



# Prentiss Institute alumni going strong

School founded in 1907 for Blacks



The Rosenwald Building still stands on the Prentiss Institute campus. (Inset) National Alumni President James Jenkins and wife Betty met at Prentiss Institute. PHOTOS BY NATALIE BELL

**By Natalie Bell**  
*Special to The Mississippi Link*

The incredible resilience of black Mississippians in the era of racial segregation still resonates at Prentiss Normal and Industrial Institute, a century-old institution still standing strong in the south-central area of the state, in rural Jefferson Davis County.

A Board of Trustees, comprised of community leaders, alumni and supporters, maintain many of the former school's buildings and has fashioned the campus, a museum and cultural heritage center.

Professor Jonas Edward Johnson and wife, Bertha LaBranche Johnson, founded Prentiss Institute in 1907. The Johnsons, two

important figures in black Mississippi history, were early 20th century leaders in education and racial advancement in the state.

They established the privately-run Prentiss Institute to provide educational opportunities that would enable young blacks from limited financial means to become productive and responsible citizens. Many students went on to become successful educators, businessmen and professionals in a variety of fields.

The Johnsons ran the school in Booker T. Washington-fashion for most of its existence. They stressed individual guidance and a balanced program of instruction in an academic and Christian atmo-

sphere.

"Had it not been for Prentiss Institute, many of its students would not have had a chance to further their education beyond eighth grade," said Mitchel Gamblin, a 1950 alum, who went on to obtain academic degrees in education and government from Grambling University and the Univ. of Northern Colorado. Gamblin then returned to teach in Jefferson Davis County, where he was born and raised.

Several buildings on the Prentiss Institute campus, including the Rosenwald Building, have been carefully and continuously

**Celebration**

The Prentiss Institute Museum Committee invites the public to its Black History Month Celebration on the Prentiss Institute Campus from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Feb. 24-26. The event will be held in the Rosenwald Building on the campus in Prentiss. Individuals who have made a significant contribution toward black history in Jefferson Davis and surrounding counties will be recognized. RSVP your attendance to one of the following people: Janice Armstrong, (601) 847-1984 or armstrongjames@bellsouth.net; Mary Ann Hudson, (601) 792-9617 or maryannhudson@windstream.com; Christine Norvell, (601) 886-7930; Erma Hall, (601) 569-2827; or L.J. Campell, (601) 278-0084.

**Prentiss**  
*Continued on page 4*

# City gets results from water samples

**By Shanderia K. Posey**  
*Editor*

On Wednesday, about a week after the city of Jackson was notified that water samples from 13 residences contained elevated lead levels, preliminary resampling results from those same residences show no lead in six of the residences.

The other preliminary results reveal five locations have markedly lower levels of lead and of those five, two locations still exceed the actionable level by 1 ppb (parts per billion). As for the last two residences, one property is now vacant, and it was learned a private well was being used at the other location.

Director of Public Works Kishia Powell met with Mississippi Department of Health representatives Wednesday to discuss the preliminary results and the next steps to address the locations exceeding the action level for lead. Next steps will include identifying funding to upgrade corrosion control measures and increased monitoring in the distribution system.

**Samples**  
*Continued on page 4*

# Tougaloo continues water drive

# Flint, Michigan mayor is Tougaloo alumna

**By Diamond Williams**  
*Special to The Mississippi Link*

Tougaloo College students will soon wrap up the water drive which started Jan. 25, to help alleviate the crisis in Flint, Mich. Donations will be accepted until 5 p.m. Feb 5.

The Tougaloo student recruiters and Tougaloo Ambassadors of Meritorious Scholars, struck an interest in the crisis and planned the drive.



**Weaver**

"Our students span the world. They look toward the interest and commitment of the college and represent that," said Tougaloo President Beverly Wade Hogan in support of the drive.

Karen Weaver, the first woman mayor of Flint, is an alumnus of Tougaloo College. Before Weaver's election in November 2015, she took a major interest in the water issues of her city.

"My philosophy of life is I can do all things through

**Drive**  
*Continued on page 4*

# Sanders' 'Feel the Bern' comes to Tougaloo

**By Diamond Williams**  
*Special to The Mississippi Link*

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sander's HBCU tour, Feel the Bern, made a stop at Tougaloo College Jan. 28, for a campaign rally.

The rally was held to discuss important issues like income equality, tuition-free public colleges and universities, and racial justice. The event also included college rituals such as the student spirit chants that engaged rally officials and students, dancing and pan-hellic recognition.

Campaign and voting information was shared by Danny D. Glover, outreach campaign director; South Carolina Rep. Justin Bamberg; Keelan Sanders, a Mississippi Democratic National Committee member and Tougaloo alumnus; and David Banner, recording artist and Jackson native.



Danny Glover, campaign director, instructs the crowd to dust the haters off. PHOTOS BY DIAMOND WILLIAMS

A personal videotaped message from Sanders was shown in his absence. "When we want something to

**Sanders**  
*Continued on page 4*

# Black History series set at New Hope

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

The fifth annual "Back in the Day" Black History series will be held at 6 p.m. each Thursday at 6 p.m. during February in the New Hope Baptist Church Family Life Center, Robert B. Cooper Gymnasium, 5202 Watkins Drive, in Jackson.

The 2016 series will highlight the following themes, guest speakers and special presentations:

Tonight is the "New Hope Legacy Night." The guest speaker will be Attorney Charlene Stimley Priestler, managing member of the Priestler Law Firm,

**Series**  
*Continued on page 4*

**Organization plans anti-abortion prayer vigil in Jackson**

Page 11

**McNair named Alcorn's new head football coach**

Page 16

**Connecting the Dots Foundation holds fashion show to aid Malawi**

Page 3



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