

# Congress moves to help inmates in federal prisons but not in predominately black state prisons



By Frederick H. Lowe  
TriceEdneyWire.com

Congress has passed legislation reducing sentences for some inmates serving time in federal prisons, but the law won't affect state prisons and jails where the majority of black men are serving time.

The legislation called "First Step Act," Senate bill 2795, passed by a vote of 87 to 12. The House of Representatives passed the legislation 358-36. Now it will go to President Trump who has promised to sign it.

First Step is designed to reduce recidivism, according to GovTrac, which monitors federal legislation.

The bill also would place inmates in prisons close to their homes to increase the likelihood of more family visitation, order home confinement for low-risk prisoners, prohibit the use of restraints on pregnant prisoners, expand adult employment for returning prisoners through federal programs and treatment of prisoners for heroin and opiod use and addiction and ease federal sentencing laws.

The Sentencing Project,

a Washington, D.C.-based advocate for a fair and effective justice system by promoting reforms, called the Senate's passage of First Step "an important milestone in the long road to ending mass incarceration and curbing the excesses and harm in the federal justice system."

"The last time Congress passed legislation to reduce sentences was in 2010 when Congress reformed the racially disparate mandatory minimum penalties governing crack cocaine offenses," The Sentencing Project reported.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which monitors hate groups, also praised the legislation, but the Law Center said the legislation will have no impact on state sentencing laws or on people who are incarcerated in state prisons or local jails.

In 2016, The Sentencing Project published "The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons," which noted that African Americans are incarcerated in state prisons

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# Holy Temple's youth look forward to a new year with JABT



HT CRUNKK with Pastor Audrey Hall

PHOTOS ARE COURTESY OF HT PR MINISTRY

Special to The Mississippi Link

2018 was a very good year for the Holy Temple Baptist Church's youth ministry – Christ Raising Up New Kingdom Kids (CRUNKK) thanks to the Junior Auxiliary of Byram-Terry (JABT).

Through its Welfare Committee, JABT adopted Holy Temple's CRUNKK ministry to establish and maintain a continuous relationship with the children and their families, to develop life skills, to encourage new ways of thinking and problem solving, to build confidence in our youth, and to teach them to take responsibility for what they do in order to be productive members of society.

"We are pleased to know that JABT plans to continue its relationship with our children and their families," said Deacons Chairman Edison T. Brown Jr. "We are so grateful for the many kind acts they have already done.

Recently, a fellowship was held at the church for the youth to celebrate the Christmas season. The children feasted on pizza, chips, juice and soda. Each child



JABT presenters and CRUNKK participants in "The Real World" workshop

in attendance was showered with love through presents and gift cards.

In a show of their appreciation for JABT, the youth created handmade thank you cards and signs. "We were touched by the youth's creativity," said Angela Noble of JABT.

This is what one youth wrote in her card:

"Dear Jr. Auxiliary. Thank you so much for bringing us the presents. We are very thankful and I am glad you chose our church because you could have chosen another church. I just can't thank you enough. Thank you. Love Azalea."

Through this adoption, CRUNKK members began the school year with new backpacks

filled with school supplies.

Teens have been offered life skills workshops such as money management, while the younger members of the group have attended workshops focused on emotional coping and anger management.

A couponing class for parents

**Holy Temple**  
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# National Park Service seeks Mississippi sites to build monuments to the Civil Rights struggle

By Frederick H. Lowe  
TriceEdneyWire.com

The National Park Service, which manages the country's national parks and many of its national monuments, is studying a location or locations throughout Mississippi to erect a monument or monuments to tell the state's complicated and violent civil rights history, according to National Parks Magazine.

The magazine's cover, which is titled "Mississippi Reckoning," is accompanied by a photograph of a smiling Emmet Till, a 14 year-old boy who

was beaten to death August 28, 1955. His body was found in the Tallahatchie River in Money, Mississippi.

"The National Park Service is mandated to the natural and cultural heritage of America, but currently, there are no sites in the system that protect places connected to Emmett Till – or any of Mississippi's complicated civil rights history," the story reported.

Kate Siber, a Durango, Colorado freelance writer, wrote that in 2017 Congress passed legislation requiring the Park Service to spend three years

studying civil rights landmarks in Mississippi. The process could lead to the creation of a new national park or several of them in the state.

Mississippi is the bloody burial ground for known and unknown African Americans murdered by white racists who were found not guilty by white male juries and white-male judges. Often enough, white perpetrators of racial violence were not charged and tried. Some of the victims include Till and Medgar Evers, state field director for the NAACP. Evers was assassinated in the

driveway of his Jackson, Mississippi home June 12, 1963.

And Civil Rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney, were killed in 1964 by the Ku Klux Klan and the police. Their bodies were found in an earthen dam near Philadelphia, Mississippi.

When Till's severely beaten and disfigured body floated to the surface of the Tallahatchie River, police discovered the bodies of three other unidentified black men who had gone

**Monuments**  
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Till



Evers

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# Public encouraged to enroll in JPD Citizens' Academy


Mississippi Link Newswire

The Jackson Police Department's next Citizens' Police Academy is scheduled for Monday, March 25, 2019. The mission of the Citizens' Police Academy is to educate and inform the community; to provide a forum for police and community interaction; to identify community problems, needs and concerns; and to foster a partnership with the community and the Police Department in working toward creating a safer community.

The weeklong experience offers exposure to numerous events, including a tour of the Public Safety Communications Center, an overview of the Community Relations/Crisis Intervention Unit, S.W.A.T and Bomb Squad exhibitions and Driving and Firearms Simulator training, to name a few. Citizens will also have the opportunity to participate in a ride-along with officers as they patrol the city of Jackson and perform their many duties.

The seminars are conducted from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m., Monday through Thursday at the Police Training Academy, and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., at the Police Firing Range for the SWAT /Bomb Squad presentations and firearms instruction.

For more information or for registration, please call our Office of Community Relations at 601.960-1389 or e-mail Renee Walker at [rwalker@jacksonms.gov](mailto:rwalker@jacksonms.gov) or Marilyn Paige at [mpaige@jacksonms.gov](mailto:mpaige@jacksonms.gov).



**CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY**  
**JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI**

**MARCH 25, 2019 – APRIL 01, 2019**  
MONDAY – THURSDAY 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM / SATURDAY 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Goals of the Citizens' Police Academy**


- To educate and inform the community about the Jackson Police Department.
- To promote the "Community-Oriented Policing" philosophy.
- To provide a forum for police and community interaction.
- To work together to create a safer city.

**POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS** **POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS**

*The Citizens' Police Academy Curriculum*

• Introduction of JPD Command Staff	• Crime against Property
• Community Relations/Crisis Intervention	• Crime against Persons
• Vice & Narcotics	• Police Range, S.W.A.T.
• Firearms Safety Class	• Bomb Squad Exhibitions
• Public Safety Communications	• Precinct Ride-Along
• Crime Scene Scenario	• Community Improvement
• Crime Prevention/Community Policing	

\* For more information and registration, please call @ Paige or R. Walker at 601.960.1389 in the Office of Community Relations. Please expect to be distributing this announcement throughout your neighborhood and business community, schools, churches, and other organizations.





**JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY APPLICATION**  
**MARCH 25, 2019 – APRIL 01, 2019**  
MONDAY – THURSDAY (6:00 PM – 8:00 PM) SATURDAY (9:00 AM – 1:00 PM)

**(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (Month/ Date/ Year) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Precinct in which applicant lives \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Neighborhood or Business Association and/or other organization to which the applicant belongs \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consent to a local background check? YES ☐ NO ☐

For more information, please call the JPD's Office of Community Relations at 601.960.1389. To register your attendance, please fax this application to 601.960.1387 or email application to Marilyn Paige at [mpaige@jacksonms.gov](mailto:mpaige@jacksonms.gov) and/or Renee Walker at [rwalker@jacksonms.gov](mailto:rwalker@jacksonms.gov)

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2019**





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## Holy Temple

Continued from page 1

has also been offered in an effort to teach money saving techniques.

JABT's Welfare Committee is chaired by LaMonica Sampson and Angela Noble. Holy Temple is pastored by JABT member Reverend Audrey Hall.

In its Byram-Terry service areas, JABT participates in various community services. Popular among them is Pack the Pickup, a project that allows the chapter to donate germ-free items for teachers and bus drivers at the elementary and intermediate schools.

In October, the Provisional Class held its You Only Live Once Youth Summit, with topics that included distracted driving (complete with simulators), internet safety

and featured a cooking demonstration by DJ Baker on healthy eating.

Recently, JABT members completed their annual Angel Tree project, where they solicit and donate coats and toys for disadvantaged children.

Their newest project is the CARE Closet, which will stock toiletries, school supplies, and non-perishable food for families in need at Gary Road Intermediate School.

JABT, in its 21st year of service, is a 501(c)3 organization committed to providing charitable service, with particular emphasis on children.

*For more information, call President Tasha Garner at 601 750-0395.*



Receiving bookbag



Receiving supplies and gift card



Bookbag presentation



JABT working with youth



Dealing with youth stress workshop



JABT members of Byram and Terry

PHOTOS ARE COURTESY OF HT PR MINISTRY

## Prisons

Continued from page 1

across the country at more than five times the rate of whites.” In some states, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Vermont and Wisconsin the disparity is 10 to 1. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that 35 percent of state prisoners are white, 38 percent are black and 21 percent Hispanic. Oklahoma has the highest incarceration rate of black males, which is 1 in 29 adults and 1 in 15 for black boys 18 to 21.

At the end of 2017, there was an estimat-

ed 1,489,600 inmates in state and federal prisons, according to the Vera Institute of Justice, which is based in New York.

There were 1,306,300 inmates in state prisons, 9,900 fewer than in 2016, and 183,300, or 5,900 fewer in federal prisons than in 2016. As of December 13, the figure was 180,790 in federal prisons.

The decline in the number of inmates in state prisons is not across the board. Some state prisons have added inmates.

## Monuments

Continued from page 1

missing after suffering violent deaths. In addition, whites in Mississippi lynched 581 blacks between 1882 and 1968, the most of any state.

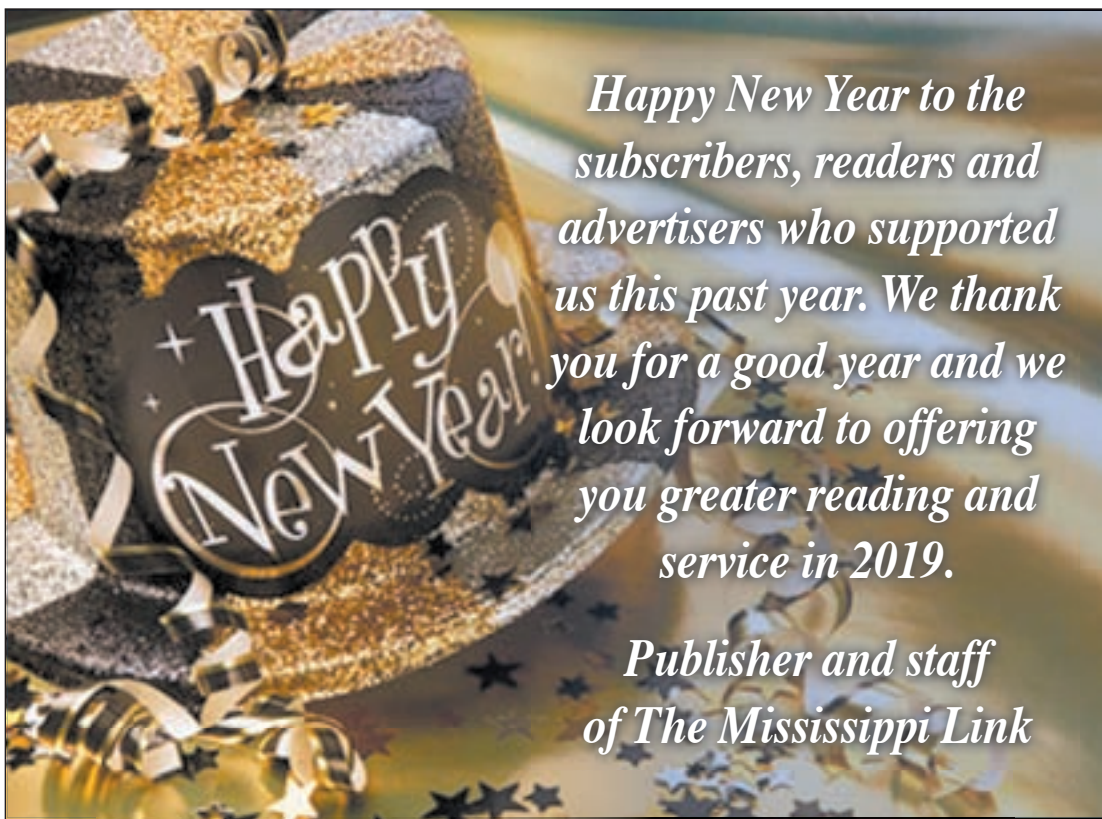
There is interest in a monument or monuments.

