



American Legion's 82<sup>nd</sup> Alabama Boys State  
**THE CITIZEN BUILDER**  
 May 29th, 2019



## Chris Baker Elected Governor Colby Lewis Lieutenant Governor



Chris Baker (F)



Colby Lewis (N)

By Dawson Camp and Ethan Ivy

Chris Baker (F), Boys State delegate from James Clemens High School in Madison, Alabama, has been elected the Governor of the 82nd Alabama Boys State. He supports bipartisan agreement, and pledges to work for the people as a whole, not just his party. The governor-elect supports the legalization of cannabis, welfare reform, maintaining the 65-year-old retirement age, universal healthcare, and an education lottery. His proposal for welfare is to implement drug testing, background checks, and more welfare workers to make sure that recipients

and applicants are getting back on their feet. On the personal level his extracurricular activities include: varsity football and baseball, the chess team, and the Student Government Association. He is also an Officer of Student to Student and he is a Student Ambassador.

Colby Lewis (N), the new 2019 Lieutenant Governor, is from Gardendale High School in Gardendale, AL. Lewis is pro-gun, pro-life, pro-legalization of marijuana, for funding infrastructure investment, welfare, education, and, if any funds remain, those will go to general funds such as

utilities, commerce, and economic improvements for Alabama. He is pro-lottery for education funding. Lewis is involved in Key Club, Honor Society, Future Health Professionals (HOSA),

golf, tennis, and the debate team. Lewis is also the President of the student council and a student ambassador at his school.

## **A Governor's Wisdom**

By Chandan Makwana

Darius Thomas recently shared his experiences as the 2017 Alabama Boys State governor and that year's Boys Nation president. He describes his time at Boys State as being both "impactful" and "memorable." Thomas said Boys State allowed him to make connections with many people with whom he shared similar interests, as well as being able to meet and communicate with those who have contrasting opinions.

Thomas felt confident in his speaking skills when he arrived at Boys State, but the week he spent campaigning helped him to develop his debating abilities, a talent that proved invaluable during his time at Boys Nation. As well as campaigning for Boys State governor, he also spent his activity time working with the newspaper and media. One of his favorite activities during the week was the elections.

Thomas explained how certain activities can help someone better prepare themselves for their week at Boys State. The Boys State experience helped to boost his confidence in public speaking and political campaigns.

Following his election as governor, Thomas traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend Boys Nation and was honored to be elected president. He explained that Boys Nation is both similar and

dissimilar to Boys State. Some examples of these differences include how delegates are separated into sections rather than counties and Boys Nation does not have interest groups for delegates. One large similarity between the two is the way campaigns and elections are run.

The most important advice Thomas offered for delegates at Boys State thing is to pay attention, learn something you did not know, and enjoy the time you spend with those around you. "You don't lack confidence, you just haven't found it yet."

## **Candidates Aim to Persuade Voters**

By Wesley Lowman

On Tuesday night, delegates of the 82nd American Legion Alabama Boys State gathered in the Ferguson Center ballroom for a general session that would feel as though it would go down in Boys State history. The candidates for Statewide offices presented their cases to voters on why they should be elected to serve at this year's Alabama Boys State.

The night, led by the Federalist and Nationalist Party Chairmen and Vice Chairmen, began with campaign speeches given by candidates for

Constitutional offices - those that are mandated by the Alabama Constitution. The candidates for Governor were given a five minute maximum time for their speeches, while candidates for other offices were given four minutes to speak.

During these speeches, many insightful ideas were brought forth by candidates from each party, leaving voters conscientiously contemplating who they felt would be the best person for the position. Jokes were laughed at, policies were proposed, and thoughts were provoked during this gathering of over 600 of the brightest young men in the state of Alabama.

After the campaign speeches, delegates were offered a chance to participate in a town hall. During the town hall, delegates asked questions that would be answered by candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

## **Donaldson Encourages Involvement**

By Sam Cowart

Judge Scott Donaldson spoke at one of general sessions at Alabama Boys State today. The judge is a member of the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals, an alumnus of the University of Alabama, and a former Boys Stater.

Donaldson had a lot to say about the importance of getting involved in politics. He discussed how so many people do not believe politics is for them because it can be "corrupt and dirty."

He recommended that even if you feel that way, you should want to get

Topics discussed included welfare reform, the legalization of marijuana, a state lottery, education improvement, abortion, energy, infrastructure, and prison reform.

