



THE MISSISSIPPI LINK

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VOL. 26, No. 37 JULY 2 - 8, 2020 50¢

Mississippi State Flag Comes Down

Lawmakers denied opportunity to witness signing of bill to retire state flag but witnessed the flag removal

By Jackie Hampton Publisher

Tuesday, June 30, 2020, was a historic day in the State of Mississippi. Governor Tate Reeves signed House Bill No. 1796, which retired the last state flag in the United States of America carrying the Confederate battle emblem. The people of the state cried out for change and the Mississippi Legislature responded overwhelmingly. "The signing of the bill was significant and historic because many people worked to make this happen over the years," stated Senator Hollman Frasier, who has represented District 27 since 1993. I along with many of my colleagues wanted to witness the signing of this historic bill because of the sacrifice made by so many over the years.

standing on the outside looking in Frasier added. "Many people lost their lives trying to change this flag." "It was like a slap in the face," said Senator Solie Norwood, when he and other legislators, that had introduced legislation year after year, were told that they could not enter the governor's mansion to witness the signing of the resolution. Norwood, who has represented District 28 since 2013 said "I can't help but think about the song-writer Sam Cooke who must have envisioned this day many years ago when he wrote the song. A Change is Gonna Come." Samuel Cooke, known professionally as Sam Cooke, was an American singer, songwriter, composer, producer, and civil-rights activist. Norwood said the change which Cooke sang about came, decades, before the legislature.

July 2

The MS state flag was the last in the United States to carry the Confederate battle emblem but Tuesday, June 30 lawmakers that worked so hard to make it happen witnessed the flag removal. Senator John Horhn-D stated, "This was a tough bill for the governor to sign. His base certainly opposed it. I think the fact that he held a subdued signing ceremony was a nod to his base and an effort to appease them."

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VOL. 26, No. 38 JULY 9 - 15, 2020 50¢

FDP hosts Black Lives Matter march in Tchula on Independence Day

Jackson mayor puts in new mask ordinance

By Morgan Bridgman Intern

Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba, mayor of Jackson, MS, has recently put into place a new face mask ordinance for Jackson residents. Lumumba announced his new face mask plan at a press conference Tuesday, June 30, 2020. The ordinance went into effect last Thursday, July 2.

Under the ordinance by Lumumba, Jackson residents are required to wear face masks in all public places whether they are indoors or outdoors. Residents who do not adhere to this new requirement could face a fine of up to \$500. Those businesses who do not make it mandatory for customers to wear masks could be shut down.

At the press conference, Lumumba was joined by members of city's Coronavirus Task Force including the city's attorney and health officials. These members took the podium to say that this order is a response to the recent week of new coronavirus cases that continue to spike as well as the different hospitals in the Jackson area.

"In recent days we have seen a sudden surge in the confirmed cases of coronavirus which has led to this executive

Lumumba

face masks to be optional especially when social distancing in the establishment is difficult to do. The punishment for these businesses who do not follow the rules could be a 24-hour shutdown by the city or a harsher punishment if they are repeat offenders.

While some business owners and workers may not agree to this new order, some are glad to see the order finally be put in place.

"I firmly believe that the mayor mandating masks to be worn in businesses is a step forward in trying to control and lower the transmission of COVID-19. Whatever measures, small or extensive, that need to be taken to potentially end this pandemic, should be taken," said JaiQuavius Dodd, a worker at a local drug store in Jackson.

Customers coming into the

July 9

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (FDP) hosted its second Black Lives Matter march July 4, (Independence Day) in Tchula MS. Edelia Dr. Jay Carthan reported that Cardell Wright, president of the Mississippi FDP, had a vision to take the protest to each municipality to bring awareness to the senseless police brutality that is adversely affecting the black community.

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VOL. 26, No. 40 JULY 23 - 29, 2020 50¢

Legendary Civil Rights icon C.T. Vivian dies at 95

The world mourns a true icon and freedom fighter 1940-2020

By Stacy M. Brown NHPA Newsweek Senior Correspondent

Somewhere it's raining. Somewhere the heavens have opened up, reflecting the tears that are falling across the globe as news of the death of civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) spreads.

The legislator, freedom fighter and justice warrior, who was famously beaten, bloodied and arrested in Selma, Alabama—and in other cities across the Jim Crow South—during the struggle for civil rights and racial equality, was 80. His death came just hours after the passing of another civil rights icon, Rev. C.T. Vivian, who was 95.