In 2018, 350 people attended six statewide public meetings to make recommendations. One site could be Evers' home, which is now a museum. The U. S. House of Representatives passed legislation in

May that would designate his home a national monument.

However, monuments honoring blacks have not fared well in Mississippi. A sign marking the place where Till's body was pulled from the Tallahatchie River has been replaced three times after gunmen shot it full of holes.

Readers are urged to donate money to the Emmett Till Interpretive Center to continue the organization's fund-raising efforts.



*Happy New Year to the subscribers, readers and advertisers who supported us this past year. We thank you for a good year and we look forward to offering you greater reading and service in 2019.*

*Publisher and staff of The Mississippi Link*





# HEAD START

**Hinds County Human Resource Agency Project Head Start  
is currently accepting applications  
for the 2018-2019 school year.**



Priority is given  
to children with  
diagnosed disabilities  
(certified IEP or IFSP)

## To Qualify:

- Child must be 3 or 4 on or before September 1st
- Family must reside in Hinds County
- Must be a low-income family  
(based on the federal poverty level)

**"Families of children with disabilities are encouraged to apply regardless of income.**

**"Priority is given to children with diagnosed disabilities  
(certified IEP or IFSP)**

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- Dental
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## To Apply, You Must Present the Following:

- 1) **Proof of child's age** - birth certificate, hospital birth record, or passport
- 2) **Proof of family's income** - tax return, W-2, pay stub, SSI, Social Security, child support, TANF, grants/scholarship, unemployment, and any other source of household income
- 3) **Proof of Hinds County residency** - lease, mortgage statement, current utility bill (light, water, gas or sewer), current phone or cable bill
- 4) **Child's Social Security number**
- 5) **Medical insurance of child (if applicable)**
- 6) **IEP or IFSP (if applicable)**
- 7) **Legal guardianship (if applicable)**
- 8) **Documentation of foster care (if applicable)**

For more information about Head Start, call (601) 923-3940.  
To apply, call HCHRA's 24-hour automated appointment line  
at (601) 962-5935.

**SPACE IS LIMITED!  
APPLY EARLY!**



Helping Families.  
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# *College Hill MB Church Christmas Cantata*

**College Hill MB Church • December 16, 2018 • Jackson, MS**

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON





# Board move makes new name of Early College High School official

## Mississippi Link Newswire

The JPS Early College High School, a special program school for promising ninth-graders, has been named for former U.S. first lady Michelle Obama. The Jackson Public Schools Board of Trustees approved the name at its regular meeting held December 4. The full official name of the program is now Michelle Obama Early College High School Program at Tougaloo College. The announcement came just in time for a parent information meeting held December 5 on the Tougaloo College campus. Stakeholders representing Tougaloo College and Jackson Public Schools weighed in on the choice of a namesake. Participants voted overwhelmingly in favor of naming the program after Michelle Obama.

Obama's name is fitting for the dual enrollment program that aims for its students to obtain up to an associate degree while completing high school graduation requirements. Through similar initiatives, she has sought improved educational outcomes for youth, especially girls and African Americans. For example, her



Reach Higher initiative encourages high school graduates to attend four-year universities, community colleges or professional training programs.

One of its goals is to increase the percentage of college graduates by 2020. Additionally, Obama has used her influence with the international community to urge leaders to commit to the support of girls who make sacrifices to earn an education.

The Michelle Obama Early Col-

lege High School Program was established in the summer of 2018.

The program helps first-generation college students and other underrepresented students earn college credits while in high school. It is open to any JPS eighth-grader who is motivated and willing to commit to the academically challenging program for all four years. Students who succeed will have completed graduation requirements and up to two years of college – all tuition-free.

# JPS School Board announces Bond Oversight Committee

## Mississippi Link Newswire

The Jackson Public Schools Board of Trustees introduced to the public the newly-appointed members of the Bond Oversight Committee at the regular Board meeting held on December 18.

“School facilities can have a profound impact on both teacher and student outcomes,” said Board President Jeanne Hairston. “With respect to teachers, school facilities affect teacher recruitment, retention, commitment and effort. With respect to students, school facilities affect health, behavior, engagement, learning and growth in achievement. Thus, without adequate facilities and resources, it is extremely difficult to serve large numbers of children with complex needs.”

As outlined in the Citizen Oversight Committee Statement of Purpose, this committee will track and communicate progress toward the construction of projects and the expenditure of funds associated with the \$65 million school bond. In carrying out this duty, the committee will be expected to meet regularly as recommended by the school board. The committee will receive bond updates from district administration and raise any questions or concerns. The committee will provide feedback to the board regarding the status of construction and the use of bond funds.

The board accepted applications from interested citizens throughout the month of October. Board members reviewed applications and made their selections during a special work session held in early December. That process yielded the committee's seven members with representation from each of the city's wards.

### JPS Bond Oversight Committee

**Akilah Irvin** works as a process improvement leader with Elinor, NA in the accounting and finance shared services division. She resides in Ward 1 with her husband Charles Irvin of Irvin Law, PLLC, along with their five children. Irvin is an alumna of Jackson Public Schools and currently has three children who attend schools within the Jackson Public School District. One son attends Murrah High School and is in the APAC program. Two of her other children attend Obama Magnet IB Elementary School. Irvin is certified as a lean six sigma black belt in continuous improvement and a certified quality compliance auditor. She joins the committee with over 15 years of experience in project management. She has expertly facilitated multimillion-dollar expansion projects at the Uncle Ben's rice factory in Greenville, Mississippi. She successfully led capital expenditure projects at the former RB manufacturing plant in Brandon, Mississippi. Irvin holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Jackson State University and a Master of Science degree in chemical engineering from North Carolina A&T State University.

**H. Ann C. Jones** (Ward 2) was born in Magnolia, Mississippi, where she graduated from Eva Gordon Attendance Center. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from Dillard University in Louisiana and a Master of Science Degree in immunology from Tuskegee University in Alabama. She worked as a scientist for a pharmaceutical company before moving to Jackson in 1977. As a citizen of Jackson, Jones has worked as a volunteer for many organizations throughout the city and state. These include local and state PTA/PTSA boards; local and national Girl Scouts of America boards; the Hinds County Foster Review Board; the Jackson/Hinds Arts Alliance; Leadership Jackson and Youth Leadership boards and the Jackson Chamber of Commerce. She was a member of Governor William Winter's Task Force on Educational Reform as well as the Task Force for Jackson Change of Government. Jones served 13 years as a member of the JPS Board of Trustees during which time as board president,

a \$150 million school bond referendum was passed. These funds were used for the building of new schools and additions as well as for renovations to other schools and other improvements to JPS facilities. Presently, Jones serves as a commissioner on the state's Commission on School Accreditation.

**Sandra McCall** (Ward 3) is a retired Jackson Public Schools professional development specialist who managed several federal programs and conducted certified and classified professional development training. After a successful career with JPS, McCall is enjoying a career as a political consultant, advising and assisting political campaigns. She is a strong advocate for children as evident in her creating the Mississippi State PTA Sandra McCall Teacher Education Scholarship during her tenure as State PTA president. McCall enjoys traveling and working on various committees at her church.

**Erica Fell** (Ward 4), originally from Lansing, Michigan, is a graduate of J. W. Sexton High School. She graduated in the top 25 of her class of over 300 students. She moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where she obtained a bachelor of administration degree in business management from Jackson State University and a master of science degree in management from Belhaven University (College). Fell currently works for the State of Mississippi as a federal grant program manager, managing over \$3.5 million and 17 sub-recipients for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA), in aiding the community in combating homelessness. Understanding the importance of giving back, Fell has served as chairperson to Jackson Public Schools GED Advisory Board and volunteers with the Forest Hill Youth Club and the Mississippi Food Network. She also serves as chair for the Local and State Board of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program through the United Way, aiding nonprofits in providing food and utility assistance to communities.

**Kass Welchlin** (Ward 5) has been a civically engaged citizen of the city of Jackson as a resident of Ward 5 for 20 years. He and his wife, Cassandra, have three children. All are current students in the JPS school system. Welchlin's career spans three industries: finance, nonprofit management, and building/construction management. Welchlin currently works with Raymond James Financial, Inc.

**Ercilla Dometz-Hendrix** (Ward 6) is a policy analyst and research expert with over a decade of experience in economic development, urban planning, international relations and political campaign management. Dometz-Hendrix is a proud graduate from the Universidad Americana in Nicaragua where she obtained her bachelor's degree in diplomacy and international relations. She also earned her master's degree in political science from Jackson State University. She is currently a doctoral candidate in urban planning at Jackson State University. Dometz-Hendrix is the proud mother to two children who have attended Jackson Public Schools since kindergarten. Farah attends Murrah High School and Tyrone II attends Barack Obama Magnet Elementary.

**Mitch McGuffey** (Ward 7) is a partner at Forman Watkins & Krutz LLP, located in downtown Jackson. He has two children currently enrolled in JPS schools. He and his wife, Amanda, are members of Redeemer Presbyterian Church. Prior to working at Forman Watkins, McGuffey began his legal career working for a firm in New York City and returned to Jackson to serve as a law clerk on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He attended law school at the University of Virginia and completed his undergraduate studies at Auburn University.

## The Mississippi Link™

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# Cadets promoted to second lieutenants during annual ROTC Commissioning Ceremony

By Justus Reed  
Contributing Writer

Two cadets were awarded for their dedication to fulfilling the requirements of Alcorn State University's ROTC program.

Khadijah Fleming, a Memphis, Tennessee native and William Gurtowski, a Vicksburg, Mississippi native, were promoted to second Lieutenants Thursday, Dec. 6 during the Fall 2018 ROTC Commissioning Ceremony at the Oakland Memorial Chapel.

Col. Timothy W. Holman, Chief of the U.S. Army's House Liaison Division in Washington, D. C. delivered the keynote speech.

Holman earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics secondary education from Alcorn in 1992. His commands include the 555th Engineer Brigade, 7th Infantry Division, 1st U.S. Corps, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord to name a few.

Holman encouraged the new lieutenants to stand tall in the midst of others who attended bigger schools. He assured them of the foundation that Alcorn has provided for their future.

"The training you received here at Alcorn State University has given you the foundation you need to lead soldiers," said Holman. "You must build on that foundation throughout your career.

In their new capacities, the



2nd Lieutenant Fleming

2nd Lieutenant Gurtowski

second lieutenants will have their own group of soldiers to lead. Holman gave them advice on how to be solid leaders.

"The enlisted men and woman that you lead, and the country you serve, deserve nothing less than your very best when you wear your uniform. Every soldier in your platoon will know your name when you arrive; it is your job to know theirs as well. Learn their hopes and dreams. Teach them the difference between making a mistake and having a lack of discipline.

When they make mistakes, it is your job to coach them to be better."

The commissioning ceremony was special for Fleming because due to certain circumstances, she was unable to be commissioned in 2016. Reflecting on how far she has come makes her appreciate her promotion even more.

"It felt great knowing that all of my hard work finally paid off," said Fleming. "Now I can focus on the task at hand, which is more training and serving my

country."

Gurtowski is confident in the preparation he received during his time at Alcorn. He looks forward to applying his training to his field.

"I am very thankful to the Alcorn cadre and cadets who took me into the program and helped me to accomplish this childhood dream," said Gurtowski. "From what I learned through the ROTC program, I feel prepared and trained for the rigorous responsibilities that I will have as an officer in the U. S. Army."

# MVSU professor presents on food insecurity during national conference



Hawkins

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

Cassandra Hawkins, assistant professor of Rural Policy and Planning at Mississippi Valley State University, presented on the topic "Understanding Food Systems in Mississippi: An Examination of the Prevalence of Food Insecurity" during the 76th Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (PAWC), hosted Dec. 2-4 at Tuskegee University.

Hawkins was recently extended an invitation to present research during a national conference designed for professionals associated with the agricultural industry PAWC is a forum committed to creating a world that values and promotes equitable access to information and technology for sustainable development of communities and natural resources.

