In our 98th Year of Service to Youth & the Community

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Optimist Club of Birmingham

The Flagship Club of the
Alabama-Mississippi District
February-March 2026

Meets 3rd Thursday
12:00 Noon

APRIL 9TH – CCDHH CONTEST
ALABAMA POWER COMPANY
600 18TH ST S, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35203
ELECTRA ROOM – 12 NOON

The Optimist Club of Birmingham will be sponsoring its annual Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH), conducted by Contest Chair Paula Hines, on Thursday, April 9th, at Alabama Power Company in Birmingham. The topic of this year's contest is, "The Moment I Realized I Belonged — My Definition of Community".

***Please plan to arrive early to get your lunch in the Atrium Cafe, so you can be ready for the meeting to begin at noon. You may bring your own lunch if you prefer.**

***No one will be allowed to enter or leave the room during a contestant's speech in order to prevent distractions. If the contest has already begun, please wait until someone opens the door for you to enter.**

MEMBER NEWS

The Optimist Club extends our deepest condolences to **Sharon Wilson** on the loss of her beloved father-in-law, **John Wilson, Sr.*** March 31st. Please keep Sharon, her husband, Don, and all their family in your prayers for God's comfort and peace during this difficult time.

FEBRUARY Birthdays: 3rd - Dr. Sudha Gutti, 4th – Nancy Benjamin, 18th – Bert Perry, 25th - Carolyn McCoy

FEBRUARY Anniversaries: 14th – Michael **& Teresa Jones, 19th –** Jerry **& Angene Coleman,**

MARCH Birthdays: 1st – Shirley Miller, 4th – Stuart Benjamin, 4th – Renee Green-Jones

MARCH Anniversaries: 11th – Elliott **& Kim Carr, 22nd –** Robert **& Desiree Bates, 26th –** Martin **& Erma Hinton**

Hope you each enjoyed your special day!

Please note: If your birthday and/or anniversary was not included, please email the dates to **Nancy Ryan** at nryan95@charter.net, so they can be added to the list.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 2 – BOARD MEETING VIA ZOOM, 1 PM
APRIL 9 – CCDHH CONTEST, AL POWER CO., 12 N
(NO MEETING ON APRIL 16)
APRIL 17-19 – 3RD QUARTER AL/MS DISTRICT MTG.
FLOWOOD, MS

PROMISE YOURSELF...

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

(Christian D. Larson, Optimist Creed)

JANUARY 15, 2026, CLUB MEETING

The Optimist Club of Birmingham was honored to have Dr. Lashelle Barmore, with Archwell Health, as our guest speaker on January 15, 2026. Growing up in urban Alabama, Dr. Barmore saw the effects of diabetes on underserved communities firsthand. She came to ArchWell Health because of the care model, and believes it affords older patients the dignity and respect they deserve. Dr. Barmore shared some very helpful information on ways to keep a close watch on glucose levels with continuous monitoring devices that can even send data to your doctor.

Dr. Barmore received her undergraduate degree from Miles College in Fairfield, AL. She received her Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in Kansas City, MO. Dr. Barmore completed her residency with St. Vincent's East Family Residency Program in Birmingham, AL. She has been in private practice in the Birmingham area since 2012.

Dr. Barmore serves on the Junior Board of the Birmingham Chapter of the American Diabetes Association as well as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. She is a member of the Alabama Medical Education Consortium, Alabama Osteopathic Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Osteopathic Association, Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine Preceptorship, American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, Mineral District of Medical Society Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA), and the Impact Mentoring Executive Board.

President Sharon Wilson thanks guest speaker Dr. Lashelle Barmore for her excellent presentation.

SNAPSHOTS FROM CLUB MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

OPTIMIST DAY – FEBRUARY 5, 2026
DONATION FROM OI TO RMH ALABAMA

In honor of **Optimist Day** on February 5, Zone 1 Lt. Gov. Vera Hendrix of the AL/MS District, presented a check for Ronald McDonald House Alabama from Optimist International Foundation, to **Sean Fredella**, Community Engagement Coordinator for Ronald McDonald House Alabama. Zone 1 Optimists attending the presentation are pictured below:

Pictured L to R: Jon Ryan - Optimist Club of Birmingham, Secretary; Nancy Ryan - Optimist Club of Birmingham, Club Foundation Representative; Sean Fredella – Ronald McDonald House Alabama, Community Engagement Coordinator; Vera Hendrix – AL-MS District, Zone 1 Lt. Governor; Sharon Wilson – Optimist Club of Birmingham, President; Janet Smith - Talladega Optimist Club Member and Past AL-MS District Governor

FEBRUARY 19 – ESSAY CONTEST

The Optimist Club of Birmingham was proud to sponsor its annual Club Essay Contest, conducted by Contest Chair Desiree Bates, to give students the opportunity to earn a $2,500 college scholarship to the college of their choice. The top 3 Club Essay Contest Winners were invited to attend the Club meeting on February 19th, which took place at Alabama Power Company in Birmingham, to read their essays to our members and guests.