National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) President and CEO, and comrade in arms with both Rev. Vivian and Lewis, expressed the devastation he and the world feel at the loss of the two revered giants. Chavis, like Vivian and Lewis, worked with, and was a disciple of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He said the world would miss Lewis's "good trouble," quoting

Lewis's famous call to arms. "The Honorable John Lewis was a longtime master freedom fighter who set the eternal example of how and why we all should fight for the freedom and equality of all humanity," Chavis remarked.

"May Lewis now have his rest in peace. As for those of us who worked with him and [those] who marched with him, we must keep fighting for freedom and equality with renewed vigor, courage and energy. Black Lives Matter."

During the NNPA's 2020 Virtual Annual Convention earlier this month, attendees were treated to a fine screening of the documentary, John Lewis: Good Trouble, provided by the Census Bureau. Lewis was also a strong advocate for Census redistricting and the world feel at the loss of the two revered giants.

Chavis, like Vivian and Lewis, worked with and was a disciple of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He said the world would miss Lewis's "good trouble," quoting

July 23

The Honorable John Lewis died just hours after civil rights activist Rev. C.T. Vivian, succumbed. Dr. Ben Chavis, National Newspaper Publishers Association president and CEO and comrade in arms with both Vivian and Lewis, expressed the devastation he and the world feel at the loss of the two revered giants. Chavis, like Vivian and Lewis, worked with, and was a disciple of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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VOL. 26, No. 43 AUGUST 13 - 19, 2020 50¢

Joe Biden nailed his V.P. choice with woman of color

By Jackie Hampton Publisher

People across the nation have been wondering and speculating who President-elect Joe Biden would choose as his running mate and finally Tuesday he has announced that he has chosen Senator Kamala Harris as his vice presidential running mate, putting for the first time, a woman of color on the presidential ticket.

"Joe Biden nailed this decision," stated former President Barack Obama, regarding his choice of Harris as his vice presidential running mate for 2020. As reported on various news stations Tuesday, Obama sent out a statement saying, "By choosing Senator Kamala Harris as America's next vice president, he (Biden) has honored his own judgment and character. And now Joe has an ideal partner to help him tackle the very real challenges America faces right now and in the years ahead."

Harris is the first black woman and the first person of Indian descent to be nominated for national office by a major party.

Sen. from Mississippi is very thrilled that Joe Biden named her as vice president. She is smart, serious, tough, and well respected by the former V.P.'s historic choice.

Senator Harris is graduates of Howard University.

Aug. 13

California Sen. Kamala Harris is Joe Biden's choice for vice president. Following months of speculation and debate over whether Biden should pick a black woman as his running mate, Harris was selected. Harris is the first black woman and the first person of Indian descent to be nominated for national office by a major party. "Joe Biden nailed this decision," said former President Barack Obama.

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VOL. 26, No. 49 SEPTEMBER 24 - 30, 2020 50¢

'Coach Prime' Deion Sanders named new JSU Tiger head coach

Supreme Court Justice RBG honored by Judge Latrice Westbrook

By Jackie Hampton Publisher

On Monday JSU Athletic Director Ashley Robinson named the legendary "Coach Prime" as the new head football coach of Jackson State University in a statement. Robinson said, "We expect to compete for and win championships at Jackson State, and Coach Sanders will help us achieve those goals."

"Prime Time" Deion Sanders, (53), riding in the back seat of a Cadillac made a grand entrance into the JSU Athletic Assembly Center, while the JSU Pep Band & Prancing J-Sets marched in front. The band, while playing at a high pitch was followed by a JPD police led motorcade blasting their sirens as a noisy spectacle.

Westbrooks (right) speaking at press conference.

By Dr. Edelia J. Carthan Contributing Writer

Court of Appeals Judge Latrice Westbrook, who is also a candidate vying for Mississippi Supreme Court, held a press conference to honor Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Monday, at

Ginsburg

brooks said as she addressed the audience. "Few are born into this world who make a sizable impact that transcends race, gender, geography, political ideology and social standing. However, Justice Ginsburg, affectionately known

Sept. 23

The rumors had been flying for days that Deion Sanders had been chosen as the new head football coach for Jackson State University, but it was not until Monday, Sept. 24 at a 9 a.m. press conference that JSU officials confirmed the rumors. Sanders was very emotional when he said, "I have a commitment to excellence in each and everything I do. He said, "God called me to Jackson State."