Evolving out of Dr. Booker T. Washington's Farmers Conference that was first hosted in 1892, PAWC now includes representatives from the national land grant community, and from the state, federal, and private sectors.

Hawkins' presentation explored how food insecurity impacts Mississippi's food systems and provided strategies to reduce its prevalence.

Her study concluded that food systems in the state need to be transformed for the disparity among families based on specific sociodemographic factors. In addition, improved policies and programs designed to address the inadequacy of food consumption in

Mississippi should be in place to reduce the prevalence of food insecurity.

"Dr. Hawkins participation in the project continues to build capacity to research food insecurity at the heart of the Mississippi Delta," said Richard Mushi, chair of MVSU's Social Sciences Department.

Hawkins has been fully engaged in efforts to address food systems in Mississippi.

In October, she presented research at a college forum organized by the School of Social Work at Mississippi State University during the World Food Day. Her presentation highlighted food insecurity and strategies for social workers to assist their food-insecure clients in Mississippi.

She was also appointed to the Mississippi Food Policy Council Executive Board in August 2018.

Following the appointment, Hawkins remained a member of the Mississippi Food Insecurity Project with Mississippi State University, a research project that examines food access and food insecurity in the state of Mississippi.

The project provides current USDA-ERS food insecurity data including socio-economic, food assistance, local food activities, food store availability, and health data for all 82 counties in Mississippi.

To learn more about PAWC, visit [www.pawc.info](http://www.pawc.info).

For more information about MVSU's Rural Public Policy and Planning graduate program, call (662) 254-3352.

# Entergy Mississippi donates \$20,000 to Alcorn's Saturday STEM program

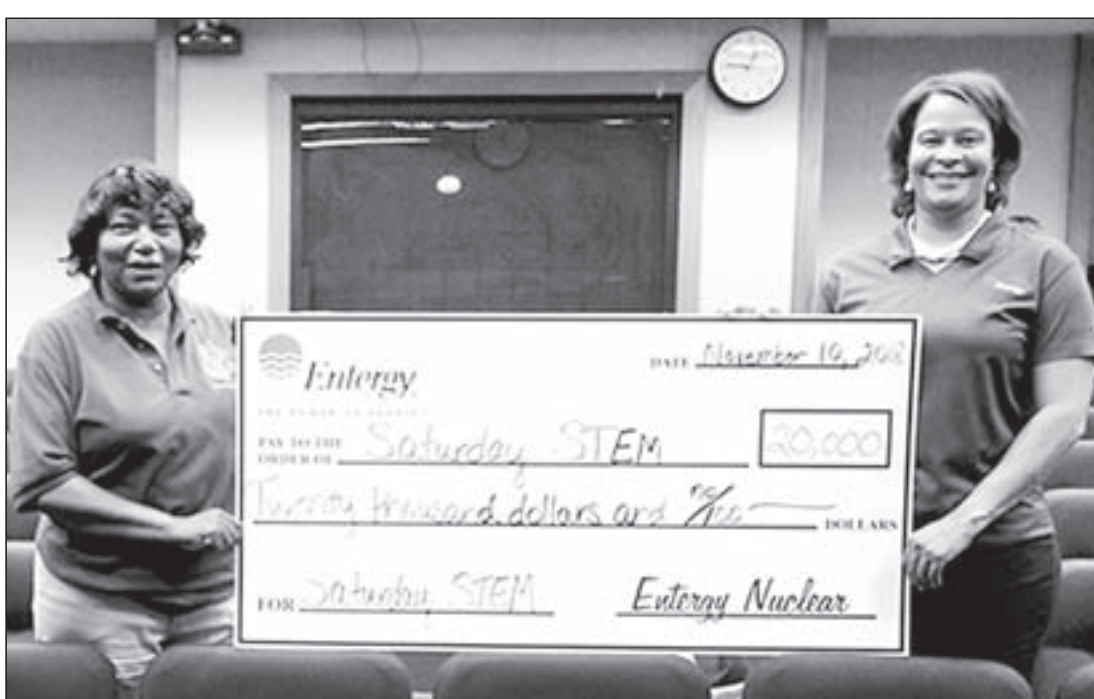
By Justus Reed  
Contributing Writer

The partnership between Alcorn State University's Saturday STEM program and Entergy Mississippi continues to go strong thanks to consistent funding.

Entergy Mississippi presented a \$20,000 donation to the program Nov. 10. The check was presented by Betina Brandon, who serves as manager of Workforce Development and Diversity at Entergy.

Mary Trimble, director of Saturday STEM, is thankful for their partnership with the company. She described how the added funding will boost the program in the future.

"The grant will be used to extend the number of days students attend classes, increase the amount of funds for hands-on learning experiences, increase the number of stipends and increase the number of learning experiences in real-world settings," said Trimble.



Mary Trimble received Entergy check from Betina Brandon.

Saturday STEM is a community outreach project of the university, providing enrichment in science,

technology, engineering and math to middle school students in Claiborne and Jefferson counties.

Saturday STEM is funded through Title III coordinated by Coretta Jackson.

# MVSU Mock Trial team performs well during Mid-South Tournament

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

The Mississippi Valley State University Mock Trial Team scored well recently during the Mid-South Invitational Mock Trial Tournament at Middle Tennessee State University in November.

During the four-round, two-day tournament, MVSU brought home another individual award.

Jasmine Murphy, a senior pre-law/legal studies and government and politics double major from Itta Bena, won an Outstanding Witness Award for the defense for her role as Dr. Miller McCoy, an expert in primatology. Murphy also served as an attorney on the plaintiff's side, scoring well and

receiving ranks on ballots in that role as well.

Other members of the team included team captains Kambreca Mitchell of Greenwood and Donovan Brownlee of Columbus, Ohio; Mychal Barnum of Memphis; Jada Brinson of Miami; Nadia Crawford of Atlanta; Alexxus Ervins of Laurel, Miss.; Rodarius Turner of Indianola, MS; Chelsea Washington of Yazoo City; and Jesiah Williams of Batesville.

The team competed against Auburn University, North Alabama University, Middle Tennessee State University and Belmont University.

The coach for the MVSU Mock Trial Team is Neysha



Sanders, Esq., assistant professor of Legal Studies at MVSU. Sanders coordinates the pre-law legal studies program, serves as university pre-law advisor and is a member of Sanders and Sanders Law Firm. Larry W. Chappell, retired professor of political sci-

ence at MVSU and Attorney Teisha Stoner of Pensacola, Fla. also serve as volunteer coaches.

The Department of Social Sciences, The Office of Academic Affairs, The Office of University Advancement, The Office of Sponsored Programs, The Office

of the President and the Leflore County Board of Supervisors all help sponsor the program.

The team expressed special thanks to John McCall, senior graphic designer for the Office of Communications and Marketing, for preparing the demonstrative

aids that students used in their testimony.

The team is now preparing for the 8th Annual Argo Invitational Mock Trial Tournament, slated for January 19-20, 2019 at the University of West Florida in Pensacola.



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## MDEQ promotes a Green Holiday Season

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) encourages Mississippians to remember the environment this holiday season through waste reduction, re-use and recycling practices to “green up” the holiday season. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the amount of household trash increases by 25 percent between Thanksgiving and the New Year.

MDEQ recommends considering the following “green” practices during the holiday season:

### Decorating ideas

Consider having a potted Christmas tree that can be replanted in the wild, in the yard, or kept and re-used the next year.

Recycle Christmas trees or consider using an artificial tree that can be used every year. Discarded Christmas trees can be used for fish spawning habitats, for mulch for public landscaping projects and homeowner use, for boiler fuel, and for lake, river and beach front stabilization. Local governments can provide information about the recycling of Christmas trees.

Use trimmed branches from Christmas trees for wreaths or hearth or table decorations rather than discarding them immediately.

Decorate with holly, cedar, berries, cranberries, popcorn, fruits and nuts – some which can be consumed and all of which can be composted.

### Gift shopping and wrapping

Take re-usable canvas tote bags for shopping and avoid using plastic bags – particularly for just one item.

Consider re-using wrapping or other reusable paper when wrapping Christmas gifts. If every American family wrapped just three presents in re-used materials that would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.

Have children make their own wrapping paper by designing and coloring brown paper grocery bags, using old homework pages, old Christmas Cards or hand drawn pictures. Grandparents will appreciate the special touch of a grandchild to any gift.

Consider using commonly dis-

carded paper items for wrapping gifts – Sunday comics, old posters, maps, discarded sheet music and wallpaper scraps for wrapping paper.

Use and re-use gift bags instead of wrapping paper.

Avoid using metallic gift wrapping paper because this paper is generally not recyclable.

Give gifts in canvas re-usable shopping tote bags rather than gift bags.

Choose products that use less packaging material.

Look for products with the U.S. EPA’s Energy Star logo. These items have been evaluated and rated for their energy efficiency.

### Gift ideas

Give gifts that will be consumed or used such as home-baked cookies, bread, or jams or a plant or tree that can be planted in the recipient’s yard.

Consider gifts that keep on giving such as a compost bin, rain barrel, battery charger, rechargeable batteries, LED light bulbs, a perpetual calendar, or an erasable message board.

Give two gifts in one by using baskets, scarves or pillowcases to wrap gifts.

Give gifts that don’t create waste such as passes to the zoo or an amusement park, music lessons, tennis, golf or other sports lessons, memberships to an organization, tickets to a concert or movie, dinner at a restaurant, a subscription to an online magazine or newspaper or an IOU to help rake leaves or repair a leaky faucet.

Give gifts that get “used up” such as candles, soap or seeds for the garden.

Give durable toys for gifts that are made from wood or metal so that they can be passed down, even becoming collectible items.

If purchasing electronic items such as a computer, television, cell phone or gaming station, find a retailer that will take back and recycle the outdated or obsolete item being replaced.

Recycle obsolete electronic devices through local community recycling programs or donate computers or televisions that have useful life to community groups, local schools or nonprofit organizations.

## Hosts of Party at Mississippi State Hospital



Mt. Elam Missionary Baptist Church



Good Hope Baptist Church



National Alliance of Postal & Federal Employees

*Mississippi Link Newswire*

Volunteers from Mt. Elam Missionary Baptist Church of Pearl, MS, shared their time and talent Dec. 15 and volunteers from the National Alliance of Postal & Federal Employees of Jackson, MS and Volunteers from Good Hope Baptist Church of Florence, MS, shared their time and talent Dec. 16 to provide food, fun and joy for patients and residents at Mississippi State Hospital.

Mt. Elam Missionary Baptist

Church is one of more than 70 groups who will provide parties and activities to over 700 patients and residents at the hospital this holiday season.

“The outpouring of love and support from all of our volunteer groups adds so much to the lives of our patients and residents during the holiday season,” said Sheila Shows, volunteer services director for the hospital.

Holiday festivities at MSH culminated on Santa Day, Friday, Dec. 21.

An annual tradition, Santa Day is a day when community volunteers and leaders gather at the hospital dressed as Santa and deliver gift bags to each and every patient and resident.

MSH, a program of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and helps the individuals it serves achieve mental wellness by encouraging hope, promoting safety and supporting recovery. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.

## A Message From The State Director

*Mississippi Link Newswire*

As we approach the end of the calendar year and enter into the Christmas season, now is the time where we typically ponder the inexplicable question, “Where did this year go?” I’ve noodled on that question a hundred times since Thanksgiving. It did go by fast, but we sure got a lot done, and I’m very proud of all we accomplished.

Our Water and Environmental Program was a top priority area during FY18 (and will be again in FY19). Through the great talent and hard work of our staff in Jackson and our field offices, along with the incredible support of the Mississippi Rural Water Association, we generated a nearly 300 percent increase in project funding over the prior fiscal year. And, we’re entering the new fiscal year with perhaps our biggest pipeline of water projects ever.

We also placed a significant emphasis on increasing our number of Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) grant awards during FY18. Through our DLT program, high school kids are graduating with college credits through online access to their local community colleges. Rural residents have direct connections to top medical specialists for health screenings and check-ups without having to drive long distances.



Rounsaville

There are great needs in our communities to expand these services. We realized a tremendous gain in DLT applications this year and successfully funded four projects – more than we’ve ever done. These projects compete on a national level, and winning these awards takes exceptional effort. By creating more awareness of this valuable program, we will see even more success.

Our Single Family and Multifamily

Housing programs remain extremely strong. Our Community Facilities program, arguably our most popular, continues making strong investments in communities throughout the state to support essential needs. Our Rural Business and Cooperative programs had another strong year with more than \$17 million in investments to support new and existing businesses and local cooperatives.

