



THE HUB

The Alabama Supercomputer Authority Newsletter

AETC 2023 CONFERENCE AND ASA SUPERCOMPUTER CENTER TOURS

As part of the 2023 AETC Conference in Huntsville, ASA was asked to partner with the Alabama State Department of Education (SDE) to conduct tours of our Supercomputer Center. We were grateful for the opportunity to showcase what ASA does for the K12 Schools in Alabama.

We divided the Center into four stations: Security Operations Center (SOC), Network Operations Center (NOC), Data Center and the Conference Room. The tour started with dividing into three groups and each group was assigned to a tour guide. Each guide would lead their group to start at one of the stations within the supercomputer center and move from station to station.



In the Security Operations Center, Victor and other SOC team members explained what their jobs were and what services we provide including vulnerability scanning and security monitoring. They even displayed on the monitors real time data and a graphic of security threats all around the world.

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MESSAGE FROM CEO

In the Network Operations Center, Loretta and Michael displayed data in real time on the monitoring screens and explained how they answer helpdesk calls and forward the requests to the right staff member within ASA. They also discussed how the monitoring screens alert the ASA staff if there is an outage for one of our clients, and explained what steps they take to resolve the requests that are called into the helpdesk. Michael explained and showed how security is handled at our supercomputer center, and how we have redundancy for utilities.

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AETC 2023 CONFERENCE AND ASA SUPERCOMPUTER CENTER TOURS (CONT'D)

In the Data Center, Rick gave a guided tour of the data center floor where the supercomputer is housed. He explained how we accommodate all of the special needs of keeping the data center cool and accessible to authorized personnel when needed. He explained what some of the historical pieces we have in the data center were used for as well.



The Conference Room is where the tour guests were provided refreshments and a souvenir. Debra and Andy greeted the tourists and welcomed them to our Center. Over the past year, we have been working on our Interactive Map Project which was displayed for tour guests on our Interactive TV Wall. Debra and Andy demonstrated how the Interactive Map works and our future plans for using it, including taking it on the road.



Other ASA staff members were on hand in the conference room to answer any questions, provide refreshments, guide groups from one station to the other, etc. We had over 250 AETC Conference participants tour our Supercomputer Center. We were glad to partner with AETC and SDE to be able to showcase our Center and the work we do for the schools in Alabama. Tourists were given the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the ASA employees. Several of the tourists asked about guided tours and fieldtrips. Many participants shared positive feedback on how beneficial it was to see and understand what all we do in our Supercomputer Center.

Thank you SDE and SueEllen for the opportunity to be a part of the AETC Conference this year. We look forward to continuing to work together!

We will have an album of the Supercomputer Center tour pictures on our Facebook page: ASA Alabama Supercomputer Authority. Feel free to tag yourself or your school district in the pictures.



Client Services

Nichole Gipson
Client Services Director

FY2023 FCC Form 479 and CIPA Agreement

As the Consortium Lead, ASA files an annual E-rate application for Category One services for each Consortium member. In order to receive discounts for internet access services, all Consortium members must certify that their school or library is in compliance with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). This certification is required on an annual basis. ASA recently emailed the FY2023 FCC Form 479 and CIPA Agreement to all Consortium members along with the requirements of CIPA. Several members have already submitted their forms to ASA; however, there are a few that have not. If you have not submitted your forms, you may access them by clicking the links below. Please forward completed forms to ASA as soon as possible by emailing them to docs@asc.edu or faxing them to 334-242-0637.

Client Satisfaction Survey Coming Soon

ASA's Client Satisfaction Survey will be coming to your Inbox in the near future. Please take a few minutes to let us know of your level of satisfaction with our services. We would also love for you to share your thoughts and suggestions of how ASA can better serve and support your school district or library. Thank you and we look forward to receiving your feedback.

Welcome New Consortium Members

ASA would like to welcome the new school districts and libraries that joined our State E-rate Consortium in July 2023. We take pride in supporting Alabama's educational entities and we're excited to work with each of you in providing services to your school district or library and continuing to advance education through technology.



Welcome to ASA!

We would like to welcome Liz Burgess, Accounting Manager in our Montgomery Office, and Trevor Smith, Assistant Building Manager at our Supercomputer Center in Huntsville.
Welcome to the ASA Team!





