



Hughes named JSU's 19th head coach

The Mississippi Link Newswire
 Jackson State University Director of Athletics Wheeler Brown announced the hiring of Tony Hughes as the football program's 19th head coach during a Monday morning press conference in the Lee E. Williams Athletic and Assembly Center Hall of Fame Room. "Today is a great day to be a Tiger," said Brown. "Coach Hughes brings over 31 years of experience to the position and we expect great things from him and from our football program."

Hughes, a Mississippi native, comes to Jackson State from Mississippi State University, where he spent seven seasons as a key member of the Bulldog football coaching staff. Hughes is known as one of the top recruiting coordinators in the nation. In 2015, 247Sports.com tabbed him as one of America's top 10 recruiters after Mississippi State hauled in one of the nation's top 16 classes according to recruiting services. In the spring of 2013, he was named

assistant head coach. According to Rivals.com, the 22 National Letters of Intent MSU received on 2015 Signing Day made up the Bulldogs' best since 2003. Fifteen of the signees hailed from Mississippi. Local recruiting will be a top priority for Hughes at Jackson State. He plans to focus on recruitment within a 150-mile radius of the university. "We will recruit players from the state of Mississippi and the local Jackson area," Hughes said. "I believe that there are

enough players in the state, if we recruit right and evaluate right, every year we will field a great football team." "As soon as this press conference is over with, I'll be on the phone making calls to get us some football players in here." Hughes takes over a Jackson State program that finished the 2015 season with a 3-8 overall record and a 3-6 Southwestern Athletic Conference mark.



Tony Hughes comes to Jackson State after several collegiate coaching positions in Mississippi and Louisiana. PHOTO COURTESY JSU ATHLETICS

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Be your own boss

Liles offers Blackburn students entrepreneurial advice



Music Executive Kevin Liles poses with Blackburn Middle School students and one of their college mentors who participated in a session of Verizon's Minority Male Makers Program at Jackson State University Dec. 10.

By Shanderia K. Posey
 Editor
 It's never too early to learn about becoming an entrepreneur. And Dec. 10, at Jackson State, Blackburn Middle School boys got advice from someone who made his first \$1 million at age 17. In partnership with Verizon's Minority Male Makers Program, Kevin Liles, former president and CEO of Def Jam Recordings, offered tons of advice to the students on the importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) academics in order to be their



Eric Johnson, a mentor from the summer program, talks with Blackburn students about their business idea before pitching it to Kevin Liles. Students are (from left) Jamarious Stewart, Dakari Ceaser, Prae McGee, and Tavorris Lenoir. PHOTO BY SHANDERIA K. POSEY

own boss one day. First he explained what entrepreneurship is. "Somebody said I want to

Liles said. "When you get that idea, be relentless in being the best and then get people to believe in you. I was told no 100 times before I started my first company." The Verizon Minority Male Makers Program launched last summer at four historically black colleges and universities – JSU, Morgan State University, Kentucky State University, and North Carolina A&T. The two-year program provides minority, male middle school students hands-on-learning experiences

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Cathead Distillery offers tours

By Shanderia K. Posey
 Editor
 It's been a whirlwind week for Cathead Distillery owners Austin Evans, 35, and Richard Patrick, 32. On Dec. 8, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held to officially welcome Mississippi's first legal distillery, located at 422 South Farish St., to the capital city. A grand opening was held last Saturday. And the fun continues today when tours of the distillery become available to the public starting at 3 p.m. Tours will also be available on Fridays at 3 p.m. and at 11 a.m. on Saturdays. Guests can enjoy a bar full of local beers, the retail shop and a game of corn hole while visiting. Upon request, private group tours are available. Evans and Patrick wanted

to offer the tours, which last about 30 minutes, for a variety of reasons. For one thing, people can see the production process in the distillery and get a better understanding of the craft, according to Evans. Patrick pointed out that the distillery combines agricultural and tourism, so it falls in the category of agritourism. "We really want the distillery to be more of a destination spot to families," Patrick said, noting that booster seats and high chairs are on hand. Having the tours "provides people with a stronger connection to the brand." Before Cathead Distillery's recent move to Jackson, the facility was located in a rural



Cathead Distillery owners, Richard Patrick (left) and Austin Evans address the crowd during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the business last week. PHOTO BY JAY JOHNSON

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DRA gives \$15M for Delta area

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.
 Contributing Writer
 The Delta Region Authority, Gov. Phil Bryant, partners, and award recipient representatives lined on the dais at the old Farmers Market, 2245 North West St. in Jackson, Dec. 10, in front of a huge crowd to announce a \$15 million investment to help grow economic opportunity in the Mississippi Delta.



Award recipient representative Mayor George Holland of the town of Moorhead speaks to the crowd. Gov. Phil Bryant listens at right. PHOTO BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

Seven investments were addressed to create and retain 95 jobs for local residents, train 92 workers for jobs in their communities, and link 515 residents to clean and safe water and sewer services. According to Bryant, "These seven investments will continue to further the success the Delta Regional Authority has

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Freddie Gray case ends in mistrial

By Juliet Linderman and David Dishneau
 Associated Press
 BALTIMORE – The first trial in the death of Freddie Gray ended in a mistrial Wednesday, with jurors saying they couldn't determine whether a Baltimore police officer was criminally responsible for the man's death. Officials appealed for calm in the aftermath of the mistrial, and small crowds of protesters demonstrated along streets lined with police officers. William Porter's trial was the first test of prosecutors'

case against six officers in a city struggling to rein in violent crime. The case hinged not on what Porter did, but what prosecutors said he didn't do. He was accused of failing to get medical help for a critically wounded Gray and was charged with manslaughter, assault, misconduct in office and reckless endangerment. Gray's injury in police custody sparked weeks of protests and fueled the nation's scrutiny of how police treat black suspects. The charges against Porter carried maximum prison terms totaling 25 years. It was not immediately clear whether Porter would be retried. An administrative hearing was scheduled for Thursday to discuss a possible retrial date. Porter waived his right to appear. Wednesday was the third day of deliberations for the jury of seven women and five men. They deliberated for a total of about 15 hours. On Tuesday, they indicated they were deadlocked, but Circuit Judge Barry Williams

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