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VOL. 27, No. 2 NOVEMBER 5 - 11, 2020 50¢

After a tense night, presidential election remains a mystery for media

ELECTION RESULTS 2020 Mississippians voted for a new state flag and legalized medical marijuana

By Edelia "Dr. Jay" Carthan Staff Writer

Millions of Mississippians' voices were heard around the state Tuesday, November 3, election day. Residents of the "Magnolia" state voted in the presidential election, a Senate race, congressional races, Mississippi Supreme Court judges' races, a new state flag and legalized marijuana.

Although the Presidential race is still undecided and is very close, Mississippians were quite clear on several state issues, and other key races. At press time, approximately 70% of the precincts reported are included in this article based off results reported by the Associated Press.

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, a Republican who said she wanted to be front row of a public hanging, won reelection for United States senate by defeating Brian Flowers, Republican.

representatives race, District 1 Republican incumbent Trent Kelly defeated Antonia Elia by winning 70% of the vote, not your personal stake at the house. You still can't fire up in public, and even if you get a card, your job is still the way for failing.

Senator Michael E. Horne, a black

demand that weed is not legal only medical marijuana. "Weed ain't legal. Medicine by winning 70% of the vote, not your personal stake at the house. You still can't fire up in public, and even if you get a card, your job is still the way for failing.

Statewide Measure 3 to approve the redesign of the state flag passed with 72% of the vote.

Mississippians and to prevent them from gaining political power. Mississippi needs an updated inclusive state constitution. It's time for a Constitutional Convention.

Statewide Measure 3 to approve the redesign of the state flag passed with 72% of the vote.

Nov. 5

For weeks' media outlets had warned that Americans would need patience on election night and beyond, and that turned out to be their most accurate prediction. John Berman of CNN told viewers on election night, "We don't know who the next president of the United States will be." Meanwhile, Mississippians voted for the new state flag and the statewide Measure 1a to allow medical marijuana.

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VOL. 27, No. 3 NOVEMBER 12 - 18, 2020 50¢

BUILD BACK BETTER

Jackie Hampton reported that after four days of uncertainty, the outcome of the 2020 presidential race was called by CNN and other television networks November 7, when former V.P. Joe Biden crossed the threshold of 270 Electoral College votes with a win from the state of PA. V.P.-elect Kamala Harris addressed the nation at 8:11 p.m., "While I might be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last."

Nov. 12

Jackie Hampton reported that after four days of uncertainty, the outcome of the 2020 presidential race was called by CNN and other television networks November 7, when former V.P. Joe Biden crossed the threshold of 270 Electoral College votes with a win from the state of PA. V.P.-elect Kamala Harris addressed the nation at 8:11 p.m., "While I might be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last."

THE MISSISSIPPI LINK

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VOL. 27, No. 9 DECEMBER 24 - 30, 2020 50¢

Merry Christmas from The Mississippi Link

Mississippi's 'education governor,' William Winter, dies

During this season of giving two MS HBCUs receive hefty donations from philanthropist

William Winter

Alcorn State University

Tougaloo College

Dec. 24

Former Mississippi Gov. William Winter, who championed education initiatives and racial harmony died Friday, Dec. 18. During his 75 years of public service, Winter linked education with economic development, observing, "The road out of the poor house runs past the school house." On a high note, Tougaloo College received \$6 million and Alcorn State University received \$25 million from philanthropist Mackenzie Scott, former wife of Amazon founder, Jeff Bezos.

Nashville

Continued from page 1

support employees and business owners limp along.

“We’ve always taken such pride to be part of this community and to see those buildings that have survived the Civil War are going to be most likely torn down is really, really sad,” said Carla Rosenthal, the owner of The Melting Pot and Rodizio Grill, both businesses destroyed in the blast that employs roughly 120 staffers combined.

Nearly a quarter of those employees had already applied for unemployment by end of Christmas.

“We’ve always felt like we were part of what has brought Nashville to become the ‘It City’ as it is,” said Rosenthal, who has owned The Melting Pot for more than 25 years and Rodizio Grill for eight. “We helped build this city.”

Tim Walker, the executive director of the Metro Historical Commission, has been anxious to survey the damage. He called the corridor an important symbol of the city’s history and development, a unique facet of Nashville’s resurgent identity.

Walker noted that some of the historic buildings had been transformed into apartments and condominiums, boutique hotels and Airbnbs.

“We’re very concerned about the damage. I know a lot of the public is,” said Walker, adding that he hopes just some of the buildings are not structurally impaired.

When the tornado hit in March, the community came together – like it is again in the aftermath of the explosion, Stephanie Coleman, the chief growth officer for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce said.

Ten years ago, the city suffered a devastating flood, and it’s been on the rebound ever since, Coleman said.

