

ALABAMA SECURITIES COMMISSION

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Alabama Securities Commission Promotes Investor Education and Fraud Prevention Outreach for Alabama Citizens

Advancing Investor Protection Through Information, Instruction and Preparation

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA (September 28, 2009) The Alabama Securities Commission (ASC) continues to protect investors and promote efficient capital formation in Alabama. The ASC supports an aggressive Investor Education and Fraud Prevention Outreach program, striving to assure that Alabama's "main street" investors—the driving force behind our state's economic vitality—have the knowledge and tools needed to build and safeguard their financial futures.

During this fiscal year, the ASC investor education program advanced personal finance education and fraud awareness and prevention practices to more than 5,017 Alabama citizens from across the state. Educational outreach was provided at 67 events statewide targeting three specific age groups, each with its own distinct financial/investment dynamics: high school and college youth; working adults in affinity groups and churches; and, seniors 50 years of age and older. The following ASC's outreach activities are tailored to provide each group with timely information and appropriate educational opportunities.

Youth and Student Programs

The Alabama Securities Commission (ASC) is an active member of the Alabama JumpStart Coalition and works with business, government and nonprofit agencies to promote financial literacy programs geared toward public and private middle and high school students. ASC offers two professionally developed financial literacy publications to state educators for classroom use. The Basics of Saving and Investing is a teaching guide used in various business, math and social studies classes in grades 7-12 and can be accessed, in electronic form, at the ASC website from the Investor Education and Fraud Prevention page (copies available upon request). Additionally, high school economics teachers can obtain printed copies of Personal Finance for the Economics Classroom to augment financial literacy instruction.

High School students and teachers from all over Alabama visit the Commission at no cost other than to provide their own transportation and lunch. Typical field trips last about four hours and include over two hours of investor education and information about how ASC regulates the securities industry in the state of Alabama and a tour of the Capitol. High school teachers may call 1-800-222-1253 and ask for the Education and Public Affairs Office to schedule a tailor made field trip.

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Affinity Group Programs

The ASC Education Office has enjoyed tremendous success in carrying the Commission's investor education initiative to affinity groups throughout the state. Affinity groups are business, civic, religious, fraternal or other stakeholder organizations with common interests or goals. These groups are typically comprised of working professionals who invest in securities, assume certain levels of financial risk and can become involved in investment ventures that may or may not be legitimate. Presentations were made to Chambers of Commerce, Alabama State employee organization members, real estate and investment clubs, attorney and accountant organizations, civic and fraternal clubs, college business and finance students and instructors and senior citizen service providers, among many others.

Adult and Senior Citizens Programs

Adults and senior citizens, aged 50 and above, comprise the fastest growing segment of our state and national population and hold a majority of the nation's personal wealth. The ASC, as part of its mission, strives to make certain that Alabama's senior investors do not fall prey to unscrupulous and illegal investment schemes. The ASC Education Office partners with the Alabama Department of Senior Services, the Alabama Attorney General's office, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) and AARP Alabama and other agencies to conduct adult and senior citizen outreach events throughout Alabama to promote personal finance skills, investor education and fraud prevention. ASC provides highly qualified staff members to make presentations and offers free printed and electronic educational materials for Alabama citizens.

New Statewide Military Outreach Program Launched

In June 2009, ASC launched an innovative investor education and outreach program tailored specifically to meet the special needs of Alabama's military personnel and their families before, during and after deployment and in the transition to civilian life. *Protect Alabama Troops (PATS)* is an information-based resource, accessible on ASC's website, www.asc.alabama.gov, containing appropriate, practical news, tips and advice for Alabama's active-duty Guard and Reserve personnel, as well as retired military and veterans. Servicemen and women can use PATS to learn valuable information about inappropriate sales practices, affinity fraud, excessive investment fees and unsuitable financial products, among many other relevant topics. Also available are online versions of notable investment literature, including two new military outreach guides developed by Kiplinger's Personal Finance and the BBB, and Salute to Smart Investing, published by the Lightbulb Press. Qualified ASC staff members are available, upon request, to visit and speak at military installations/units and provide seminars on personal finance, investor education and fraud prevention.

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For more information contact Dan Lord, Education and Public Affairs Manager at 1-800-222-1253.

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