

## FEATURE ARTICLE

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Contact:

Amanda Zambrano, PR Major

E-mail: zambrac@auburn.edu

Phone: 813.598.3362

### Auburn University- Students Saving Lives One Pint at a Time

On average a single pint of donated blood can save up to three lives. According to the American Red Cross website, approximately 5 million people will be in need of a blood transfusion this year, their lives depend on donations; at Auburn University students understand the dire need and work hard to help this cause. Amy Stone is a cabinet member for the Student Government Association, her concentration is Auburn University blood drives. Partnered with the American Red Cross, Stone and her committee plan and execute several campus wide events throughout the year.

Stone and her committee work with no budget. At every blood drive however, they have dozens of food and drink donations from local businesses. "We try to make the experience better for each person by providing food, drinks or even a friendly hand to hold. We do this to let them know how much their contribution is valued," Stone said. Appointments to donate at an Auburn University 2008 blood drive can be made online at [www.auburn.edu/SGA/EVENTS/BLOODDRIVES](http://www.auburn.edu/SGA/EVENTS/BLOODDRIVES), appointments are strongly recommended.

Stone, along with Ivy Pittman, American Red Cross' blood services accountant manager for Lee County, scheduled 6 blood drives to take place at Auburn University this year.

The September 2008 blood drive acquired 577 units/pints of blood. "I usually tell people to multiply that number by three to see how many lives they can save. Auburn saved 1,731 lives in two days time," Pittman said. September's blood drive was the first one in the new student union building and the bigger space allowed for a larger capacity and helped double the number of donors.

Auburn's contribution is vital to the state of Alabama because even with Auburn's help Alabama still ranks among the states that never meets its blood quota. "It's unfortunate because if only every

resident of Alabama that was eligible would donate twice a year, Alabama would have more than enough blood to even surpass its quota,” Pittman said.

Auburn University is in the Alabama and Central Gulf Coast region and it is the leading donor in the region.

The next blood drive is scheduled for Nov. 11, 2008. Auburn competes with the University of Alabama in the annual ‘Beat Bama Blood Drive’. Last year Auburn donated 60 percent more blood than the University of Alabama. “The November drive is so very important because even though schools are out and can’t host blood drives during this season there are still people in need,” Pittman said.

The actual requirements for donating blood are not many and it shouldn’t be a hard process according to Grace Fleming, assistant director of university blood drives. “Some general guidelines include being at least 17 years old. You must weigh at least 110 pounds, and not have donated blood in the last 8 weeks.” Other guidelines apply and they are all read to the participant before they are able to donate.

The blood drives are marketed all across the university. Posters tell all the information about where to go and how to get involved. The publicity committee of the SGA is responsible for informing the community of the events and encouraging participation. The blood drives are not limited to students, faculty or staff and they welcome anyone willing to make the generous contribution.

On a blood drive day in Auburn the campus is overtaken by neon-colored arm bandages exposing those that have donated their time and blood for the cause. Leanne Maksin, a junior majoring in biomedical sciences, has made 6 contributions in her time at Auburn and she does so because she understands the priceless need for blood in Alabama. “I’m healthy and willing to help out,” Maksin said, “so the answer is simple for me, donate.”

To find out more about Auburn University blood drives and how to get involved visit the SGA website at [www.Auburn.edu/SGA/EVENTS/BLOODDRIVES](http://www.Auburn.edu/SGA/EVENTS/BLOODDRIVES) or for more information about the American Red Cross visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).