“We were still on that track, you know, starting in the beginning of 2020. Really everything was looking up, looking bright, for Nashville and our future,” she said.

“This is a situation that we know we will get through,” Coleman said. “The fact that we didn’t lose lives, it gives us the hope. ... I think we’re just thankful that it wasn’t a different story.”

Relief

Continued from page 1

George McClendon, a member of the American Mathematical Society.

“The stimulus is politicians destroying the economy with garbage policies while they flout the rules and party then offering to extract nearly 1 trillion dollars from working-class people, give them back \$600 each and give the overwhelming majority to big businesses,” Tim Pool, a filmmaker, musician, and journalist, wrote on Twitter.

Republican and Democratic negotiators reached a new \$900 billion stimulus deal on Sunday, December 20.

The \$900 billion package is far lighter than the more than \$2 trillion CARES Act, which was signed into law earlier this year and provided di-

rect payments of \$1,200 for individuals who made \$75,000 or less and \$2,400 for couples who earned \$150,000 or less.

The CARES Act also provides an additional \$600 per dependent child.


The latest bill contains direct payments of \$600 per adult and \$600 per dependent child. Though lawmakers still have not finalized the language, it’s believed those payments would be based on the same provisions of the CARES Act.

The bill also provides \$300 of weekly enhancement in unemployment benefits – down from \$600 in the CARES Act.


It reopens the small business loan program, provides aid for schools and childcare, extends evic-

Covid


Continued from page 1




Mosley




Addison



Turner



Payton



Hudson

vis Therapeutic Services, LLC injected that the black community is affected more than any populace. He declared that many blacks distrust doctors and other health officials because of past experiences.

The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment, a clinical study of untreated syphilis in the African-American male between 1932 and 1972 by the US Public Health Service, has spawned skepticism.

To quell lurking fears of COVID-19 vaccinations, Turner claimed, “But several have worked diligently to eradicate problems... Efforts are made to cater to concerns of the black populace.”

Turner then expressed to listeners: “Your concerns are our concerns. You all want to hear from trusted sources to be able to know that the information you’re getting, the vaccines that we’re talking about [are] going to be worth taking the risk.”

Dobbs responded: “The risk of the vaccine is minimal and the risk of COVID is substantial. So we need to not only do it for ourselves but do it for our families and our communities.”

The number of COVID-19 illnesses and deaths hinges on Mississippians’ conduct during the Christmas season, particularly since cases have spiked in the state.

Dobbs warned that all Mississippians are responsible for limiting the spread of the disease. They are in the high risk category if they fail to wash their hands, fail to use hand sanitizers, fail to social distance and fail to wear face masks or coverings (especially indoors). He then asserted that people run a risk if they share meals because “the holiday table brings with it a silent super spreader.”

The State Health Officer explained that most people are unaware that they have COVID-19 when they spread it. But the body “teaches itself how to recognize the virus... One person gets it and infects somebody else,” said Dobbs.

Limiting the presence of others is crucial to limiting the spread of COVID-19. Thus, Dobbs suggested that unless for “urgent” or “essential” means, travel (including restaurants, airports, weddings, funerals, sporting events and in-person church services) should be avoided.

Dobbs added that once a person is infected, it takes time to fight off germs.

Healthcare personnel, nursing home workers and occupants, older adults and persons irrespective of age with underlying health conditions are to get vaccinated during the first phase. Essential workers would be next, followed by the remaining populace. In approximately 21 days a second dose is essential.

According to Dobbs, persons with type 1 and type 2 diabetes and asthma should be vaccinated. Expectant mothers and other persons with health concerns should seek guidance from their physicians.

JSU President Thomas Hudson encouraged everyone to get vaccinated and said he planned to get vaccinated publicly.

“Thanks Dr. Dobbs. We are in the forefront of this conversation. Don’t count us out,” said Alisa Mosley, interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.

Mosley spoke favorably of Dr. Dobbs’ work, proclaimed that JSU was “a partner in the fight against the coronavirus” and appealed to the participants to “listen to the science.”

JSU anticipates conducting a second session of COVID-19 in January 2021.

Presiding officer for the event was Marinelle Payton, MD & PhD, founding chair of Public Health at JSU.

For further insight into COVID-19, visit <https://www.fda.gov>; Mississippi Coronavirus Hotline – 877-978-6453.



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Vicksburg casinos affected by COVID-19 Pandemic

By Aaron Terrett
Student Intern

On March 16, the Mississippi Gaming Commission ordered all casinos in Mississippi to close as the COVID-19 virus was steadily and rapidly spreading. This led to a halt in business affairs for every week that the casinos remained closed. Two months later, on May 21, the casinos were allowed to reopen under strict, and enforced social distancing guidelines. Some casinos found it harder to get back into the groove and experienced difficulties getting things back on track.