With more outreach to our lending community, I believe we can double the investment of our Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan program in FY19 to support new jobs and economic growth.

All told, USDA Rural Development invested more than \$507 million in Mississippi during FY18. For a state with a general fund budget of only \$6 billion, that is a tremendous addition to Mississippi’s economy.

I’m proud of each and every member of our Rural Development team and am blessed to have the opportunity to serve along with you. And, I am grateful for our many partners whom without we could not serve our customers effectively.

Let’s get plenty of rest during the Christmas break. Fiscal Year 2019 is going to be a big year for us.

*John Rounsaville, State Director of Rural Development MS*



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# The Cosby Trial



**"Bill Cosby was tried and convicted without any actual evidence that his 'crimes' had ever been committed, no police reports, no medical records, no collaborating witnesses, just the accusations of white women recalling events that occurred 30 years in the past..." — Bob Law, National Black Leadership Alliance**

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

If it wasn't the most read story of the year, the trial of comedian and former "America's Dad," Bill Cosby — along with his conviction, sentencing and appeal — likely proved the most written about.

With its coverage of the Cosby case's unbelievably biased and mischaracterized reporting, mainstream media outlets provided clear examples of the combustible President Donald Trump's catch phrase: "Fake News."

When speaking with African Americans in position to potentially influence public perceptions, the Black Press found they too were misled because of heavy reliance on the coverage of mainstream.

Most Americans believe that Cosby's civil deposition was his admission of plying women with unwanted Quaaludes and then sexually assaulting them. However, most Americans were not in the courtroom from jury selection to verdict — in both trials. And relatively few heard every bit of testimony or read Cosby's earlier civil deposition.

When viewed in its entirety, the 87-page civil disposition document is rich with consistent denials of wrongdoing by Cosby and explanations of events that were never reported by mass media, including that he and Andrea Constand had engaged in an ongoing consensual relationship, one which Cosby desperately hid from his wife of more than a half-century.

When asked in the deposition, by Constand's lawyer, Delores Troiani, about Quaaludes and why he received a prescription for them in the 1970s, Cosby answered:

"What was happening at that time was that that was — Quaaludes — happen to be the drug that kids, young people were using to party with and there were times when I wanted to have them just in case."

Jimmy "JJ" Walker, the former "Good Times" star who co-starred with Cosby and screen legend Sidney Poitier on the film, "Let's Do it Again," said "everyone was using Quaaludes in the 1970s. Women wanted them and men wanted them."

Troiani next asked, "Did you ever give any of those young women the Quaaludes without their knowledge?" Cosby answered, "No."

With headlines and newscasts leading stories with "Cosby Admits to Drugging Women," and "Cosby Admits he Plied women with Quaaludes for Sex," the general public continues to inaccurately believe that the fallen star admitted to secretly and repeatedly "slipping a mickey" to women in order to engage in sex with them.

However, the deposition reveals

## COMMENTARY

that women he offered Quaaludes to, knew what they were taking and readily accepted the drug. One woman who testified against Cosby at trial said she'd even taken a Quaalude prior to going to Cosby's house because she "wanted to get in the mood."

Constand, the only Cosby accuser whose accusations have led to criminal trial, was actually never offered Quaaludes, yet testimony to the contrary was inexplicably admitted by the judge and exploited by the district attorney.

Further, and perhaps more troubling, is what's in the deposition but was not reported by mainstream media, are the details of the night in question between Cosby and Constand.

Cosby explains to Costand attorney Troiani, that on the night in question, he and Constand engaged in consensual foreplay. They spoke of her anxiety and trouble sleeping and he offered her Benadryl to help her to relax, not Quaaludes. Afterwards, according to Cosby's own words in the deposition, they proceeded to "have a necking session."

They kissed passionately, she "got on top of me, and we necked," he said — none of which was found in the heavily redacted version that Troiani and District Attorney Kevin Steele have spoken about and that the mainstream media reported. It was also redacted at trial and never heard by the jury.

Cosby told Troiani that Constand removed her hand from his penis and used her hand to shove Cosby's hand further down her pants. "She was moaning," Cosby said. "She did not stop me, and I want to go," he said.

Following the encounter, Cosby prepared a blueberry muffin for Constand and her favorite red zinger tea which she bit a piece of the muffin and sipped the tea. "I feel a glow. I feel that Andrea has a glow about our sexual moment. She is now facing me and facing the living room," Cosby said.

"I walk her out. She does not look angry. She does not say to me, don't ever do that again. She doesn't walk out with an attitude of a huff ... And, she went out the door and went to the car. I said to Andrea, call me when you get home."

Contrary to what's been reported and what Constand testified at trial, she never went to sleep and was never unconscious. Further, Cosby discussed the various times he and Constand, without the use of a Benadryl tablet, had engaged in kissing and petting.

In describing the relationship, Cosby told Constand's attorney how her client wanted "to do some-

thing about her — I say behind — but she says, butt. She wanted to tighten up her butt and have a great butt... we were able to talk about exercises and things like that."

When asked whether he thought Constand had "grandfatherly feelings" toward him, Cosby said no.

When Troiani asked why not, Cosby responded:

"She didn't ask for a quarter or to sit on my lap. I have no idea what you're talking about. You don't grab your grandfather's penis and massage it."

Bob Law of the National Black Leadership Alliance appealed to African Americans not to be hoodwinked by Cosby's conviction.

"Before you rush to judgment on Bill Cosby be aware of the American Standard of Justice that is rooted in white supremacy and white privilege. The news accounts that he confessed were fake. Actually, according to spectators in the court room, there were so many contradictions, suppressed testimony as well as breach of process in jury selection, including the prohibited opening of a sealed deposition; that in reality there was no trial," Law said in a letter signed and endorsed by the alliance and other civil rights activists.

"Bill Cosby was tried and convicted without any actual evidence that his 'crimes' had ever been committed, no police reports, no medical records, no collaborating witnesses, just the accusations of white women recalling events that occurred 30 years ago. And that is in opposition to the legal principle that the accuser cannot bring the action and also be the witness without any collaborating evidence," Law said.

Since the conviction and subsequent sentencing in September, Cosby's wife Camille has written two op-eds for BlackPressUSA.com, one calling on African Americans to get to vote in the midterm election and the other about racism, hate groups and voting rights.

In each, she condemned her husband's prosecutors and the judge.

"Our ancestors fought for the right to [vote]. They were jailed, were beaten, were killed for fighting for our right to vote. Yet, too often, we do not exercise that most important right. We overlook the mid-term elections because we forget how greatly they can impact our lives," Camille Cosby said.

"But, as I learned from [Montgomery County District Attorney] Kevin Steele's election in 2015, a corrupt politician at any level is a danger to the American people, and even more so when that politician has promised to act in service of his own toxic ambitions and racial hatred," she said.

# NNPA's Series on Slavery

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The shootings of unarmed African Americans by law enforcement officers continued as a hot topic throughout 2018.

As 2018 ends, justice, perpetually denied and hidden behind the "blue wall" of unaccountability, has finally come out of the shadows with the trial, conviction and imprisonment of Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke. Van Dyke was convicted by a jury of his peers for the fatal shooting of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, whom dashcam video showed was walking away when Van Dyke opened fire.

Upon his conviction, Van Dyke was immediately remanded into custody, saw a later bail request denied, and now faces a possible 20-year prison term upon sentencing, which is scheduled for Jan. 18, 2019.

Along with racially-charged shootings, alt-right protests and the emergence of white supremacists who've been vocal in their support of President Donald Trump and his anti-minority policies, there are reminders aplenty of what African Americans and other people of color have had to endure since the founding of the United States.

Three years ago, Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, wrote an op-ed warning individuals of color that, "we have to be vigilant and concerned about any scheme to desensitize, trivialize or to downplay the actual genocidal realities of African slavery."

On Aug. 18, the United Nations held an observance that likely made Chavis, and others like him, proud. They remembered that on that date five hundred years prior, in 1518, Charles I, Spain's King, issued a charter authorizing the transportation of slaves from Africa to the Americas.

Up until then (from at least 1510), African slaves were generally transported to Spain or Portugal and then trans-shipped to the Caribbean. Charles's decision to create a more direct, more economically-viable Africa-to-America slave trade, fundamentally changed the nature and scale of this terrible human trafficking industry.

During the 350 years that followed Charles's decision, at least 10.7 million black Africans were transported across the hemispheres. An additional 1.8 million died on route. In August, the NNPA at Chavis' direction, began a series on the diabolical history and continued impact of the transatlantic slave trade.

To date, the NNPA has published eight parts of an ongoing series on the transatlantic slave trade — none was more controversial than Part Two, "The Catholic Church Played Major Role in Slavery."

The trans-Atlantic slave trade was introduced by the coming of the Europeans who came with the Bible in the same manner that Arab raiders and traders from the Middle East and North Africa introduced Islam through the Trans-Saharan slave trade, according to AfricaW.com, a premiere informational website available throughout the continent.

"In fact, the Church was the backbone of the slave trade," the authors wrote. "In other words, most of the slave traders and slave ship captains were very 'good' Christians."

For example, Sir John Hawkins, the first slave-ship captain to bring African slaves to the Americas, was a religious man who insisted that his crew "serve God daily" and "love one another."

His ship, ironically called "The Good Ship Jesus," left the shores of his native England for Africa in October 1562. Some historians argue that if churches had used their power, the Atlantic slave trade might have never occurred.

By the same logic, others argue that the Catholic church and Catholic missionaries could have also helped to prevent the colonization and brutality of colonialism in Africa. However, according to a 2015 Global Black History report, the Catholic church did not oppose the institution of slavery until the practice had already become infamous in most parts of the world.

In most cases, the churches and church leaders did not condemn slavery until the 17th century.

The five major countries that dominated slavery and the slave trade in the New World were either Catholic, or still retained strong Catholic influences including Spain,



Portugal, France, England and the Netherlands.

"Persons who considered themselves to be Christian played a major role in upholding and justifying the enslavement of Africans," said Jonathan Chism, an assistant professor of history at the University of Houston-Downtown.

"Many European 'Christian' slavers perceived the Africans they encountered as irreligious and uncivilized persons. They justified slavery by rationalizing that they were Christianizing and civilizing their African captors. They were driven by missionary motives and impulses," Chism said.

Many Anglo-Christians defended slavery using the Bible. For example, white Christian apologists for slavery argued that the curse of Ham, in Genesis 9:20-25, provided a biblical rationale for the enslavement of blacks, Chism said.

In this passage, Noah cursed Canaan and his descendants arguing that Ham would be "the lowest of slaves among his brothers" because he saw the nakedness of his father.

However, a further understanding of the passage also reveals that, while some have attempted to justify their prejudice by claiming that God cursed the black race, no such curse is recorded in the Bible.

That oft-cited verse says nothing whatsoever about skin color.

Also, it should be noted that the black race evidently descended from a brother of a Canaan named Cush. Canaan's descendants were evidently light-skinned — not black.

"Truly nothing in the biblical account identifies Ham, the descendant of Canaan, with Africans. Yet, Christian apologists determined that Africans were the descendants of Ham," Chism said.

The reporting, viewed by tens of thousands, received numerous comments — some who claimed the church was being picked on.

"This is certainly ill-informed. Someone needs to do more homework. Many Popes condemned slavery: Eugenius IV (in 1435 the Papal bull Sicut Dudum), Paul III (1537 bull Sublimus Dei), Gregory XIV (1590 bull Cum Sicuti), Urban VIII (1639 bull Commissum Nobis), Innocent XI (in 1676), Benedict XIV (1741 bull Immensa Pastorum), Gregory XVI (1839 bull In Supremo), Leo XIII (in 1888 and 1890)," said reader Stephanie Jones.

Another reader, Deborah, commented: "Thank you Stephanie, you know, this makes me feel like it wasn't a coincidence that this author and this news media purposely chose this time to bash the church once again. Just to kick us while we are down."

However, reader Lisa Catranides defended the article, writing:

"Along with the practice of extraction of Africans from their homelands for enslavement on other continents, slavery of Africans in Africa was brutally manifested under Christian Missionaries who imprisoned and enslaved thousands of Africans during the development of the rubber extraction industry.

"Christian missionary forces built numerous stockades to hold and torment Africans forced to harvest rubber trees under the direction of Dutch King Leopold with the assistance of Christian missionaries from Great Britain.

"An Irish missionary accompanying the British named Rodger Casement was knighted by the king of England for revealing the brutality of imposed slavery of rubber trade within Africa, leading to the cessation of Britain's involvement in the rubber trade partnership with the Dutch at that time."

