



Barnes-Clay to receive prestigious NSTA award for new science teachers

The Mississippi Link Newswire
Lanier High School Teacher Kristen Barnes-Clay has been selected by the National Science Teachers' Association Awards and Recognitions Committee as a recipient for the 2017 Ma-land P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Science Teachers. Each year, NSTA re-

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Still pleading our own cause: The Black Press celebrates 190 years

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA News Wire Contributor

The oldest black business industry in America began 190 years ago. On March 16, 1827, the first edition of the "Freedom's Journal" was published, thrusting African Americans into the bustling publishing business. At the time, blacks in America weren't even considered citizens, most were slaves and forbidden to read or write. However, John Russwurm and Reverend Samuel Cornish rose up bravely declaring that, "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us."



A display wall showcases the front pages of the nation's black newspapers. TRAVIS RIDDICK/NNPA

Dorothy Leavell, publisher of the historic *Chicago Crusader* newspaper, which celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2015, said that when Russwurm and Cornish established the Black Press by publishing the *Freedom's Journal*, they wanted to provide a voice for black people. The Black Press became one of the only means of communication between black people. "Black men and women were vilified in the New York press in the 1800s," said Leavell. "Some white newspaper publishers sought to defend the dignity, honor and character of black people, however, Russwurm and Cornish said they, 'wish to plead our own cause.'" Without the Black Press, genuine stories of African Americans would go untold, said Robert W. Bogle, the publisher of the *The Philadelphia*

Tribune. Bogle said that only black people can tell their stories accurately. "We are as relevant today as we were when the *Freedom's Journal* said they wanted to tell our story in our words," said Bogle. Denise Rolark-Barnes, the chair of the NNPA and publisher of *The Washington Informer*, said she studied the history of the Black Press and used the 190-year milestone to reflect on the legacy of black newspapers. "[What I discovered] helped me understand how the Black Press played a vital role in fighting for human rights, abolishing slavery and outlawing lynching," Rolark-Barnes said. "The lesson for us, as publishers, is that we must remain important in our communities

and continue to be the voice for victims and spotlight those who have achieved success." While mainstream media seems distracted by the current political atmosphere, Rolark-Barnes said that it's vital that the Black Press continue to focus on telling the stories that are relevant to the black community and recording black history. NNPA president and CEO Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., said that March 16, 2017 is a sacred historical day in the long, multidimensional freedom struggle of African people in America and throughout the world, because of the courage of John Brown Russwurm and Samuel Cornish who dared first to publish *Freedom's Journal*. Chavis said that the Black Press in America has been on

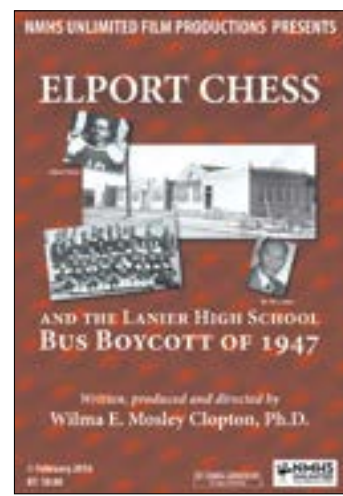
the frontlines of social change in the United States for 190 years. "Today, more than ever, the Black Press remains the trusted and audacious voice of black America," said Chavis. "Today, the NNPA continues this irreplaceable tradition of publishing truth to power. Our freedom fighting publishers are all united as we reaffirm the vital importance and relevance of the Black Press now and into the future." Jacqueline Miles, publisher of the half-century-old *Pensacola Press* in Florida said that it's important to note that the Black Press has become the source of information for jobs, weddings, births, deaths and even entertainment.

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A Crossroads Film Festival Review 'Elport Chess and the Lanier High School Bus Boycott of 1947'

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent
Contributing Writer

Listed among films made by Mississippi's women filmmakers is *Elport Chess and the Lanier High School Bus Boycott of 1947*. Wilma Emma Mosley Clopton, Ph.D., the movie's writer/producer/director, calls attention to youth in their restless search of truth, justice, and equality.