Upon reopening, Ameristar Casino in Vicksburg introduced their social distancing guidelines which included: limiting capacity on the gaming floor to no more than 50% capacity, live entertainment being suspended, the valet being closed, and masks being required. According to gamers who frequent Ameristar, they believe that Ameristar took the necessary steps to keep their gamers and their employees safe.



Ameristar Casino – Vicksburg, MS

However, with the new restrictions slowing business at the casino, Ameristar was forced to lay some employees off in order to stay within the guidelines.

In August, Ameristar laid off 150 employees as a result of circumstances created by COVID-19. The layoffs came months after business halted, then resumed at a much slower pace than before. According to a letter penned by Ameristar General Manager, Gerad Hardy, “The impact on our business

was not reasonably foreseeable until now. We simply could not foresee that the initial closures of our properties that were issued by one or two states for a limited period of time ultimately spread throughout all the states in which we operate and eventually be extended, interrupting almost all business and travel temporarily. These significant drags on our business will likely continue for the foreseeable future.”

The Waterview Casino is another in Vicksburg that was



Waterview Casino – Vicksburg, MS

forced to close its doors in March. After reopening, Waterview began screening for COVID-19 symptoms at the door and requiring masks. Along with these precautions, they closed every other gaming machine to ensure that they adhere to the social distancing guidelines. The additional measures may seem commonplace in today's world, but these measures ensure that another closure is far from imminent.

With the recent news of a vaccine making its way around

the country, restrictions in the Casino business may soon be a thing of the past. However, some in the industry seem to believe that the changes brought upon gambling by the COVID-19 restrictions are here to stay.

Derek Sola, casino designer, has suggested that future casino designs will likely include a way to merge physical gaming with mobile gaming by introducing ‘gaming lounges.’ Ideas like these were whispers before the pandemic, but with the ef-

fects of the pandemic spreading the ideas are quickly becoming a strong possibility.

As of now, the lasting effects of COVID-19 on casinos is unknown. It remains a mystery whether or not casinos will adapt the social distancing guidelines long-term. In the meantime, the effects of the virus are still being felt across the state. Some casinos were fortunate enough to get away unscathed; for others, the pieces are still being put back together.

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State auditor reveals misappropriation of public funds in Holmes County School District

By Edelia Dr. Jay Carthan
Contributing Writer

State Auditor Shad White says students and taxpayers footed the bill for a \$4,200 BYOB party, overpaid the superintendent by \$20,000, and found 22 unapproved credit card purchases totaling \$12,338 according to a recent report.

According to a report released this month by the Mississippi Office of the State Auditor, White revealed that Holmes County Consolidated School District paid Dr. James L. Henderson, who is no longer with the district, \$170,000 salary in fiscal years 2019 and 2020 although the school board voted to pay him \$160,000 salary. In addition, the district paid the former superintendent \$9,000 for relocation expenses in excess of the amount allowed by state law. Henderson resigned to take another job in Illinois in July.

The district wrote in their response that the superintendent's contract provided for a salary of \$170,000, and that "an agency may pay moving expenses as long as the original contract of employment included those expenses as part of the compensation package." White is recommending Henderson repay the district \$20,000 within thirty days.

"This audit reveals widespread problems. The public school students of Holmes County and the taxpayers are the victims here. As a product of public schools myself, my office remains committed to uncovering and stopping this sort of misspending," White wrote in a press release from the state auditor's office.

White said the district hosted an event unrelated to academic purposes. The district paid over \$4,200 for an "adults only" BYOB party to celebrate the passage of a bond issue. The \$18.4 million bond issue was to rebuild three schools and implement necessary infrastructure repairs. The referendum was ultimately rejected by voters during the election November 5, 2019.

The party was held November 2 before the election. Henderson said it was a get-out-the-vote celebration, and a community engagement movie night for students and parents. This expenditure was listed on the claims docket as a "parent celebration." Upon further review, it was uncovered the event was coordinated to celebrate the passing of a school bond. According to the event flyer, it was for, "Celebrating Passage of the 2019 School Bond Referendum.

Cardell Wright, president of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, Holmes



Henderson

County Chapter said, "Issues within the Holmes County School District have been ongoing for years and so often those issues have been overlooked and swept away. Seeing the released audit report was not a surprise because it seems as if the citizens are used to this kind of corruption. No one is without blame. From the school board to the former superintendent, all of them are complicit in this appalling act of misconduct and misappropriation of funds. Something must be done."