An excellent historic account of these atrocities is written by prize-winning author Mario Vargas Llosa in a novel entitled "The Dream of the Celt." It provides astonishing insights into this era, as lived by spirited Irishman Roger Casement, including excerpts from his personal journals.



# All things become new in Christ

By Pastor Simeon R. Green III  
Special to The Mississippi Link



Now, the Christian can fall and commit sin. He is a free, moral agent; he has a right of choice.

The possibility is there, but a real Christian does not want to commit sin; he turns away from it. He does his best not to get in a situation where he could commit sin.

Someone may inquire, “How do I take temptation?” You do not stand alone in your own strength in the temptation. You do not grit your teeth and say, “I’m not going to do it.” In First Corinthians 10:13 the Apostle Paul wrote, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” In other words, the Lord will make a way so that

you do not have to commit sin. If you were to give in to temptation, you would commit sin; but you can escape it.

The Christian does not want to do anything that would displease his Lord and Savior. You see, Jesus Christ can be hurt. Before He hung on the Cross, He suffered undue pain as you and I have never known. They placed a crown of thorns on His head, beat Him so severely that it actually took the flesh off His back, and they spat upon Him. Have you ever had somebody spit in your face?

You need to think about what Jesus endured. He suffered for righteousness sake. He committed no sin and no guile. He suffered as a righteous man; He was not guilty. Sometimes, we have to suffer things because of our own faults, but He had none.

How is it possible for a Christian to live Holy? In the world people are so mixed up about Holy living. They wonder why nothing really changes when somebody becomes a

member of a church. They get involved in religious activities, but there is no real change on the inside. Dear one, when I speak of coming to Christ, I am not talking about joining a church. You cannot join the Church of the Living God; you must be born again. When you are born again, you are a member of the Church of the Living God. When you are born again, a change takes place: the mind is changed, the heart is changed (I am not talking about the physical heart; I am talking about the center of your affection) and the spirit is changed; then God moves in with His Holy Spirit. This is how you can live free from sin. Again, it is not in your own strength. You become a new man or a new woman. Paul said in Second Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Christians are brand-new people on the inside. The Holy Spirit gives them new life, and

they are not the same anymore. We are not reformed, rehabilitated, or reeducated – we are recreated (new creations), living in vital union with Christ. Paul said in Colossians 2:6-7, “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” Just as plants draw nourishment from the soil through their roots, so we draw our life-giving strength from Christ. The more we draw our strength from Him, the less we will be fooled by those who falsely claim to have life’s answers. If Christ is our strength, we will be free from human regulations.

To you and yours, “Happy New Year, 2019!”

*Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joynes Road Church of God, 31 Joynes Road, Hampton VA 23669. He is a member of the National Association of Evangelism Church of God, Anderson, Ind.*

# P R E S E R V E D

## Questions to live by

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



As 2018 comes to end, some of us may end it the same way it began: asking God questions about His purpose for our lives. In fact, the bible is full of many questions. “My God, Why has thou forsaken me?” “Woman, will thou be made whole?” are just a few that we may be most familiar with.

Below are few of the most commonly questions that we ask (or should) God.

Lord, why me? – This question is probably the one that we ask the most when we are trying to deal with life. We wonder why bad or unpleasant things happen but often aren’t patient enough for the answer.

Lord, why not me? – This question is the opposite of the first one. Instead of wondering why bad things happen, the heart of this questions is whether you can allow God to change how you see the world and your place in it.

Lord, will you change me? – This question deals with control and whether you will allow God’s divine destiny for your life to be more important than the fear that often hinders.

Lord, do you see me? – This question is one that is rarely asked by some of us. Part of the reason is because asking this question shows that you are no longer going to hide the real you from God. He already knows the real you anyway; God is just waiting for you to realize who that person is.

Lord, do you know me? – This question asks that you go beyond your superficial commitments

to church and church work. It’s not that God doesn’t “know your heart” and give you credit for being active in church, but can you honestly say that your life outside of church, your words and your actions are a living witness of the power of God?

Lord, why not now? – Can you allow God to control time and the changing of your life’s seasons? In asking this question, the issue is whether you can give up control and allow the power of a faithful prayer to change your circumstances.

Lord, why now? – Can you deal with shifts and transitions? Simply put, can you graciously accept the unexpected change that God brings to your life?


There is actually nothing wrong with asking these or any questions of God. The problem for most of us is that we decide to go to our pastor or prayer partner when God is the only one that can answer these questions.

Even 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 confirms how God answers us: “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.” Many of us try not to ask God questions in a crisis but that’s when he wants to hear from us the most.

As we celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of another, we should remember that the key to having a better 2019 is asking the right questions of God and ultimately making better choices.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*Shewanda Riley is a Dallas, Texas based author of “Love Hangover: Moving From Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends.” Email her at [preserved-bypurpose@gmail.com](mailto:preserved-bypurpose@gmail.com) or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.*




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# Will you join the crusade for Bennett College for Women?

By Julianne Malveaux  
NNPA News Wire Columnist



Bennett College for Women is an oasis where we educate and celebrate women, and develop them into twenty-first-century leaders and global thinkers. That was my elevator speech in the five years, from 2007 through 2012, when I led the college. It is still an oasis, a safe space for black women and others who embrace our mission. It still educates and celebrates women. But now, in 2018-2019, my college has challenges. The accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, has said that Bennett College is fiscally unstable. If we can't raise a minimum of \$5 million by February 1, 2019, just a few weeks from now, the school will lose its accreditation!

How has it come to this? Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have had a tough row to hoe for a plethora of reasons. At Bennett, enrollment has dropped from the historic high I managed of 750 in 2009 to something under 500. Thanks to the efforts of the current president, Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, enrollment rose by 15 percent and by 26 percent with new students this year. That's good, but we've got to be great. What's great? Student enrollment of 800 or more. Great is an endowment that is robust and unique academic programs. What's great is the preservation of an amazing black women's history, a history that is too often swallowed.

History belongs to she who holds the pen. That was my mantra at Bennett. We need to tell black women's stories, and this is a place that reflects them. For every woman who embraces #MeToo, there must be another who embraces the swallowed aspects of black women's history. We don't often hear, for example, of the fantastic legacy of Willa Player, the first woman president of Bennett College, and the first African-American woman to become president of a four-year fully accredited Liberal Arts College. Player was an amazing grace, a woman who was both a civil rights leader and an excellent educator.

She had the audacity to invite Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel when no one else in Greensboro would have him. She supported the Bennett students who took part in the Woolworth's sit-ins (a chapter of history not much elevated as the A&T Greensboro Four were the more prominent leaders). Make no mistake. Bennett women were jailed. Bennett women stood up. And Player stood with them.

Bennett College has a unique history, and it is a history that must be preserved. It will only be maintained if folks who love women, women's history, and the elevation of black women's voices come together to find five million dollars in just a few weeks. I am writing this column to appeal to those who will help. Here's how:

- You can make a contribution to the College. Check out our website, [www.bennett.edu/donate](http://www.bennett.edu/donate).
- You can tell your friends to contribute. Let's take this column and make it viral. Take it to your church, to your sorority or fraternity, to your club, to your friends. Black folks have more than \$1.3 trillion in annual income. Bennett College needs less than four-tenths of one percent of that. Come on, y'all. We can do this. If just 5000 of the high net worth black woman gave a grand, we could do this. I'm asking my sisters to join the crusade for Bennett.
- You can help us find an angel to help, not only with the \$5 million that must be raised but also with a long-term contribution. If you have an angel that you'd like me, President Worthy Dawkins or President Emerita Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole to talk with, please reach out to me at [dr.j@juliannemalveaux.com](mailto:dr.j@juliannemalveaux.com). At this time, we only need unrestricted dollars by February 1, 2019. Please help.

Year after year we hear stories of HBCUs that are facing financial challenges. Why is this one different and special, and what will Bennett do to ensure that it does not reencounter some of these challenges?

Bennett College is prepared to engage in a strategic planning initiative to move us from surviving to thriving. We are prepared to engage in 21st-century technology to make our campus work. We need resources to move to the next step, and we are ready to raise those funds with just a little help. Are you in?

Bennett College President Phyllis Worthy Dawkins has been bold, firm and strategic, as she has faced these challenges. She says, "We look forward to working with partners who understand that their investment supports the education of deserving young women whose potential is only limited by the opportunities we give them. Our challenge is great. Our time is short. Our resolve is mighty."

I #StandwithBennett at [www.bennett.edu/donate](http://www.bennett.edu/donate). Will you? Please send your dollars and your ideas. Please help us water the oasis.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist. Her latest book "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available via [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for booking, wholesale inquiries or for more info visit [www.juliannemalveaux.com](http://www.juliannemalveaux.com)

# Donald Trump's border wall demand is dressed up with more lies about immigrants

By Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.  
Founder and President of  
Rainbow PUSH Coalition



"Yes, if we don't get what we want, one way or the other ... I will shut down the government," said President Trump to Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker-designate Nancy Pelosi, referring to his demand for \$5 billion to build his border wall.

Trump festooned his demand with his customary lies, claiming that much of the wall has already been built (it hasn't), that immigrants are spreading disease (they aren't), that border agents recently detained "10 terrorists in a short period of time" (they didn't). In reality, illegal immigration has been declining, not rising.

This isn't a crisis; it's a political ploy designed to fan fear and division. The Bible teaches us to "love your neighbor as yourself." We will be judged by how we treat the least of these. In Luke, chapter 10,

Jesus tells the story of the stranger on the Jericho Road, who was robbed, stripped and beaten by a band of thieves. He is ignored by a priest and a religious official. He is saved by a Samaritan – a people who were widely despised at the time – who binds his wounds, takes him to an inn and pays his fare. "Go and do likewise," Jesus instructs.

In contrast, Trump slanders the strangers. His administration has ripped babies from their parents, shackled pregnant women, locked up thousands indefinitely. He has constricted legal immigration, even as employers seek new workers as the baby boomers age and retire.

In the midterm elections, Trump, worried about mobilizing his base, descended into hysteria, threatening to revoke the citizenship of those born here – a direct violation of the Constitution – rousing fears about a supposed invading army of migrants, eventually dispatching 7,000 troops to the border, an insult to our military and to our border patrols.

He succeeded in raising the importance of the issue, but he lost the argument. Democrats swept to a majority in the House. Polls showed most Americans still believe that immigrants benefit this nation, as opposed to costing it. The percentage of Americans supporting lower levels of immigration has fallen from a high of nearly two-thirds in the mid-1990s to an all-time low of less than 30 percent in June.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, who immigrated from India at 16 and is the first Indian-American woman elected to the House of Representatives and one of 12 naturalized citizens, notes that a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill exists – one that once got 68 votes in the U.S. Senate. It paid for more border security, while providing a clear road map to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented, including the Dreamers, and fixed many of the problems of our system: outdated family visa caps, cruel immigration backlogs and a failure to address pressing needs of employers. Trump, how-

ever, doesn't seek a solution; he seeks the preservation of an issue – one that he believes can help him divide and conquer. What's needed instead, as ayapal wrote, is a moral imagination about immigration.

This is not about "open borders," as Trump slanders Democrats. It is about creating a humane, sensible, smart system to deal with legal immigration, cut down on illegal entry and address those desperately seeking asylum. We would also be wise to seek to assist rather than destabilize our neighbors so that their economies thrive. People don't want to leave their homes. Only desperation for their families leads them to venture into the unknown.

Now is a good time for each of us to look into our hearts, to see our neighbors without blinders. They aren't seeking to invade America. They aren't longing to leave their families, their homes, their communities. They are struggling to survive. They are strangers on the Jericho Road. We should meet them with an open heart, not a closed mind.

# First Step Act is the most important federal criminal justice reform in decades

By Marc H. Morial  
President and CEO  
National Urban League



*"For too long, sentencing in our country has been overly severe and has disproportionately targeted communities of color – especially black men. Reforming some of the most draconian federal sentencing laws, including unfair mandatory minimum sentences under two- and three-strikes laws, will make our system more just. However, to be clear, the FIRST STEP Act is very much just that – a First Step. It is a compromise of a compromise, and we ultimately need to make far greater reforms if we are to right the wrongs that exist in our criminal justice system."* – Senator Kamala Harris

The U. S. Senate this week took the most significant step toward federal criminal justice reform in decades with the passage of the First Step Act. As the House previously had passed a nearly identical bill, and the president has committed to signing it, the First Step Act is virtu-

ally assured of becoming law.

