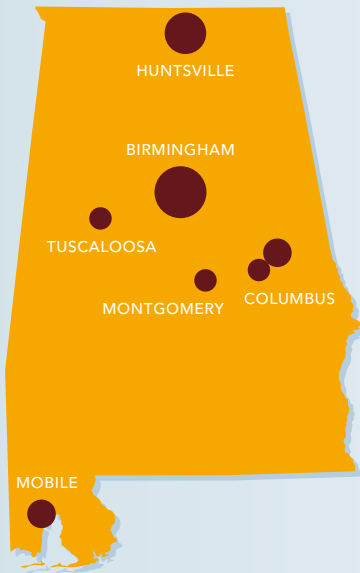


# ALABAMA

Medical researchers funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are working every day to improve health, discover cures and provide hope to people the world-over affected by disease. This work, however, has a secondary benefit: it supports employment and economic activity across the United States, including in Alabama.



## ADDING TO ALABAMA'S ECONOMY

In FY2017, 21 institutions in Alabama received

**644 research awards**  
**totaling nearly \$300 million**

While the bulk of the research awards went to the University of Alabama at Birmingham, many others supported a range of institutions and businesses throughout the state. This research funding, when cycled through the economy, generated **\$710 million in total sales** for Alabama businesses:



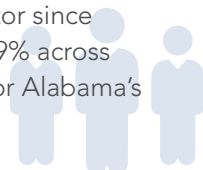
Supporting **more than 4,600 jobs** in Alabama; and



Generating approximately **\$54 million in tax and fee revenues** for state, county and municipal governments statewide.

## BOOSTING THE LABOR FORCE IN ALABAMA

**Jobs in the scientific R&D sector in Alabama pay on average 2.4 times more than those in other sectors.** In 2017, this was \$86,300 vs. \$36,100. And for young workers (under 25), the difference was even greater — 2.7 times the average pay in other fields, \$33,500 vs. \$12,400. This wage difference, coupled with 50% job growth for young workers in the scientific R&D sector since 2014 (compared to only 9% across all sectors), bodes well for Alabama's future growth.



## REDUCING PUBLIC HEALTH COSTS

In Alabama, **40% of the population** is enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid<sup>i</sup>, far exceeding the national average of 35%, and spending on these programs amounts to **8% of Alabama's total GDP**, also above the national average of 6%. The prevalence of chronic disease in Alabama is much higher than in other states.<sup>ii</sup>

### COMPARED TO OTHER STATES, ALABAMA RANKS:

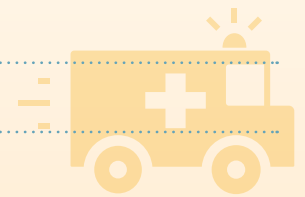
**3rd** for rate of **diabetes**

**5th** for rate of **obesity**

**6th** for rate of **cardiovascular disease**

**8th** for rate of deaths from **Alzheimer's disease**

**11th** for rate of deaths from **cancer**





Images: University of Alabama at Birmingham

## MEDICAL RESEARCH AT WORK IN ALABAMA

Alabama serves as ground zero for a major national study of the geographic and racial differences in the occurrence of stroke. While stroke is the fifth leading cause of death among U.S. adults, blacks are more likely to die from stroke than whites. Regardless of race, those living in the “Stroke Belt,” a cluster of eight southeastern states including Alabama, are far more likely than those in the rest of the United States to suffer from stroke or other cardiovascular disease.

The Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS) study led by the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health aims to understand the underlying reasons for these differences. Since 2003, researchers have followed more than 30,000 study participants from across the country gaining critical data about differences in stroke incidence and mortality. For instance, researchers have found that living in a Stroke Belt state early in life — more so than as an adult — contributed to a greater risk of stroke<sup>iii</sup>. Researchers also have found that the lower a neighborhood’s socioeconomic status, the higher a person’s stroke risk regardless of race.<sup>iv</sup>

“Thanks to the contributions of study participants, a lot has been learned,” said George Howard, DrPH, University of Alabama at Birmingham professor of biostatistics and study lead. “Because of them, I honestly think the burden of stroke can be reduced for everyone, but particularly for African-Americans and Southerners. If we do this, the implications will be staggering.” The REGARDS study is funded by the National Institutes of Health’s National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS).

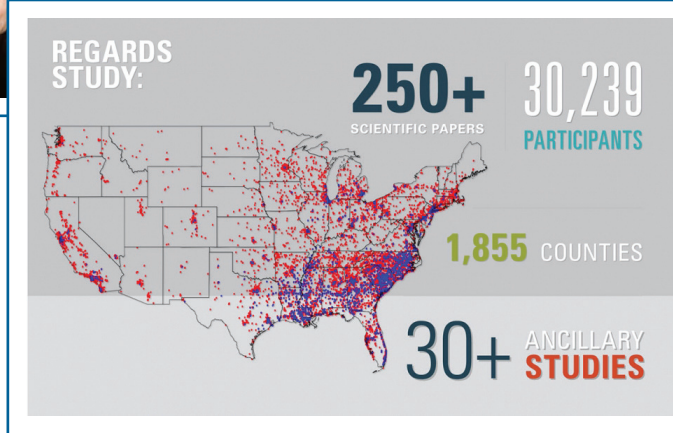
<sup>i</sup> According to the most recent statistics available from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

<sup>ii</sup> [Diabetes and Obesity: “The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America 2018”](#)  
[Cardiovascular Disease: Kaiser J Family Foundation State Health Facts](#)  
[Cancer Deaths: National Cancer Institute State Cancer Profiles](#)  
[Alzheimer’s Disease Deaths: Alzheimer’s Association “2018 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures”](#)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.uab.edu/news/research/item/3405-study-finds-people-raised-in-the-stroke-belt-are-at-increased-risk>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/10/161019173106.htm>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.uab.edu/news/research/item/9160-regards-study-receives-20-4-million-grant>



## RESEARCH-SUPPORTED JOBS IN ALABAMA

Thermo Fisher Scientific operates a 140-person facility in Auburn where, as part of the company’s scientific laboratory products business, it performs kitting and makes testing kits and other products used by NIH-funded researchers in Alabama and across the country.



United for Medical Research is a coalition of leading scientific research institutions and industries, and patient and health advocates that have joined together to seek steady increases in funding for the National Institutes of Health. Learn more at [www.unitedformedicalresearch.com](http://www.unitedformedicalresearch.com). For examples of the amazing things that NIH research is making possible, visit [www.amazingthingspodcast.com](http://www.amazingthingspodcast.com).