Congratulations to:

1st Place Winner - Christian Stubbs
2nd Place Winner - Reese Childs
3rd Place Winner - Brooks Ford

Each winner received a cash award and a medallion in recognition of earning 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place. Other contestants included **Taytem Evans** and **Haley McAdams** who also did an excellent job in writing their essays! All who participated in the contest received a Certificate of Participation.

The Club was proud to submit Christian Stubb's 1st Place winning essay for further competition and wishes him all the best in the Alabama-Mississippi District Contest!

Please visit our Club FB page for more pictures of events:
https://www.facebook.com/BirminghamOptimistClub

Congratulations to our Club Essay Contest Winners: 1st Place - Christian Stubbs; 2nd Place - Reese Childs; 3rd Place - Brooks Ford

1st Place Winner Christian Stubbs with Essay Contest Chair Desiree Bates & his proud Grandmother!

2nd Place Winner Reese Childs with her proud Dad!

SNAPSHOTS FROM CLUB MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY. MARCH 7 – ORATORICAL CONTEST

Our annual Club Oratorical Contest, conducted by **Contest Chair Ryan Adams** and **Co-Chair Erma Hinton**, was held on Saturday, March 7th, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Birmingham. The topic of this year's contest is, "The Moment I Realized I Belonged — My Definition of Community".

The contest was the first level of competition to give participants the chance to move forward to the Zone and Regional levels of competition, for the opportunity to earn a $2,500 college scholarship to the college of their choice at the District level. The winner of that contest will continue to move forward for the opportunity to earn up to a total of $25,000 at the Optimist International level!

Congratulations to:

1st Place Winner - Addison Grantham
2nd Place Winner -Christian Stubbs
3rd Place Winner - D'Ariya Larry

Each winner received a cash award and a medallion in recognition of earning 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place, along with a Certificate of Participation.

The Club was honored to sponsor the 1st and 2nd Place Winners, Addison and Christian, who were eligible to advance to the next level of competition in the Zone 1 Contest.

Contest Chair Ryan Adams meets with participants before the contest begins.

Oratorical Contest Chair Ryan Adams & Co-Chair Erma Hinton are ready to begin the contest!

Contest Chair Ryan Adams & Co-Chair Erma Hinton present Certificate of Participation to Addison Grantham, 1st Place Winner of the Oratorical Contest!

Contest Chair Ryan Adams & Co-Chair Erma Hinton present Certificate of Participation to Christian Stubbs, 2nd Place Winner of the Oratorical Contest!

Contest Chair Ryan Adams & Co-Chair Erma Hinton present Certificate of Participation to D'Ariya Larry, 3rd Place Winner of the Oratorical Contest!

SNAPSHOTS FROM CLUB MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

MONDAY, MARCH 16 – ZONE 1 ORATORICAL CONTEST

Congratulations to Zone 1 Oratorical Contest Participants sponsored by the Optimist Club of Birmingham, **Addison Grantham** and **Christian Stubbs**, who both did an outstanding job!! The contest was held at Bethel Baptist Church, hosted by the Birmingham West End Optimist Club.

As **2nd Place Winner of the Zone 1 Contest**, **Addison** was eligible to move forward to the next level of competition..

We are so proud of both Addison and Christian!!

Congratulations to Addison Grantham, Christian Stubbs, and 1st Place Winner Brian Greene, sponsored by Talladega Optimist Club.

Gov. Mike Holt & Lt. Gov. Vera Hendrix congratulate 2nd Place Winner Addison Grantham.

Gov. Mike Holt presents Certificate of Participation to Christian Stubbs

President Sharon Wilson, Chair Ryan Adams, Addison Grantham, Co-Chair Erma Hinton, and Maranda Dancy, mother of Addison.

Pictured L to R (back row) Club Contest Chair Ryan Adams, Addison Grantham, Club Contest Co-Chair Erma Hinton, Addison's Mom Maranda Dancy, Treasurer Leon Evans, (front) President Sharon Wilson and Immediate Past President Carolyn McCoy

Club Contest Chair Ryan Adams and Co-Chair Erma Hinton congratulate Addison Grantham.

SNAPSHOTS FROM CLUB MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
REGION 1 ORATORICAL CONTEST
HUNTSVILLE, AL

Congratulations to **Addison Grantham**, 2nd Place Winner of the Region 1 Oratorical Contest, conducted by **Region 1 Chair Leon Evans**, Treasurer of the Birmingham Club, in Huntsville!

Congratulations also to 1st Place Winner, **Shiloh Fonjia**, **of Huntsville**. Both young ladies will be representing Region 1 in the AL/MS District Oratorical Contest, to take place in Flowood, MS, on Saturday, April 18th, for the opportunity to earn a $2,500 scholarship to the college of their choice. The District Winner will then move on to the International Regional level of competition, for the chance to earn up to a total of $25,000 scholarship at the Optimist International Competition!

Region 1 Contest Chair Leon Evans and Zone 3 Lt. Gov. Sandra Griffin, present Certificates of Participation to Shiloh Fonjia and Addison Grantham, who will both be representing our Region in the District Oratorical Contest.

1st Place Winner - Shiloh Fonjia - Huntsville
2nd Place Winner - Addison Grantham - Birmingham