As part of our goal for every American to have an equal right and responsibility to fully participate in our democracy, and all people to have a right to justice and fairness, the National Urban League has been on the forefront of criminal justice reform for decades. Over the last year, we have worked closely with members of Congress to craft the bill and garner support.

The act would make the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 – reducing the disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences – retroactive. As many as 2,600 federal inmates, could see their sentences reduced.

It would ease mandatory minimum sentences under federal law, including the "three strikes" rule. It increases "good time credits" and "earned time credits" that inmates can earn. It applies retroactively, potentially qualifying 4,000 inmates for release the day the bill goes into effect. In addition to reducing overcrowding, the vocational and rehabilitative programs that earn inmates credit have been shown to reduce the likelihood a participant will re-

offend.

The bill also requires inmates to be housed within 500 miles of their families when possible, and prohibits the shackling of inmates while they are pregnant, giving birth or in postpartum recovery.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the bill is the far-ranging support it has received across the political spectrum in this era of deep partisan polarization. It passed in the Senate by a vote of 7-12, while the House version passed earlier this year by a vote of 360-59.

Presidential advisor Jared Kushner, who took a leading role in the effort, said "For all those who are deserving of a second chance, this legislation will make a meaningful and measurable difference in their lives."

Conservative Senator Mike Lee of Utah wrote, "My time as a prosecutor also tells me that not every criminal is dangerous or incapable of living a productive life. My faith as a Christian teaches me that many people are capable of redemption. And my instincts as a conservative make me believe that the government can be reformed to work better."

Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey wrote, "For the first time in a long time, with the passage of this bill into law, our country will make a meaningful break from the decades of failed policies that led to mass incarceration, which has cost taxpayers billions of dollars, drained our economy, compromised public safety, hurt our children and disproportionately harmed communities of color while devaluing the very idea of justice in America."

As its name implies, the act is hardly the comprehensive reform America needs. We continue to work for elimination of cash bail for non-violent crimes, and more support for reentry programs like our Urban Reentry Jobs Program. And much more work remains to be done at the state level, where the vast majority of sentencing and incarceration takes place.

But the First Step Act represents a remarkable achievement of bipartisan cooperation, and we congratulate and thank the Congress members, staff and fellow civil rights organizations who helped to make it happen.

# My 2018 Top Ten stories

By E. Faye Williams  
Trice Edney Newswire



At the end of each year, people begin writing New Year's resolutions that as they write them, they pretty much know they will not be keeping them Yet, it's a popular ritual. I know because I write the resolutions, too, with every intention of keeping them, but somehow, as the year goes by, I fall behind on keeping them.

Another ritual we tend to go through is "Top 10 Stories of the Year." We don't always agree to what those stories are. I've already read several lists of top stories for 2018. To make my point, I'll use the Associated Press' list of the top 10.

On that list, not necessarily in order of importance, are: (1) Murder of Jamal Khashoggi (2) Climate change (3) California wildfires (4) Kavanaugh hearings (5) U.S. Immigration (6) U.S. Midterm elections (7) Mass shootings (8) #MeToo movement (9)

Trump-Russia probe and (10) Parkland school shooting.

I agree all of the above are important stories; however, if you happen to be black in America, you might say that all of those things concern you, and many were handled badly by the person who currently occupies the White House.

Just in case the AP's list was in order of importance, we'd probably organize them in a different order, and have several more to add that would come pretty high on the list.

We would certainly place the following as top stories of the year – some good, some bad, but worthy of our attention:

- (1) Voter suppression considering how votes were counted for Stacey Abrams in Georgia for governor, Andrew Gillum in Florida for governor, Mike Espy for senate in Mississippi. I'm also concerned about Beta O'Rourke's campaign in Texas;
- (2) All of the women who won offices at all levels for the first time;
- (3) Colin Kaepernick's continuing campaign for justice;
- (4) Michelle Obama's book "Becoming" and its phenomenal sales being named the bestselling hardcover book of the year, selling over 2 million copies in the first 15 days;
- (5) Democrats taking back the U.S. House of Representatives so they can block some of the craziness on the other side of the aisle;
- (6) Parkland School shooting and the aftermath of the attention the students brought to gun control;
- (7) Proof that the current administration in charge of governing in Washington has lost all credibility and nothing can save them;
- (8) Without completing it, the Mueller investigation has shown us that #45 has nowhere to run, nowhere to hide. He doesn't know when to hold them, when to fold them, when to throw down and when to walk away, but now is a good time;
- (9) President Barack Obama's continuing to be a class act by bringing joy to so many – such as his recent visit to District of Columbia Children's National Medical Center while bearing gifts;
- (10) The absolute unending, never before seen craziness, lying, dangerous, stupid, criminal behavior we continue to witness from the occupant in the White House – the one who promised to "clean up the swamp."

Each day I wake up, I turn on the news to see what we're facing for the coming day. Even staff members don't know until they hear #45's plans on the news. From tweets, we learn that we are in for another crazy, unpredictable day.

There were many good things that happened in 2018, but they were over shadowed by the antics of #45 who dominated the news week after week, not in a good way, but what is believed to be criminal behavior. Many of us are left wondering when will this be over?

E. Faye Williams is national president of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. [www.national-congressbw.org](http://www.national-congressbw.org) and [www.respectus.store](http://www.respectus.store) 202 678-6788. She is also host of "Wake Up and Stay Woke" on WFPW-FM 89.3 radio.



# Avoiding the holiday blues

By Alphonso Gibbs  
www.MensHealthNetwork.org

The six weeks encompassing Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's – collectively called “the holidays” – are for most a magically unique time of year, filled with holiday carols, reunions, displays of colorful lights, love and affection, often expressed through gift giving.

But for some, the holidays bring hurt. Caused by factors including the weather, separation, death, stress, unrealistic expectations, hyper-sentimentality, guilt or overspending, holiday depression – also called the “holiday blues” – can zap the merriment out of even the most wonderful time of the year.

Holiday depression affects one million people every year. Men and women, young and old, all fall victim to feelings of sadness, loneliness, anxiety, guilt and fatigue during this emotionally charged season.

Men's Health Network offers the following 10 suggestions to help you identify and ward off – or at least better cope with – potential sources of holiday depression.

1. Acknowledge that you're hurting – Others may expect certain attitudes and behaviors from you that you may not feel. The retail industry's “holiday hype” presents an overly sentimental, nostalgic, and even imaginary notion of the holidays (usually to try to sell you something). Sill, feelings of sadness, loneliness, or depression don't automatically vanish just because it's the holidays.

Acknowledge your pain, be open and honest with others, refuse to feel guilty, and get help if necessary. It's ok to laugh. Don't be afraid. You won't be struck by a bolt of lightning for laughing. Remember, a closed mouth won't get fed.

2. Have a plan to deal with your feelings – Try to surround yourself with people who care about and support you – family, friends or church members. Invest yourself in an exercise program (aerobic activities such as walking, running, cycling, etc., are recommended because of their mood-elevating ability). If necessary, see your doctor or therapist. And learn to say “no.” Others' expectations are not a reason for your own mental health to suffer.

3. Set realistic expectations – Keep your expectations realistic rather than perfectionistic. Prioritize and reduce self-imposed holiday preparations. Delegate responsibilities. Realistically plan your budget, spending and shopping. Do less and enjoy more. Obsessing over endless details is bound to change this long-awaited, once-a-year season from a time of exuberance to one of exhaustion. Make it a point to be honest with yourself, and if necessary and possible, limit the time and situations/people you want to be around. When you've had enough of either, make sure that you have a way to leave or step away.

4. Take time for yourself – Why is it called holiday depression? Because, for most people, these feelings don't occur at other times of the year. Remind yourself of what you enjoyed during the previous months, then continue them during the holidays. Make yourself a priority. Instead of a “Discount Double Check,” give yourself



Gibbs

an “Emotional Double Check.” Give yourself permission to feel what you feel. Just don't stay there too long. Getting enough rest, eating and drinking in moderation, exercising, and continuing other favorite activities can maintain normalcy, routine, control and predictability.

5. Consider that your depression may actually be caused by this time of year – Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, occurs because of reduced exposure to sunlight – which is just what happens during the holiday season when daylight hours are shorter. Check with your doctor to see if light therapy might be beneficial for you.

6. Help others – Soup kitchens, homeless shelters, nursing homes, churches and scores of other organizations can always use volunteers, especially at critical times of the year. Additionally, you'll benefit from the company of other people around you rather than being alone.

And, help others help you. Tell those who care about you what you do or don't need from them. They often don't know how to help, or what to say, but want to.

7. Bury the hatchet – Perfect families don't magically appear during the holidays, but family conflicts can. “Letting go” and forgiving can help heal past wounds. Additionally, family feuds can even be deliberately set aside until after the high-tension holidays in order to facilitate the peace and enjoyment of everyone at this special time.

8. Start your own traditions – Both families and traditions change with time. (Every tradition had to start somewhere.) Rather than reminiscing over the “good old days,” accept the fact that change may be necessary, grasp the season as it is now, look forward to the future, and create your own family traditions that can be enjoyed and even preserved for future generations.

9. Keep your alcohol intake low – Don't pour gasoline on a fire. Remember, alcohol has a depressive effect on your nervous system, so if you're experiencing the holiday blues, drinking too much alcohol will only worsen your depression.

10. Rededicate yourself to your spirituality – The “reason for the season” is often swallowed up by maddening materialism that can distract from the history, meaning and significance of holiday celebrations. Step back, slow down, and refocus on transcendent, eternal matters. Rededicate yourself to spiritual pursuits, such as church attendance, church work, prayer life and other disciplines. Regain the focus originally intended by this time of year.

# Seven agencies to launch three-week round-up of winter coats for needy



## The Mississippi Link Newswire

Seven organizations, including the Capital City Roller Girls roller derby team, launched a drive to collect winter coats for impoverished Jackson residents at a news conference at AMR's headquarters, 600 Melvin Bender Drive, December 20.

Jackson Fire Department, Stewpot Community Services, Good Samaritan Center, Living Independence for Everyone and The Salvation Army are participating the project with the Roller Girls and AMR.

The project is named, “Skates and Sirens: Coats to the Rescue.” The organizers encourage donating any size old coats in good condition or new coats.

Organizers say there is a strong need for the project in our community.

Capital City Rollergirl Jessica Cain said, “There are hundreds of people of all ages in Jackson without a good winter coat. Some people without coats are homeless and there are also families with homes who simply don't have the money for adequate winter coats. From now til spring, they'll all suffer in the cold. So, please help.”

Each of Jackson Fire Department's 21 stations will serve as collection points.

Cleotha Sanders, division chief at JFD said, “The holidays are a time of giving. We're asking the more fortunate among us: Go to your closets, take out coats you and others in your family have outgrown or stopped wearing for any reason. Then, take them to a Jackson fire station any day, any time. Or add a new coat to your shopping or return lists and drop it off at any JFD station you pass on your way home.”

Cain said the project will end January 7.

Each person donating a coat can choose which of the three social service agencies receives the coat. Donors can also request a receipt for a tax deduction.



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Week of December 23, 2018



# Cade Chapel M.B. Church 2018 Christmas Cantata

**New Horizon Church International • December 16, 2018 • Jackson, MS**

PHOTOS BY DEREK ASHLEY

## *The Mississippi Link Newswire*

Sunday, December 16, 2018, marked the thirty-ninth year that the Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church – Department of Music presented its combined choir accompanied by the combined orchestra in the church's annual Christmas Cantata.

Each year the Cade Chapel Christmas Cantata tells the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ. The 2018 presentation featured a multi-generational cast of participants including 80 adult vocalists, a children's chorus, a 45-piece orchestra and dance ministries.

This year Cade Chapel was honored to partner with Jackson State University's MAD-DRAMA Performance Troupe to execute the theatrical aspects of the worship experience.

The cantata was titled "Our King Has Come." The musical featured contemporary and tra-

ditional works including, "Mary Did You Know," "Gloria," "The Little Drummer Boy" and "He Lives." It was held at New Horizon Church International located at 1770 Ellis Avenue in Jackson, Miss.

Reverend Reginald Buckley serves as Cade Chapel senior pastor, Reverend Horace L. Buckley is the pastor emeritus and Beray Thigpen serves as the minister of music and cantata conductor.

The 2018 cantata was produced by Shannon Pittman Moore. It was directed by Alisha Domey-Bell, Marquise Loving, Charmaine Montgomery and Mandy Strong-White. The cantata narrator was Mea Ashley.