Auditors also identified payments made to companies owned by Henderson's relatives for \$14,000 which is being forwarded to the Mississippi Ethics Commission. Auditors discovered there were purchases made to his sister's catering business totaling \$8,000, and \$6,000 to his brother-in-law's charter bus services.

The audit revealed that a credit card was used without school board authorization for 22 purchases worth over \$12,000 which is being forwarded to the Auditor's Investigations Division.

Citizens reacted to the report on Facebook. Some of the comments said the board needs to be held accountable while others said the board need to be replaced altogether.

Former Tchula city alderman and community advocate, Sheila Head, wrote, "Some people are so focused on thinking that I am making the district look bad that they have completely overlooked the fact that our school has been labeled with a F rating for the past few years. This is a reflection of the lack of leadership at the top, not the teachers and staff."

Some of the other findings in the 24 page report were: four different bank accounts were not properly showing a difference of \$8,251,011; 30 travel reimbursements lacked proper documentation, approval or signatures; failed to submit monthly financial reports in a timely manner; and many more misappropriation of public school funds.

NFL honors Mississippi man freed after 22 years in prison

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

The NFL says it is honoring Curtis Flowers, a black man from Mississippi who was imprisoned more than 22 years and was freed in late 2019, months after the U.S. Supreme Court threw out the last of his several convictions in a quadruple murder case.

The NFL says players are wearing helmet decals this season "to honor victims of systemic racism, victims of police misconduct and social justice heroes."

The league said Wednesday on Twitter that Flowers is among those being recognized.

"I am so blessed, humbled, and thankful that the NFL and Roc Nation chose to include me to be honored in today's movement for social change and justice," Flowers, who has maintained that he was wrongly convicted, said in a statement in the NFL tweet.

Roc Nation is an entertainment company founded by Jay-Z. Its philanthropic arm, Team Roc, has been working on social justice issues, including pushing for better living conditions for inmates in Mississippi prisons.

"I am a life-long lover of the NFL and the work this organization does in our society," Flowers said. "Thanks to my Lord, Jesus Christ, my family, friends, supporters, my dream



Flowers AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS, FILE

legal team for this opportunity. I continually think about all of the men and women who are still unjustly incarcerated."

Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch said in September that she would not try Flowers a seventh time in the 1996 slayings and a robbery that took place at a furniture store in Winaona, Mississippi. He had been in custody since 1997.

Flowers was convicted four times: twice for individual slayings and twice for all four killings. Two other trials involving all four deaths ended in mistrials. Each of Flowers' convictions was overturned.

In June 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court tossed out the conviction and death sentence from Flowers' sixth trial, which took place in 2010. Justices said prosecutors showed an unconstitutional pattern of excluding black jurors from Flowers' trials.

The Supreme Court ruling came after American Public Media's "In the Dark" investigated the case. The podcast recorded jailhouse informant Odell Hallmon in 2017 and 2018 recanting his testimony that Flowers had confessed to him.

The first six trials were prosecuted by the local district attorney. Flowers was still facing the 1997 indictments in December 2019 when a judge agreed to release him on bond. The district attorney handed the case to the attorney general, and her staff spent months reviewing it before deciding not to go forward because of a lack of credible witnesses.

The four people shot to death on July 16, 1996, in Tardy Furniture were store owner Bertha Tardy, 59, and three employees: 45-year-old Carmen Rigby, 42-year-old Robert Golden and 16-year-old Derrick "Bobo" Stewart.

Analysis: Mississippi early voting needs veto-proof support

By Emily Wagster Pettus
Associated Press

Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves is making clear, even before the start of the 2021 legislative session, that he opposes any big changes in the way the state conducts elections.

About 1.3 million Mississippi residents voted in the 2020 presidential race, and the vast majority cast their ballots on Election Day.

Republican Secretary of State Michael Watson said the state issued about 248,000 absentee ballots. Some people voted absentee by mail, and some cast absentee ballots in-person at circuit clerk's offices. Watson said absentee voting in 2020 was roughly double what it was during the 2016 presidential election.

In many places around Mississippi, people stood in long lines outside and inside precincts. The Republican governor said that he and his wife, Elee, stood in line more than an hour at a precinct near the Governor's Mansion in downtown Jackson – and he said he

was OK with that.

"I believe in the institution of Election Day, and I have said that from the beginning," Reeves told reporters Dec. 14 at the Capitol, adding that he opposes expansion of mail-in voting.