News in Government

Cary Hill

Governmental Affairs Director

2023 GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Governor Ivey called the Alabama Legislature into Special Session on Monday, July 17, with the sole intent of redrawing Alabama's seven Congressional Districts based on a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in early June that stated Alabama's district lines violated the Voting Rights Act. The court specified the lines be redrawn to form a second majority-minority district. The Legislature met for five days, from Monday through Friday, July 21, to complete their work, which is the shortest amount of time possible to pass legislation.

As the case when the legislature debates reapportionment, the atmosphere became contentious between the parties as both houses worked to get a bill signed in the 5-day span of debate. Over a hundred maps were submitted for consideration during this time, straining the Reapportionment Office staffers to review the maps in a timely fashion. Democrats in both houses pushed for plans that included two majority-minority districts while the Republicans pushed plans that included one majority-minority district and one district that increased minority representation but still fell well short of a majority.

Governor Ivey signed the republican written bill but lawmakers are uncertain whether the federal courts will accept the changes made by the Legislature as having complied with the Voting Rights Act. But a status hearing will be held on August 14 by a three-judge panel of the federal district court to review the new Alabama Congressional map, who can accept the map or deny it and appoint a Special Master to redraw the map yet again. This decision is likely to set off a fresh round of litigation that could wind up back at the US Supreme Court for a final definitive decision.

As of now, the governor is not expected to call another special session and the legislature is scheduled to convene on February 6, 2024.

UPDATE

The 3-panel court declined the newly drawn redistricting map and have hired a special master to redraw the map. Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall will contest the ruling.



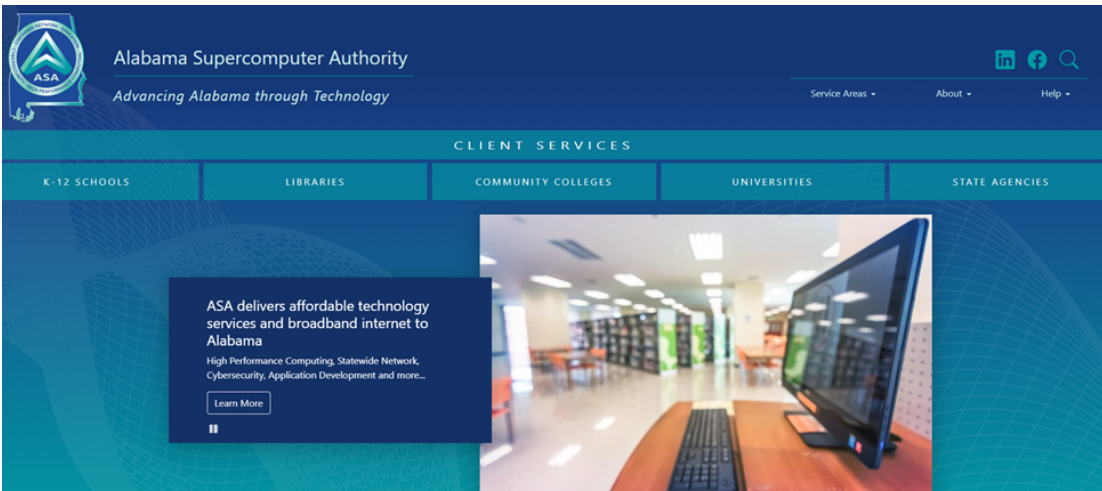
September 25 & 26, 2023

Stop by our Booth! We will have a limited edition giveaway!



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Debra Wallace



A Fresh Facelift: ASA's New Look

We are excited to unveil the next chapter in Alabama Supercomputer Authority's journey: our enhanced website redesign! In our constant pursuit of excellence, we have revamped our online presence to provide you with an even more seamless and informative experience.

Our redesigned website boasts a modern and intuitive interface that is not only visually appealing but also user-friendly. The new layout ensures that you can access the information you need with just a few clicks whether you need access to E-rate information or interested in new services. Stay informed about ASA's latest developments, news, and events online or by subscribing to our newsletter.

At ASA, we are committed to providing you with the highest level of support, and our new website is another step in that direction. We believe this redesign will enhance your experience and provide you with the resources you need to succeed in your work. Click on the link below to access the new ASA website.

Best regards,

www.asc.edu