*For more information regarding activities at Cade Chapel M.B. Church, you may contact the church office at 601 366-5463.*





# FILM REVIEW: IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK

## BARRY JENKINS DIRECTS FAITHFUL ADAPTATION OF BELOVED JAMES BALDWIN CLASSIC

By Kam Williams  
*Columnist*

In 1974, James Baldwin published “If Beale Street Could Talk,” a love story, set in Harlem, about a beleaguered black couple’s pursuit of the elusive American Dream. Many critics consider the heartrending novel Baldwin’s best work, perhaps because of the way in which it humanizes an array of African-American characters ordinarily marginalized and relegated to

the shadows of society.

Now, Barry Jenkins, director of 2017’s Oscar-winning Best Picture, Moonlight, has brought a faithful adaptation of the revered classic to the big screen. The poignant coming-of-age tale co-stars Kiki Layne as 19 year-old Tish Rivers and Stephan James as her 23 year-old fiance’ Fonny Hunt.

At the point of departure, the star-crossed lovers are already behind the proverbial 8 ball.

Narrator Tish informs us that her beau, an aspiring sculptor, has recently been arrested for rape. Then, during a jailhouse visit, she lets him know through the frustrating glass partition that he’s going to be a father.

Fonny takes the news of the pregnancy in stride, which is more than can be said for his family, especially his disapproving mother (Aunjanue Ellis) and sisters (Dominique Thorn and Ebony Obsidian). Fortu-

nately, Tish’s feisty mom, Sharon (Regina King), is up to the challenge of getting everybody to stop pointing fingers self-righteously in favor of focusing on the blessing of a baby that’s coming.

Meanwhile, Fonny’s impending trial looms large. For, despite an airtight alibi, he was ostensibly framed by a racist cop (Ed Skrein) capable of cavalierly framing a black man for a crime he didn’t commit.

Hope for justice rests with getting the alleged rape victim (Emily Rios) who fingered Fonny at the direction of Officer Bell to tell the truth. But she’s moved to Puerto Rico, making the prospect of her recanting in court unlikely, unless Sharon is willing to go to extraordinary lengths in quest of exoneration.

All of the above unfolds in fascinating fashion against a variety of visually-captivating backdrops. Kudos to Barry

Jenkins for crafting another compelling inner-city saga, and especially for coaxing a career performance out of Regina King, a shoo-in for an Oscar nomination.

Excellent (4 stars)  
Rated R for profanity and sexuality  
Running time: 117 minutes  
Production Studio: Plan B Entertainment / Annapurna Pictures / PASTEL  
Studio: Annapurna Pictures

# Blacktrospective 2018

## Kam’s Annual Assessment of the Best in Black Cinema

By Kam Williams  
*Columnist*

### Best Big Budget Black Films

1. If Beale Street Could Talk
2. Black Panther
3. Green Book
4. The Hate U Give
5. The Equalizer 2
6. Uncle Drew
7. BlacKkKlansman
8. Superfly
9. Nobody’s Fool
10. A Wrinkle in Time

### Best Independent Black Films

1. Sorry to Bother You
2. Blindspotting
3. Monsters and Men
4. Nappily Ever After
5. Traffik
6. Kings
7. Gemini
8. Roxanne Roxanne
9. Tyrel
10. The Citizen

### Best Black Documentaries

1. Quincy
2. The Final Year
3. Where’s Daddy?
4. Making The Five Heartbeats
5. The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X

### Best Actor (Lead Role)

1. Stephan James (If Beale Street Could Talk)
2. Chadwick Boseman (Black Panther)
3. John David Washington (BlacKkKlansman & Monsters and Men)
4. Lakeith Stanfield (Sorry to Bother You)
5. Daveed Diggs (Blindspotting)
6. Denzel Washington (The Equalizer 2)
7. Kyrie Irving (Uncle Drew)

8. Trevor Jackson (Superfly)
9. David Oyelowo (Gringo)
10. Jeffrey Wright (Hold the Dark)

### Best Actor (Supporting Role)

1. Mahershala Ali (Green Book)
2. Michael B. Jordan (Black Panther)
3. Daniel Kaluuya (Widows & Black Panther)
4. Russell Hornsby (The Hate U Give)
5. Courtney B. Vance (Ben Is Back)
6. Ving Rhames (Mission Impossible: Fallout)
7. Anthony Mackie (The Hate U Give)
8. Jorge Lendeborg, Jr. (Love, Simon)
9. Shaquille O’Neal (Uncle Drew)
10. Common (The Hate U Give)

### Best Actress (Lead Role)

1. Viola Davis (Widows)
2. Kiki Layne (If Beale Street Could Talk)
3. Amandla Stenberg (The Hate U Give)
4. Zoe Kravitz (Gemini)
5. Sanaa Lathan (Nappily Ever After)
6. Paula Patton (Traffik)
7. Regina Hall (Support the Girls)
8. Storm Reid (A Wrinkle in Time)
9. Halle Bery (Kings)
10. Tiffany Haddish (Night School & Nobody’s Fool)

### Best Actress (Supporting Role)

1. Regina King (If Beale Street Could Talk)
2. Letitia Wright (Black Pan-

- ther)
3. Tessa Thompson (Sorry to Bother You)
4. Lena Waithe (Ready Player One)
5. Regina Hall (The Hate U Give)
6. Aunjanue Ellis (If Beale Street Could Talk)
7. Lupita Nyong’o (Black Panther)
8. Tiffany Haddish (Uncle Drew)
9. Oprah Winfrey (A Wrinkle in Time)
10. Danai Gurira (Black Panther)

### Best Big Budget Directors

1. Barry Jenkins (If Beale Street Could Talk)
2. Ryan Coogler (Black Panther)
3. George Tillman, Jr. (The Hate U Give)
4. Spike Lee (BlacKkKlansman)
5. Charles Stone III (Uncle Drew)
6. Director X. (Superfly)
7. Antoine Fuqua (The Equalizer 2)
8. Ava DuVernay (A Wrinkle in Time)
9. Deon Taylor (Traffik)
10. Tyler Perry (Nobody’s Fool)

### Best Independent and Documentary Directors

1. Boots Riley (Sorry to Bother You)
2. Reinaldo Marcus Green (Monsters and Men)
3. Rashida Jones (Quincy)
4. Rel Dowdell (Where’s Daddy)
5. Robert Townsend (Making The Five Heartbeats)

# Kam’s Kapsules

## Weekly previews that make choosing a film fun

By Kam Williams  
*Columnist*

For movies opening Christmas 2018

### Wide Releases

**Holmes & Watson** (PG-13 for violence, profanity, sexuality, drug references and crude humor) Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly co-star as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, respectively, in this crime comedy which finds the legendary sleuths trying to stop arch-rival Moriarty (Ralph Fiennes) from assassinating Queen Victoria (Pam Ferris). With Rebecca Hall, Hugh Laurie, Steve Coogan and Kelly Macdonald.

**Vice** (R for profanity and violent images) Christian Bale portrays Dick Cheney in this seriocomic biopic recounting the ambitious politician’s career from Beltway bureaucrat to most powerful vice president in U.S. history. Featuring Amy Adams as

Lynne Cheney, Sam Rockwell as President George W. Bush, Tyler Perry as Colin Powell, and Steve Carell as Donald Rumsfeld.

### Independent & Foreign Films

**American Renegades** (PG-13 for profanity, violence and brief sexuality) Suspense thriller about a team of Navy SEALs that goes rogue upon discovering a treasure trove of gold bullion worth billions at the bottom of a lake in Bosnia. Co-starring J.K. Simmons, Sullivan Stapleton, Charlie Bewley and Joshua Henry.

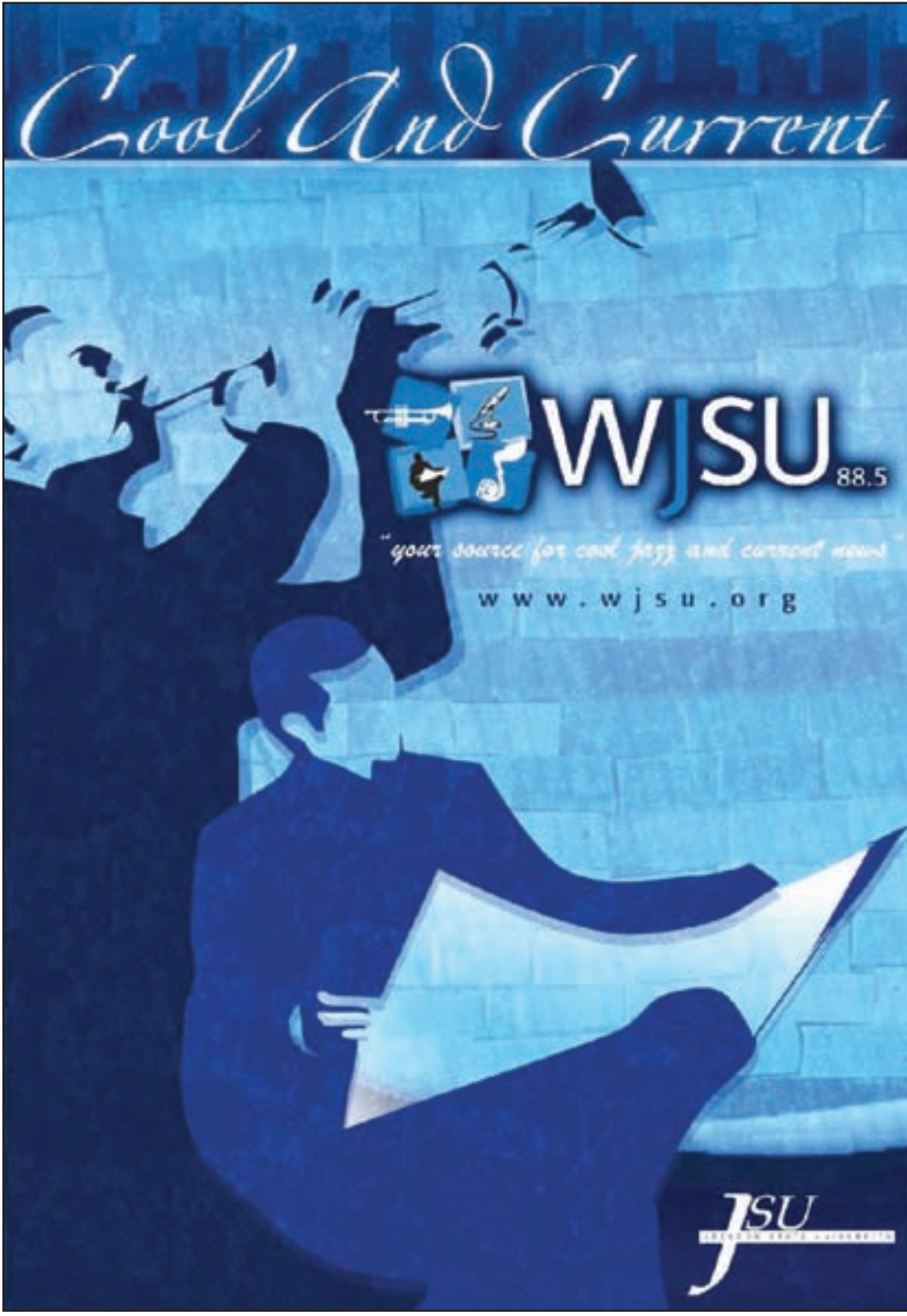
**Destroyer** (R for violence, sexuality, drug use and pervasive profanity) Gritty tale of redemption revolving around a veteran LAPD detective’s (Nicole Kidman) attempt to track down the participants in a tragic bank robbery that’s been haunting her for over a decade. With Toby Kebbell, Tatiana Maslany and Sebas-

tian Stan.

**On the Basis of Sex** (PG-13 for profanity and suggestive content) Courtroom drama revisiting a groundbreaking, sex discrimination case argued by Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Felicity Jones) early in her legal career. With Kathy Bates, Sam Waterston, Armie Hammer and Justin Theroux.

**Stan & Ollie** (PG for smoking and mild epithets) Bittersweet biopic about Stan Laurel (Steve Coogan) and Oliver Hardy (John C. Reilly) recounting the legendary comedy team’s 1953 reunion in Great Britain for a comeback concert tour. Supporting cast includes Danny Huston, Stephanie Hyam and Susy Kane.

