

**“BAMA RISING: A BENEFIT CONCERT FOR ALABAMA TORNADO RECOVERY”,  
HOSTED BY ALABAMA, WONS A SOLD-OUT CROWD AT BIRMINGHAM’S BJCC  
ARENA FEATURING AN ALL STAR LINE-UP AND RAISES UNPRECEDENTED  
FUNDS THROUGH SPONSORSHIP, TICKET SALES, AUCTION ITEMS AND  
DONATIONS**

***THE EVENT GENERATED OVER \$2.1 MILLION AND BROUGHT MUCH NEEDED  
LIGHT TO THE STRICKEN AREA***



**(L-R): Birmingham Mayor, William Bell; Kate Nielsen, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham; Jeff Cook, Teddy Gentry, Randy Owen, ALABAMA; David Smith and Jeff Mango, Verizon**

**Nashville, TN – (June 22, 2011)** –“BAMA RISING: A Benefit Concert for Alabama Tornado Recovery”, presented by Verizon, hosted by ALABAMA, entertained a sold-out crowd on June 14th at Birmingham’s BJCC Arena during the nearly six-hour concert that featured 19 of today’s top entertainers. The event raised over \$2.1 million which will be used for tornado recovery through the Bama Rising Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham. In addition to the monies raised through sponsorship, ticket sales, merchandise, auction items and texting, Dave Matthews underwrote the expenses of the event and Brad Paisley donated the production. “Bama Rising” was presented & produced by AEG Live/The Messina Group, Red Mountain Entertainment and Red Light Management. Corporate sponsors include Verizon, PCI Gaming, Birmingham Auto Dealers Association, Coca-Cola, Bravado, Zeekee Interactive, Bill Young Productions, Tour Design and Ticketmaster. The BJCC Arena also donated a portion of their normal charges.

The benefit pulled together an All Star cast of top entertainers that truly left the crowd in a frenzy of excitement after every performance. From the opening set by concert hosts and organizers, ALABAMA, including the Holy Trinity Children’s Choir and the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra, the crowd was treated to outstanding performances by Rodney Atkins, Dierks Bentley, Bo Bice, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Luke Bryan, Sheryl Crow, Sara Evans, Taylor Hicks, Little Big Town, Martina McBride, Montgomery Gentry, David Nail, Jake Owen, Brad

Paisley, Kellie Pickler, Darius Rucker, Ashton Shepherd and The Commodores, including an all singing finale that had the sold-out room singing along to every note.

Kate Nielsen, President of the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, philanthropic partner with Bama Rising through the Bama Rising Fund of the Community Foundation: “We are thrilled at the total shared today by the organizers of Bama Rising. This is phenomenal for our citizens. We look forward to working as part of the advisory committee for the Bama Rising Fund in distributing these dollars to support tornado survivors across our state as they rebuild their lives. As part of our overall efforts in tornado recovery locally and across Alabama, we have already been working with existing and new Long Term Recovery Committees in every affected county to gain on-the-ground information about what is needed.”

ALABAMA said, “We are here to help our neighbors, and we are doing that tonight. We are so blessed to be able to bring this amount of talent into one room to help raise funds and entertain the people of Alabama.” Other artists were just as humbled by the experience.

“This is indescribable, country music fans are so loyal and so generous” – Little Big Town

“We’ll bend a little bit but we won’t break. We all pull together in time of need” – Montgomery Gentry

In summary of the event the following quote is from a survivor that was in attendance.

“The event means a lot to me. My sisters and I were affected by the tornado along with the loss of my house and parents. It means so much to be here and hear my favorite song “A Little Bit Stronger” by Sara Evans. I’m happy to be a part of it.” – Ciera Sanders, 14 years old from Shoal Creek Valley in Ashville, Alabama.

BAMA RISING encourages fans to donate \$10 to the Bama Rising Fund by texting “BAMA” to 501501. Text messaging rates will apply, and the \$10 donation will be added to the donor’s cell phone bill. Donations in any amount can be made through a secure on-line giving site linked to [www.bamarising.org](http://www.bamarising.org).

The Bama Rising Fund has been established at the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham to support long-term recovery statewide in the wake of the April 2011 tornadoes that devastated Alabama. Decisions about how to deploy BAMA RISING concert proceeds and gifts to the Bama Rising Fund will be made by an advisory committee including representatives of the artists, promoters and the Community Foundation.

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### **About The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham:**

The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham is the oldest and largest community foundation in Alabama, dedicated to driving positive change through grants, leveraging donor giving to meet community needs, and works with other organizations to collaborate and bring resources together. The Community Foundation has experience in distributing donations in

previous disasters, including tornadoes in 1998 and 2002 and following the evacuation of survivors of Hurricane Katrina survivors to the Birmingham area in 2005. For more information, go to [www.foundationbirmingham.org](http://www.foundationbirmingham.org).

**About ALABAMA (the group):**

With a career to date that has resulted in 21 Gold, Platinum and multi-Platinum albums, 42 number one singles and over 73 million records sold, ALABAMA has received over 150 industry awards including 8 country music "Entertainer of the Year" honors, 2 Grammys, 2 People's Choice Awards and their very own star on the "Hollywood Walk of Fame." The band most recently received the Academy of Country Music's Pioneer Award in 2003 and was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2005. Members Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry, and Jeff Cook all hail from Ft. Payne, ALABAMA and have enjoyed more than 30 years of unprecedented success.

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