



Yes we did: President Obama delivers long goodbye

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The first black President of the United States will leave office at noon January 20. The run-up to his departure has been featured in

interviews, endless retrospectives and analyses.

During an unseasonably warm night in Chicago, President Barack Obama shared his thoughts and experiences with a hometown

crowd, as his final days in office approached.

“Michelle and I have been so

Obama

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President Barack Obama delivers a farewell speech that highlighted the goals and accomplishments of his administration in Chicago, Ill. The crowd chanted “four more years,” during the speech. PHOTO BY DERICK TRIPLETT/CHICAGO CRUSADER

Dreams do come true



Lequoya Williams and her children, Riyah and Syrius, pose for cameras Monday in front of their new Habitat home.

By Stephanie R. Jones
Contributing Writer

Three Jackson residents had lots of cheer during the holiday season. They moved into new homes – homes of their own – just before and after the Christmas holiday. They have Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area to thank.

Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area dedicated three homes in Midtown Monday as part of its celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

LeQuoya Williams closed on her four-bedroom, two bath home on Manship Street Dec. 28 and moved in Jan. 1. “It’s the greatest thing to happen to me in a while,” said Williams, who started the process of working on her home in April 2016. Williams is the mother of two children, Syrius, 3, and Riyah, 1.

Williams and the other new homeowners have interest-free, 30-year mortgages. Williams said some people thought her home was one provided by HUD, and came with restrictions on what could be done. “I had to explain to them that this is my home; I own it and there are no rules and restrictions. I just have to pay my mortgage,” Williams said.

Williams’ niece also was celebrating Monday. Valondria Williams and her 11-year-old son Kordell Johnson, moved into their new home a few blocks away on McTyre Avenue in December as well.

Tierra Christian and her two sons Byron Burns, 7, and Tristian Burns, 3, were excited about the dedication and blessing of their new home on Kevin Barnett Court.

“It’s a good feeling to be able to say ‘this is my own,’” Christian said.

The houses were made possible by the contributions of 850 hours of service by volunteers from Baptist Health Systems, New Hope Baptist Church, Covenant Presbyterian Church, and five United Methodist Churches – Christ UMC, Anderson UMC, Madison UMC, St. Luke’s UMC, and Saint Mark’s UMC.

Habitat
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AKA celebrating a legacy of supreme service



Alpha Kappa Alpha members (in white) present awards to recipients Dr. Byron D. Orey, Dr. Lisa Osunleti, Dr. Larry Johnson and Dr. Scharri Ezell Walker. PHOTO BY STEPHANIE R. JONES

By Stephanie R. Jones
Contributing Writer

An overflow crowd made up mainly of women in white dresses and pearls filled Tougaloo College’s Woodworth Chapel Sunday to commemorate the founding 109 years ago of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Members of Beta Delta Omega Chapter, a graduate chapter in Jackson, Miss., along with Gamma Rho Chapter (Jackson State University) joined to host their 109th Founders’ Day Observance. They paid tribute to their founders as well as members of the Jackson Metro area whose life work has aligned with the mission of service to which Alpha Kappa Alpha adheres.

“Today we are celebrating a legacy of supreme service,” said guest speaker Evelyn J. Leggette, Ph.D., provost and senior vice-president for Academic and Student Affairs at Jackson State University and a mem-

ber of BDO.

Leggette said the day was also an opportunity to reflect on the trailblazing AKA founders, to share accomplishments of members past and present, and to look to the future.

“Our founders in 1908 asked, ‘what can I do, how can I render service?’” Leggette said. “These women knew that there is no greater call than service and it’s up to us to carry that out.”

Alpha Kappa Alpha, the first sorority for African-American women, was founded on the campus of Howard University Jan. 15, 1908. It remains committed to “Service to All Mankind” by providing community outreach to neighboring communities under the umbrella “Launching New Dimensions of Service,” the organization says. Its international program focuses on: Educational Enrichment, Health Promotion, Family Strengthening, Environmental Ownership, and Global Impact.

BDO was founded in 1934. “These enthusiastic, talented women knew that if the world is to be made better, I must get in there to make it better – supreme service,” Leggette said.

“How will we live up to our founders’ vision?” Leggette asked. “There is no better way to do something for yourself than to serve others. We celebrate the legacy of supreme service.”

In that vein, the chapters recognized some Jackson Metro area community members who serve their communities day to day in accordance with the sorority’s goals.

Recognition was given in the areas of health care, leadership and community service.

Jasmin O. Chapman, chief executive officer of Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center, was recognized as Health Care Advocate of the Year.

Leadership Recipient of the Year was Jerry Young, pastor of New Hope

Baptist Church and president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

Community Service Recipients of the Year were Jackie H. Hampton, publisher of *The Mississippi Link*, and Alice Thomas Tisdale, publisher of *The Jackson Advocate*, for their work in sharing news and experiences of the local African-American community.

The Dr. Ernestine Holloway Educators of the Year awards went to Larry Johnson and Scharri Ezell Walker, both of Tougaloo College.

Liza Osunleti Beckely-Roberts of Jackson State University, and Byron D. Orey, Jackson State University political science professor, were named the Dr. Cozetta White Buckley Educators of the Year.

The chapters presented \$1,000 checks for endowed scholarships to

AKA

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Area Greeks participate in coat collection

By Stephanie R. Jones
Contributing Writer

Jackson Metro area residents might not need coats right now but it’s still winter and cold weather will come again before the season is over.

To make sure everyone stays warm when temperatures do fall, the Metro Jackson Chapter of the National Pan Hellenic Council – an umbrella group of black sororities and fraternities – held its annual “Warm Coats and Warm Hearts” initiative in conjunction with Burlington Coat Factory at Metro Center Mall Monday.

This is the 7th year the council has held the drive to collect coats for those

in need, said Floyd Williams, chairman of the event and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

The coat drive is the council’s event to give service on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. “We wanted the Divine 9 (African American Greek-letter fraternities and sororities) to do something collectively on this day,” Williams said.

The Warm Coats and Warm Hearts initiative was started by the national news program Good Morning America.

Williams said during Monday’s

Coats

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Members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. joined other members of the Mississippi Panhellenic Council in a coat donation drive for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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