. The AAAs cover all 67 counties in the state and were established to respond to the needs of Americans 60 and over. One of its best known programs is its Elderly Nutrition Program.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ADSS and its 13 AAAs have worked diligently to meet the needs of Alabama's senior citizens. With congregate meals suspended, the nutrition coordinators at each AAA had to alter their meal plans to ensure participants did not miss any meals. Hot meals continued to be served at some senior centers via curbside pick-up and home delivery. Clients who were unable to come to the center to get a hot meal were transitioned to the frozen home-delivered meal program.

The AAAs are now transitioning back to hot meals. All hot meals are packaged at the senior center and are either given out by curbside pickup or delivered to

the home of the client. Other programs include a grocery bag program and USDA Farmers to Families Food Box Program.

Housed within every AAA is an Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC). This is a national initiative put in place by the Administration for Community Living to provide access to information and assistance for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers. The ADRC provides benefits screening, education, and options counseling on long-term care services, and support.

The Medicaid Waiver for the Elderly and Disabled Program strives to help clients retain their autonomy by providing services that allow them to live safely in their own homes for as long as it is appropriate.

The State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) offers:

- Answers to questions about Medicare, Medigap, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, long-term care insurance, and other health insurance programs
- Information about Medicare beneficiaries in specific areas, such as home health benefits and Medicare claims and appeals
- Assistance in understanding Medicare and other health insurance benefits
- Referrals to other programs or agencies, where appropriate, and
- Group presentations by SHIP counselors on a variety of health

insurance topics.

The Alabama SenioRx Prescription Assistance program aims to help people manage their chronic illnesses earlier and prevent other serious health problems. This medication assistance helps people utilize their limited resources for food and other important expenses.

Individuals who qualify for SenioRx receive a three-month supply of prescriptions from various pharmaceutical companies for free or at a low cost. The drug cost assistance can be renewed as long as the person is eligible. To qualify, you must be at least 55 years of age with a chronic medical condition, have no prescription drug insurance coverage, and must meet certain income guidelines. Social Security individuals with disabilities, those who have applied for disability or have a doctor's declaration of disability, and who are in the 24-month Medicare waiting period are also eligible for medication assistance regardless of age.

For more information, contact your local AAA and ADRC at 800.AGE.LINE (800.243.5463). You can also find them on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

*This is a series of articles about Alabama Success Stories. Please let us know if you have a similar success story you would like to share with the RSA membership. You may contact us at [communications@rsa-al.gov](mailto:communications@rsa-al.gov).* ●

## IRS Issues Additional Guidance on Waiver of 2020 Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)

BY RHONDA H. PETERS, DIRECTOR OF RSA-1/PEIRAF

**T**he Internal Revenue Service issued additional guidance relating to the waiver of the 2020 required minimum distribution (RMD) from certain retirement plans in accordance with the CARES Act. The CARES Act permitted RSA-1 members the option to forego their RMD not already paid for 2020.

On June 23, 2020, the IRS provided additional guidance permitting the repayment or rollover of RMDs already

paid for 2020. Any RSA-1 member or beneficiary who has already received a RMD in 2020 now has the option to return their RMD to the RSA-1 Deferred Compensation Plan or rollover the RMD. The deadline for returning or rolling over the 2020 RMD is August 31, 2020.

If you have already received your 2020 RMD and would like to return or rollover your RMD, contact the RSA at 334.517.7230.

If you would like to forego payment of your 2020 RMD, mail a signed letter to the RSA-1 Benefits Division requesting to waive your 2020 RMD as stated in the CARES Act or contact our office and a form will be mailed to you.

You may call the RSA-1 Benefits Division at 877.517.0020 or email [rsa1info@rsa-al.gov](mailto:rsa1info@rsa-al.gov) with any questions concerning your 2020 RMD. ●



# Please, Do Not Cost Alabama Billions of Dollars! Fill Out the Census! Get Every Person To Do It!



**RETIREMENT SYSTEMS OF ALABAMA**  
201 SOUTH UNION STREET  
P.O. BOX 302150  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-2150

**PRSRT STD**  
**U.S. POSTAGE**  
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MONTGOMERY, AL  
PERMIT NO. 402

## ENJOY YOUR SUMMER/FALL A Special Deal FOR RSA MEMBERS

### The Battle House,

#### A Renaissance Hotel \$119

• August 5-20, 23-27, 29-31  
• September 1-9, 13-16, 23, 28-30 • October 4-8, 11, 18-25, 29-31