Both the Federalist and Nationalist Party platforms addressed similar issues, so the campaign speeches and town hall meeting provided delegates with more information that would allow them to make an informed decision at the ballot box today, Wednesday. The elections are now over and results are in (and available via Twitter and Facebook). The Governor and Lieutenant Governor will have the privilege of traveling to Washington D.C. in July to represent our great state at Boys Nation. Good luck to all of the candidates in their elections, and we look forward to the many things our delegation will accomplish this year.

involved in that kind of work even more in order to make it better. He emphasized how all of us can be the



change that prevents corruption in our state and federal government. He also encouraged that you take advantage of

the many opportunities to run for office and get involved in any way possible at this year's Boys State.

## **City Leadership Meetings**

By Ethan Ivy

City leadership meetings are an opportunity for delegates, in smaller groups to step out of their comfort zones and reflect not only on the speaker's' experiences, but also the experiences of the City as a collective. These leadership meetings give delegates the opportunity to engage in non-political debates that bring the group together, with the goal and vision of giving delegates the skills and knowledge to be better leaders, better people, and better citizens.

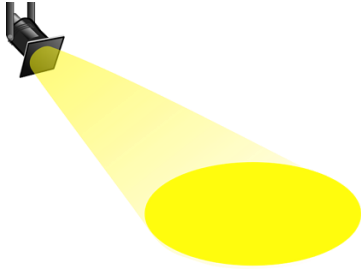
The schedule at Boys State is undeniably filled to the brim with speakers, government sessions, and experiences for the delegates to learn how our Alabama government works and how to improve yourself as a leader. This schedule can be intimidating for delegates due to how filled the schedule is, but these Leadership Meetings can create a positive environment and place to collectively grow as a city and as a people.

The goal of the American Legion Alabama Boys State is to teach young men about the responsibilities of citizenship, and increase their ability to effectively address our common problems. This goal is achieved by engaging them in a "mock government" process to teach participants how the Alabama government functions and

having speakers who are successes in their own careers and who have had positive engagement in the civic life of the state. Many of these speakers were Boys State delegates and are able to share their experiences in life, showing the delegates how Boys State affected them as people, and developed them as leaders.

These meetings are strategically scheduled at the end of the day to give the delegates something to think about overnight, and give them the most amount of time to effectively reflect on the day as a whole. Part of that reflection is to process the information received over the course of the day and reflect on their future growth as leaders of Alabama. In these meetings, counselors ask questions that make delegates think about how they can improve as people and as leaders while also offering them life experiences from the counselor and their fellow delegates.

By the end of the day most, if not all, delegates are exhausted from the day and are ready to go to bed. Yet, these Leadership meetings are essential to the Boys State delegates learning process, and is a safe environment for students to share their experiences and grow together as a city and as people.



## In the Spotlight

By Jaylin Davidson

In theater, a young man by the name of Basin Naim from City 2 had no interest in acting, but took the opportunity to join the theatre group with a few of his friends and has grown to enjoy it. He explained that the students are in

charge of everything, from stage design, to casting, writing the script, and more.

They have started practicing vocal training and rumor is they are pretty good, but there's always room for improvement. Naim said the group is enjoying their sponsors and each other.

There is a total of around 30 boys in theatre and each city is a part of it. Naim said the group's counselor, Billy Fields, kept his interest in this activity group. Fields told the actors, "All ideas are good ideas," and "Everyone has to embrace being bad before being good."

When asked about the production, all Naim would say was, "It's a surprise."

## Campaign Jokes

By Dawson Camp

A sampling of the humor we found in the campaign speeches:

- "BILL BILL BILL BILL BILL"
- "Put the PEN to the paper and vote for me"
- "DePENed on me"
- "In the words of Bill Martin "git 'er done"
- "Hold your hand up with me and count to five, now you're counting on me"
- "I'm gonna snap all of our problems away like Thanos"

## Sports!

By Dawson Camp

Sport results for Wednesday

<b>Cities</b>	<b>Softball</b>	<b>Basketball</b>	<b>Ultimate Frisbee</b>	<b>Soccer</b>	<b>Volleyball</b>	<b>Academic Bowl</b>
1-3	12-6	34-15	1-6	0-2	0-2	30-120
2-4	7-1	35-44	6-5	2-5	1-2	20-100
7-10	0-10	29-30	5-8	0-4	2-0	120-70
8-9	12-8	30-23	1-5	1-5	0-2	150-80
5-6	Bye	Bye	Bye	Bye	Bye	Bye