Many states allow people to cast a ballot days or weeks in advance, at their convenience. That list includes Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee and Georgia. Efforts to enact early voting in Mississippi have hit a wall, so far.

With Reeves staking out his preference for the tradition of Election Day, singular, rather than Election Days, plural, any change would have to be made by a veto-proof margin with more than two-thirds support in the state House and Senate. Republicans control both chambers. For enough of them to go against the governor's wishes, they would need strong support from people back home. Republican lawmakers also would have to be convinced that early voting would help Republicans at least as much, if not more,

than it would help Democrats.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Mississippi is one of the 16 states that require people to have an excuse to cast an absentee ballot. In Mississippi, being out of town on Election Day because of work or school is an acceptable excuse. Wanting to avoid standing in line near other people during a pandemic is not.

Mississippi also allows absentee voting by anyone 65 or older or by anyone who has a permanent or temporary physical disability. Legislators made a temporary revision that expires at the end of 2020, allowing absentee voting by any person under a physician-imposed quarantine because of COVID-19 or by any person caring for a dependent who was under such a quarantine.

Mississippi cities have elections for mayor and other officials in 2021, with party primaries in April and the general election in June. As the pandemic continues, it's unclear whether legislators will consider extending the absentee voting provisions tied to COVID-19 quarantine.

Democratic state Sen. David Blount of Jackson has filed bills for a number of years to create no-excuse early voting in Mississippi. He said he will do so again in 2021 because he believes legislators should do all they can to make it easier for people to vote in a secure manner.

"Most states already have it, most people want it and it's completely secure," Blount told The Associated Press last week. "You have to walk in the courthouse past the sheriff's deputy, you work with a trained circuit clerk's staff person and you show your ID."

Blount said such a system would have "zero potential for fraud." As for needing a veto-proof margin, Blount said he hopes most legislators would see early voting is what their constituents want.

"Do we want more people to vote, or not? Do we want shorter lines on Election Day, or not?" Blount said. "Early voting helps with both of those questions."

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Smoking and drinking and COVID-19

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Having a glass of wine or a cigar might seem like a good way to cope with the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic. But for some people, too much alcohol or use of tobacco products is making the ongoing health crisis worse. Alcohol and smoking use has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic according to a study published in JAMA. Smoking and drinking is a way for some people to cope with stress. This pandemic has been very stressful. With round the clock coverage online, TV, radio and conversation there is no relief from the exposure to COVID-19 stressful information.

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism cuts across gender, race and nationality. 14 million people in the United States or 1 in every 13 adults abuse alcohol or are alcoholic. More men than women are alcohol dependent or have alcohol problems. Alcohol problems are highest among young adults ages 18-29 and lowest among adults ages 65 and older.

In the United States 1 in 4 people smoke. According to the Surgeon General's Report "Nearly 40 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native adults smoke cigarettes, compared with 25 percent of adults in the overall U.S. population. They are more likely than any other racial/ethnic minority group to smoke tobacco or use smokeless tobacco." The Surgeon General's Report also stated, "Smoking is associated with depression, psychological stress and environmental factors such as peers who smoke and tobacco marketing practices."

Early April, 16% of all adults said they were drinking more during the pandemic, with higher rates among younger adults. One in 4 Millennials and nearly 1 in 5 Gen Xers said they had upped their alcohol intake.

We know that COVID-19 has increased depression, anxiety, loneliness and physical isolation. All of these issues will help increase both smoking and drinking.

The following steps may be helpful in getting a handle on an increased drinking and smoking:

Get professional help. You can do it yourself but 90% of the people that try don't succeed. There are a lot of groups that can help. According to the American Cancer Society each year millions of Americans attempt to stop smoking and need advice and counseling that may improve their likelihood of success. Get information in advance about treatment options in your community. With the help of a health care professional, some families join with other relatives and friends to confront an alcoholic as a group. This approach



should only be tried under the guidance of a health care professional that is experienced in this kind of group intervention. If the person is willing to get help, call immediately for an appointment with a treatment counselor.

Practice relaxation techniques. Coping with a craving to smoke or use tobacco can be very stressful. In the past, smoking may have been your way to deal with stress. Take the edge off your stress by practicing relaxation techniques. These include deep-breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, yoga, visualization, hypnosis and massage.

Stop all "cover ups." Family members often make excuses to others or try to protect the alcoholic from the results of his or her drinking. It is important to stop covering for the alcoholic so that he or she experiences the full consequences of drinking.

