



How can Keelon Russell prep for Alabama vs Georgia?

SPORTS, 1B

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Traffic, Trump, touchdowns

President’s visit may affect more than security at Alabama-Georgia game

Jennifer Lindahl
Tuscaloosa News
USA TODAY NETWORK

President Donald Trump is coming to one of college football’s biggest games Saturday, and his presence could change the experience for nearly 100,000 fans at Bryant-Denny Stadium. Trump is expected to attend Alabama’s game against Georgia in Tuscaloosa, bringing with him the security requirements of a sitting president to an event that already requires extensive planning for traffic, crowds and public

safety. Fans could encounter additional security measures, road restrictions and delays getting to the stadium. Alabama’s football staff is also preparing for possible communication disruptions, an issue that has surfaced at other games Trump has attended. It won’t be the first time Alabama has dealt with the logistical challenges of hosting Trump. He attended the Alabama-Georgia game in Tuscaloosa in 2024 and the Alabama-LSU game in 2019. Here’s what fans should know about

how Trump’s visit could affect Saturday’s game. **Trump’s visit means heightened security at Bryant-Denny Stadium** A presidential visit requires a security operation beyond the normal game-day setup. When Trump attended Alabama’s game against Georgia in 2024, fans faced enhanced screening before entering Bryant-Denny Stadium. **See TRUMP, Page 2A**



Alabama head coach Kalen DeBoer coaches the Crimson Tide Sept. 19 at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa. Alabama defeated Florida State 50-36.
GARY COSBY JR./TUSCALOOSA NEWS

Alabama to observe Columbus Day holiday

Jennifer Lindahl
Montgomery Advertiser
USA TODAY NETWORK

For some people, Columbus Day means a day off. For others, it’s a holiday whose name and meaning have changed over the years. Columbus Day is still on the calendar. This year, it falls on Monday, Oct. 12. What is Columbus Day, and does Alabama still recognize it as a holiday?

When is Columbus Day 2026?

Columbus Day 2026 falls on Monday, Oct. 12. The federal holiday falls on the second Monday in October each year, so its date changes from year to year.

What is Columbus Day?

Columbus Day commemorates Christopher Columbus’ 1492 voyage across the Atlantic and his arrival in the Americas. For generations, the holiday was presented as a celebration of Columbus and his role in connecting Europe and the Americas. Over time, the holiday has become the subject of broader debate over colonization and the impact European arrival had on Indigenous peoples. That is why the October holiday is observed under different names in different parts of the country.

Who was Christopher Columbus?

Christopher Columbus was an Italian-born explorer who sailed for Spain. In 1492, he crossed the Atlantic with three ships while searching for a westward route to Asia. Instead, he reached the islands of the Caribbean, beginning a period of lasting contact between Europe and the Americas. Columbus became a celebrated historical figure, but his legacy is also controversial. European colonization brought violence, displacement and disease to Indigenous peoples, contributing to the debate over how Columbus and the

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‘Opens the door to a lot of opportunities’



Four Northridge High School seniors, Adipta Gupta, Annalise Hammond, Adam Song and Ariq Isyraq, are among the five Tuscaloosa City Schools students named semifinalists in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program.
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TUSCALOOSA CITY SCHOOLS

Five Tuscaloosa students honored as National Merit semifinalists

Jasmine Hollie
Tuscaloosa News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Five seniors enrolled in Tuscaloosa City Schools seniors been named semifinalists in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program, an honor awarded to fewer than 1% of high school seniors nationwide. The semifinalists are Central High School senior Jefferson Morris and Northridge High School seniors Adipta Gupta, Annalise Hammond, Adam Song and Ariq Isyraq. The students qualified based on their performance on the 2025 PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, according to a news release. More than 1.2 million students from about 20,000 high schools entered the competition. More than 16,000 students were selected as semifinalists na-



Central High School senior Jefferson Morris is among the five Tuscaloosa City Schools students named semifinalists in the program.
tionwide. Semifinalists can advance to finalist standing and compete for about 6,700 National Merit Scholarships

worth nearly \$24 million. About 95% of semifinalists are expected to become finalists, according to the release. Morris said the recognition could help him pursue his goal of becoming an aerospace engineer and eventually working for NASA. “I’m pretty happy about it,” Morris said in the release. “I’d like to get what I can in terms of scholarships, and apparently, this is a big one.” Morris said a math teacher encouraged him to take the test. He plans to study engineering, potentially at the University of Alabama before continuing his education at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Gupta said he spent considerable time preparing for the exam and hopes the recognition will help reduce the cost of college. He credited his coursework **See SEMIFINALISTS, Page 5A**

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