#### The Battle House RSA Spa Package \$207

• August 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26  
• September 2, 8-9, 15-16, 23, 30 • October 5-6, 19-20

#### Riverview Plaza \$109

• August 5-20, 23-27, 29-31 • September 1-20, 24-30  
• October 1, 3-6, 12-25, 29

#### Grand Hotel \$127 plus a 15% resort fee

• August 2-6, 9-13, 16-20, 23-24, 30-31 • September 1-3, 7-8, 13-17, 20-21, 27-29 • October 4-8, 1-12, 25-26

#### Grand Hotel RSA Golf Package \$199 plus a 15% resort fee

• August 2-6, 9-13, 16-20, 23-24, 30-31  
• September 1-3, 7-8, 13-17, 20-21, 27-29  
• October 4-8, 1-12, 25-26

#### Grand Hotel RSA Spa Package \$259 plus a 15% resort fee

• August 2-6, 9-13, 16-20, 23-24, 30-31  
• September 1-3, 7-8, 13-17, 20-21, 27-29  
• October 4-8, 1-12, 25-26

#### Marriott Shoals \$109

• August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 • September 7-8, 13, 20, 27  
• October 3, 17, 24, 31

#### Marriott Shoals RSA Spa Package \$210

• August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 • September 13, 20, 27  
• October 3, 17, 24, 31

#### Renaissance Ross Bridge \$119

• August 2-6, 9-12, 16-20, 23-27, 30-31  
• September 1-3, 7-10, 13-17, 20-24, 27-30  
• October 1, 4-8, 11-15, 18-22, 25-29

#### Ross Bridge RSA Spa Package \$223

• August 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, 23-26, 30-31  
• September 1-2, 7-9, 13-16, 20-23, 27-30  
• October 4-7, 11-14, 18-21, 25-28

#### Auburn/Opelika Marriott Resort \$109

• August 2-5, 10-11, 16-17, 19-20, 23-27, 30-31  
• September 1-2, 7-10, 13-17, 20-22, 27-30  
• October 11-13, 18, 20-21, 25-28

#### Auburn/Opelika Marriott Resort RSA Spa Package \$201

• August 2, 5, 16, 19-20, 23, 26-27, 30  
• September 2, 9-10, 13, 16-17, 20, 27, 30  
• October 11, 18, 21, 25, 28

#### Prattville Marriott \$89

• August 2, 9, 13-16, 20-22, 27, 30  
• September 3, 6-10, 13, 17, 27 • October 4, 11, 18, 25

#### Renaissance Montgomery \$119

• August 1-3, 7-12, 16, 19-27, 30  
• September 12-13, 16-17, 19, 23-27  
• October 11-14, 18, 21, 30

#### Renaissance Montgomery RSA Spa Package \$209

• August 7-8, 12, 19-22, 26-27  
• September 12, 16-17, 19, 23-26 • October 14, 21, 30

*Specific room requests may require additional charge.  
Rates available the 1st of the month and  
are not applicable to groups.*

800-228-9290 Ask for RSA rate. **Promotional Code: R2A** on [www.rsa-al.gov](http://www.rsa-al.gov)  
**Book Online and Save RSA \$4.**

## The "Economic Terror" of 2020 CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

- Global Trade decline (the G.R.) by 12%, 2020 will be 18% to 25%.
- Housing, banking (financial), manufacturing will be harmed, but services (hotels, sports, malls, higher education, tourism) will be critically wounded.
- 51.2+ million first-time unemployment job losses; it took 6 years to get back from the G.R.
- Before, a shortage of workers – now, an over-supply causing wage growth to fall – and some unemployment schemes actually pay ex-workers more not to work.

In time, we will get past these serious problems – from racism to health pandemics – if we listen to the real heroes of America like General James N. Mattis, our former Secretary of Defense: "In unity, there is strength." ●

## WANT TO HELP?



## A FREE CAR TAG

Tired of that worn-out dealer tag on the front of your car? Would you like to help the RSA and our Alabama Tourism Department advertise "Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail" on your front bumper? If so, call to request a tag at 334.517.7000 or 877.517.0020, or write:

Tag, P.O. Box 302150  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2150

Member Hotel  
Discounts Webpage



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