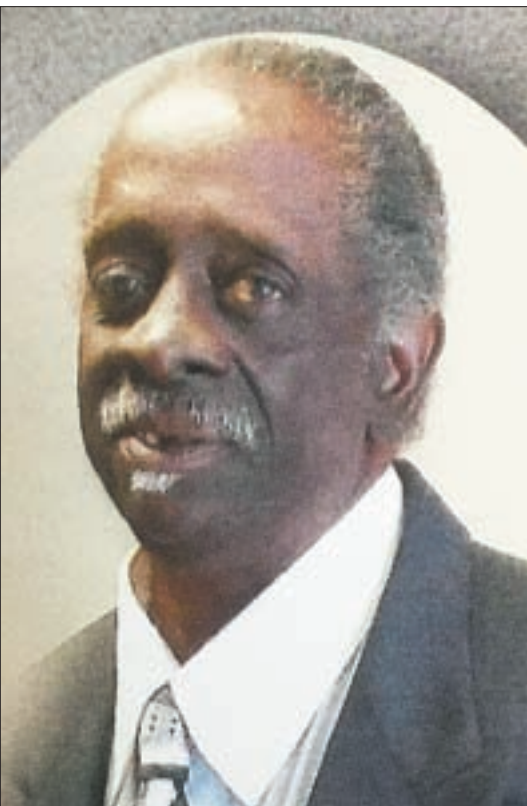
**They Shall Not Grow Old** (R for graphic images) World War I documentary featuring unseen footage and commemorating the centennial of the conflict. Directed by Peter Jackson.





## Ernest Samuel “Sammie” Garrett

*June 18, 1957 - December 17, 2018*



Sammie Garrett was born June 18, 1957 to the late Ernest and Sadye Garrett and Albert Crump and Martha Dean Crawford. He passed away December 17, 2018 in Jackson, Miss.

At an early age he joined Crossroads Church of God in Farmhaven, Miss. and later united

with Friendship Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss. He attended Canton High School. He was well traveled and lived in many different cities.

Sammie grew up to be a very unique man. He loved music and loved to dance. Fishing and hunting were his favorite past times. He worked as a carpenter, roofer and house painter. He was particular about his work because he said, “My daddy taught me how to do this and I always wanted to do a good job for him.”

He met and fell in love with Rosie Jones. He insisted that they be married in a ceremony presided over by an ordained minister, no justice of the peace.

Sammie leaves to cherish his memory a loving wife Rosie Jones-Garrett; four stepdaughters Pat Sanders-Young, LaShunda Dishmon, Kenya Jones all of Jackson, MS; Ivory Cater of Canton, MS; brothers Albert Crawford (Pauline) of Union Church, MS, Johnny Crawford (Doris) of Fayette, MS; sisters Ollie Garrett of Seattle, WA, Ethel Faye Wales (Thomas) of Canton, MS Merlee Crawford of Crosby, MS. Sisters Gerdie Crawford, Dianne Williams and Sadye Garrett preceded him in death. A host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends will cherish fond memories of Sammie.

Memorial service for Ernest Samuel Garrett was held at Friendship Baptist Church in Jackson, MS December 22, 2018 with burial at Eugene Garrett Memorial Cemetery in Farmhaven, MS.

## Letitia Ann Crawford

*April 10, 1948 - December 15, 2018*



Letitia Ann “Tish” Crawford was born to the late Theiryola and Verlon Crawford (Smith) in Chicago, Illinois April 10, 1948. She was preceded in death by her parents, as well as two brothers, Anthony Smith and Zachary Crawford. Tish graduated from Loretto Academy in 1966 and studied at both DePaul University and Jackson State University.

While at JSU she gained an extended family, Uncle Jim and Aunt Mary Smith.

Tish bore three children, Bryan, Brandee and Byron. She left Jackson and returned to Chicago in 1981, but in 1993, permanently relocated back to Jackson with her children.

Always good with numbers, and inspired by the

entrepreneurial spirit of her parents, Tish started an independent accounting and bookkeeping company, Business Solutions Services. She completed taxes and payroll for many local businesses, friends and family.

Tish was involved with many organizations. She was a member of the F.R. Carter Phyllis Auxiliary of MS, member of the Fannie P. Sanders Chapter #44, Order of Eastern Star, P.H.A., Jurisdiction of MS and the Grand Accountant for the Maurice F. Lucas Sr. Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star, P.H.A., Jurisdiction of MS. Tish was also a member of Toastmasters International where she once served as president of the 1684 Capital City Toastmasters Club.

She enjoyed working on arts and crafts. She was known to give away many of the things she made by hand as gifts to people on holidays and other special occasions.

Tish was a spiritual person and a devout Christian. She encouraged her children to seek out truth and challenge long-held beliefs. She also impressed upon them to always put God first, seek Him out in all things and to never worry because as she always liked to say, “This too shall pass.”

Tish was called home to be with the Lord December 15, 2018. She leaves behind to cherish her memory three children (Bryan, Brandee, Byron) nine grandchildren (Caelan, Jelani, Sariah, Gianna, Jaelynn, Maliyah, Sophia, Sage, Jaycee), a son-in-law (Joseph), two daughters-in-law (Lakiesha, Flora), two nieces (Chiquita, Talisha), five nephews (Anthony C., Anthony P, Troy, Zachary, Michael), great nieces, great nephews and a host of extended family and friends.

Letitia Crawford was funeralized December 22, 2018 at the Jackson Memorial Chapel in Jackson, MS.

## Dr. Otrie Bertrelle Hickerson Smith

*March 17, 1936 - December 19, 2018*



Dr. Otrie Bertrelle Hickerson Smith, born March 17, 1936 in Coffeyville, Kansas, to Rev. Carl Que Hickerson Sr. and Murphy McAllister Hickerson died Wednesday, December 19 at Merit Central Hospital.

She graduated from Dunbar High School in Washington D.C. in 1954; from Howard University with a degree in chemistry; and earned a medical degree at Howard University College of Medicine in 1962. She completed an internship at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, New York; residency in psychiatry at Mental Health Institute in Independence, Iowa, post-graduate training and a staff appointment at the prestigious Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas.

She accepted an appointment to be chief psychiatrist in the Outpatient Department of Public Health and Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry at Howard University College of Medicine. She was certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

In 1963, she married Claude Richard Alexander, Sr. Their union produced one son, Claude Richard Alexander Jr., born in 1964. While their marriage would last only two years, they remained friends up to Claude Sr.’s death in 2013. In 1969, she married Dr. Robert Smith, Sr, whom she had met in 1958 during their time at Howard College of Medicine. On

August 22, 1970, Otrie gave birth to their firstborn daughter Donna Elizabeth, whom she nicknamed Smithy, and on November 19, 1972, she gave birth to a son named Robert Jr., whom she nicknamed Putt Putt. In 1975, they became foster parents to a daughter named Pamela. In 1976, they opened their home to Otrie’s niece Laura.

She came to Jackson, Mississippi in 1969 to take an appointment as a staff psychiatrist with the Mississippi Veterans Administration Center and a staff appointment as an instructor in Clinical Psychiatry and Attending Physician at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. In so doing she was the first female and the first black psychiatrist in the State of Mississippi and one of the few in the South, as well as the first black to join the Mississippi Psychiatric Association.

A founding member of the Committee of Black Psychiatrists of the American Psychiatric Association, she helped push the APA to diagnose as PTSD. She further served as a psychiatrist and psychology instructor at Tougaloo College. She was founding director of Mental Health at Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center which was the first mental health center in a community health center in the country, now FQHCs, Private Practice Psychiatrist at Mississippi Family Health Center. She retired as

a staff psychiatrist with the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Jackson.

She served as observer consultant for the Council of Mental Health Services of the American Psychiatric Association, on the Initial Review Committee of the Minority Mental Health Center of the National Institute of Mental Health, a member of the Advisory Committee of the Mississippi State Department of Mental Health, as a consultant for Special Education Services with Jackson Public Schools and a consultant for Mental Health of Job Corps for Minact, Inc.

Her professional, civic and social memberships include being a life member of the APA Jackson Medical Association, Mississippi Medical and Surgical Association, National Medical Association, Central Mississippi Medical Association, Mississippi State Medical Association, American Medical Association, Mississippi Psychiatric Association, Golden Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Jackson Chapter of Links, Inc., board member of the Women’s Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, director of Southern Regional Young People’s Department of the Women’s Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc., and a member of Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church.

Dr. Otrie Smith was funeralized Dec. 27, 2018 at Cade Chapel M.B.Church in Jackson, MS.

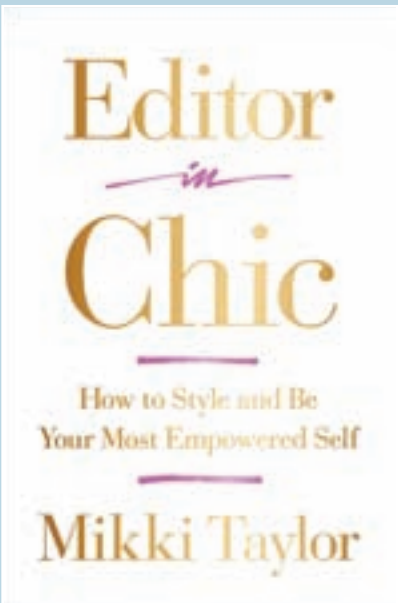
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BOOK REVIEW:

“EDITOR IN CHIC!”

BY MIKKI TAYLOR

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**By Terri Schlichenmeyer**  
*Columnist*

Up against the wall. That’s where you were, hiding for most of the holiday party season. Hiding dry skin. Hiding bad hair, a lack of style, or ill-fitting clothing. For most women, looking good always looks easy. Could “Editor in Chic” by Mikki Taylor be their big secret?

Today started with a good morning.

You’re up, alive and ready to have an amazing life. What’s next?

Says author Mikki Taylor, start

by owning “the queen in you…” and giving her a little kick-start talk today and every day. Appreciate yourself, don’t be envious of anyone else, and choose joy. Doing so will help you to move forward.

Work to break your addiction to fear because fear can take away dreams; also remember that dreaming is not daydreaming. Know your own value, but be willing to alter it by embracing feedback and rejecting criticism; yes, there is a difference, just as there’s a difference between friend and acquaintance.

Once you’ve learned to honor the queen within, know how to take care of her outside.

Sleep is the most underrated beauty treatment in the world, and it doesn’t cost you a dime. Establish soothing bedtime rituals and make your bedroom a “sanctuary.” Try rocking in a chair; it works for both mind and body.

Know your skin type and pamper it accordingly: “Cherish your beautiful brown skin” as if it were baby skin. If you need more than moisturizer, find a qualified dermatologist; in the meantime,

reach for age-appropriate products to keep your skin glowing. Don’t forget about your hands or the skin on your feet!

As for makeup, there are a lot of do’s and don’ts to follow to get the right look. Consult with an expert to ensure that you get cosmetics that are right for you and that showcase your “bold and authentic” self. Invest time with a good hairstylist and pick the best shampoo. Don’t “cut corners” on your hairstyle or wig, and “be sure to wrap your hair at night…” And when it comes to clothes, ignore that dress size.

“Like age,” says Taylor, “it’s just a number.”

One thing you’re going to know just by browsing inside “Editor in Chic,” this ain’t gonna be cheap.

Over and over again, author and Essence editor-at-large Mikki Taylor encourages her readers to “invest” on procedures, products and processes. Some of those things are recommended by name. You can almost feel your wallet getting skinny.

That rather makes the You-Go-Girl rallying cries ring a little hollow, especially when

one considers that readers have likely already read them before, elsewhere. Yes, it’s true that, together with the spiritual advice here, products and self-promotion might help some readers, but what they gleaned from the women before them probably already taught them what they need.

And cost a lot less, too.

Overall, this isn’t a bad book. It’s worth considering, but look at both sides before you buy. “Editor in Chic” may help you find your authentic style – or its advice may drive you up the wall.

Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

Holiday greetings from the Superintendent and Staff



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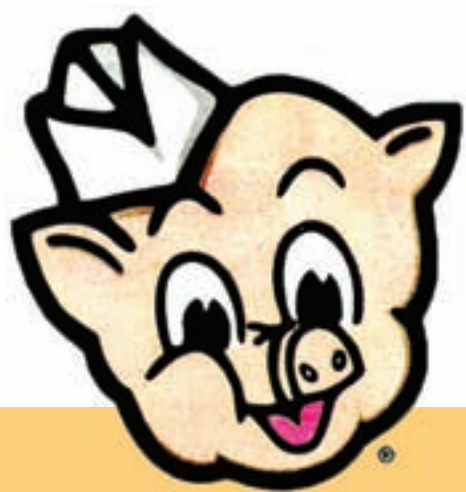


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