



Scale Back Alabama kicks off its 11<sup>th</sup> year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Teresa Fair or Molly Killman, ADPH, (334) 206-5226 or Rosemary Blackmon, Alabama Hospital Association, (800) 489-2542 or (334) 272-8781

A new year is the perfect time to **shed** those extra pounds, and the state's largest weight loss and physical activity competition can help you do that.

Scale Back Alabama is an 8-week statewide program that encourages Alabamians to eat healthier, exercise, and to have fun while doing it. Cash prizes drawings are held for teams and individuals that lose at least 10 pounds, and participants receive weekly tips on ways they can improve their health.

This year's contest began with a kickoff today in Montgomery and a challenge from the city of Montgomery. Michael Briddell, director of public information and external affairs for the city, called out fellow city administrators and mayors to join Montgomery in participating in the contest. "In Montgomery, we are not only concerned about economic development and city services, but also about the health of our citizens," said Briddell. "We have participated in this exciting program for many years; it's a fun way to develop some healthy habits, and the results have been amazing. I urge all cities to encourage their staff and their citizens to participate."

The contest that began with a challenge from American Idol winner Ruben Studdard in 2006 has continued to be a staple in many companies, hospitals, health departments and other organizations, with millions of pounds lost over the 11-year history.

Last year, 10,826 teams of two participated, a total of 21,652 people. More than 1,000 of those teams had each team member lose 10 pounds, and there was a total of 76,485 pounds lost.

The program is free, and teams of two can register to participate at [www.scalebackalabama.com](http://www.scalebackalabama.com). Participants must **be** 18 years of age and live in Alabama or work in Alabama and must weigh in during the week of Jan. 11 – 18 at an official weigh in site. Pubic weigh-in sites are listed on the Scale Back Alabama website.

Scale Back Alabama is a public awareness program sponsored by the Alabama Hospital Association, the Alabama Department of Public Health and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.