Overt signs of the culture boxes them into confinement when it comes to their educational pursuits. They are only allowed to ride city bus number six, though there are yellow buses that white students ride with freedom to sit where they desire. On bus six are two vacant seats up front designated for white passengers who may or may not board the bus. Elport Chess, returning World War II veteran, continues his educational pursuit at Lanier. Cognizant of the separate seating areas, he decides to not continue to the back of the bus but rather, to sit in one of the vacant seats up front. The white bus driver, Strong, continues downtown where he reports the incident to police. Chess' arrest alarms students who in turn share their experience with their teacher, Mr. Lyles, who walks downtown and escorts Chess back to school. Chess' bravery causes students to engage in a bus strike.

When they learn that Strong's boss did not keep his word to fire him, they went on another strike. It was this second strike that compelled city bus management to come before the students and announce that Strong would no longer work for the company. These strikes draw viewers into the reality of what happens when collective voices speak. Then, too, they motivate youth to channel their anger in positive directions when it comes to questioning authority. The incidents address perseverance by compelling one to seek to collaborate, rather than settling into a compromising disposition. Clopton brings familiar voices to speak. Former Jackson Public Schools Superintendent

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Bankplus announces initiative to support women in business

The Mississippi Link Newswire

BankPlus announced the launch of The Source, an initiative designed to provide Mississippi women in business with access to capital, mentoring support and networking opportunities to succeed in business. The Source will launch with the goal to loan \$50 million from BankPlus to women seeking to start a business, grow a business or for any other business purpose. This investment further demonstrates the bank's continued commitment to the communities it serves. "We are extremely excited to launch The Source as a community-wide initiative for all women in business," said Bill Ray, president and CEO of

"The Source" will support Mississippi women in business with mentoring and networking opportunities. BankPlus is the first Mississippi bank to offer an initiative of this scale to women in business.

BankPlus. "Many of our state's great businesses were started by women and many of our business leaders are female. We believe that if we can provide critical information to help all women succeed in business, our communities will thrive." The Source launches with an impressive list of Mississippi business women on the initiative's Founding Advisory Panel.

Members of the panel will act as a resource to participants in The Source network. "I am excited to be a part of The Source program and give back to the community," said Founding Advisory Panel member Marlo Kirkpatrick of Kirkpatrick & Porch Creative. "Plus I know I have so many things

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The Mississippi Link to participate in Social Media Town Hall Forum

By Othor Cain
Contributing Writer

We are five weeks away from casting our votes in the municipal primary elections in Jackson. We want to give you a really good look at the candidates before you head to the polls. *The Mississippi Link* is teaming up with AARP of Mississippi, Rho Lambda Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. and OCD Media to present the first ever Social Media Town Hall Forum. This forum is designed to give all social media savvy voters an opportunity to interact and get up close and personal with the candidates seeking the top office in the capital city. Although 15 people are currently

listed as candidates, we will present the top five candidates as revealed from our survey. The top five candidates from our survey are (in alphabetical order): Ronnie Crudup Jr, Robert Graham, John Horhn, Chokwe Antar Lumumba and Tony Yarber. The other candidates have all been invited to be recognized and will be given an opportunity to interact with attendees during the social mixer. The other Democratic Candidates for mayor are Sidney Gladney, Monroe Jackson Sr., Jessie Jones and Brian Reynolds. The Republican candidates are Walter Slone Sr. and Jason Wells. The Independent candidates are Gwen Chapman, Jaelyn Mask and Kenneth

Swarts. Corinthian Sanders is running for mayor as a Libertarian candidate. This forum is slated for March 28 beginning with a social mixer at 5:30 p.m. at the Jackson Convention Complex. The social media platforms will engage audiences on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. These platforms will live stream our conversation through out the evening. The conversation begins promptly at 6:30 p.m. This forum will drive home the issues that we face as a city. Issues such as the budget; neighboring cities; furloughs; water; management and con-

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