Time your intervention. The best time to talk to the drinker is shortly after an alcohol-related problem has occurred – like a serious family argument or an accident. Choose a time when he or she is sober, both of you are fairly calm, and you have a chance to talk in private.

Be specific. Tell the family member that you are worried about his or her drinking. Use examples of the ways in which the drinking has caused problems, including the most recent incident.

State the results. Explain to the drinker what you will do if he or she doesn't go for help – not to punish the drinker, but to protect yourself from his or her problems. What you say may range from refusing to go with the person to any social activity where alcohol will be served, to moving out of the house. Do not make any threats you are not prepared to carry out.

Call on a friend. If the family member still refuses to get help, ask a friend to talk with him or her using the steps just described. A friend who is a recovering alcoholic may be particularly persuasive, but any person who is caring and nonjudgmental may help. The intervention of more than one per-

son, more than one time, is often necessary to coax an alcoholic to seek help.

Chew on it. Give your mouth something to do other than smoking. Chew on sugarless gum or hard candy. Munch on something crunchy and satisfying like raw carrots, celery nuts or sunflower seeds.

Get support. It is important to remember that you are not alone. Support groups offered in most communities include Al-Anon, which holds regular meetings for spouses and other significant adults in an alcoholic's life, and Alateen, which is geared to children of alcoholics. These groups help family members understand that they are not responsible for an alcoholic's drinking and that they need to take steps to take care of themselves, regardless of whether the alcoholic family member chooses to get help.

Go online. Join an online stop-smoking program. Or read a quitter's blog and post encouraging thoughts for someone else who might be struggling with cravings. Learn from how others have handled their tobacco cravings.

Get physical. Physical activity can help distract you from tobacco cravings and reduce the intensity of cravings. Just 30 minutes of moderate physical activity can make a craving go away. Get out for a walk or jog. If you're stuck at home or the office, try squats, deep knee bends, push-ups, running in place, or walking up and down a set of stairs a few times. If physical activity doesn't interest you, try prayer, needlework, woodwork or journaling. Or do chores for distraction, such as vacuuming or filing paperwork.

Remember the benefits of quitting. Write down or say out loud the reasons you want to stop smoking and resist cravings. These might include feeling better, getting healthier, sparing your loved ones from secondhand smoke or saving money. And if you're a closet smoker, you may save hours of time since you no longer have to spend time trying to creatively conceal your habit.

The A, B and C's of hepatitis

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

One in every 30 baby boomers has been infected with a hepatitis virus, which puts them at a higher risk for liver cancer, liver cirrhosis and liver transplants. Hepatitis is an inflammatory condition of the liver. It's commonly caused by a viral infection. There are other possible causes of hepatitis, which include autoimmune hepatitis, hepatitis that occurs as a secondary result of medications, drugs, toxins and alcohol. Viral hepatitis, including hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C, affect your liver. Each of these viruses has different hepatitis symptoms and treatments.

Hepatitis A (HAV) is a virus that causes an acute inflammation of the liver (hepatitis) in most cases gets better on its own. HAV can be more serious for older people. HAV is transmitted through close person-to-person contact with an infected person, sexual contact with an infected person and the ingestion of contaminated food or water. It can infect many people at once. An infected food handler at a restaurant can infect everyone who ate at the restaurant. The CDC estimated there will be over 25,000 new HAV infections in 2020. There is a vaccine for HAV but no medication available at this time for treatment. HAV is best addressed through supportive treatment. HAV vaccine is usually given in 2 doses given 6-18 months apart depending on manufacturer. Combination HAC-HBC vaccine is given typically in 3 doses over a 6-month period.

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) can be both acute (short-term illness) and a chronic (ongoing illness). HBV is transmitted primarily through birth by an infected mother, sexual contact with an infected person, sharing contaminated needles, syringes, or other injection-drug equipment. HBV is less commonly through needle-sticks or other sharp instrument injuries, organ transplantation and dialysis and interpersonal contact through sharing items such as razors or toothbrushes or contact with open sores of an infected person.

Chronic infection develops in 90% of infants after acute infection at birth, 25%-50% of children newly infected at ages 1-5 years and 5% of people newly infected as adults.

HBV is very common in Asia and Africa. The CDC estimated there will be over 22,000 new HBV infections in 2020. It's also estimated there are over 800,000 people living with chronic HBV infection. All pregnant women should be tested for HBV during an early prenatal visit. People born or have parents born in regions with intermediate and high HBV rates should be tested. There is a vaccine for HBV but no medication available at this time for treatment. HBV is best addressed through supportive treatment. A person with HBV should be monitored regularly for signs of liver disease progression. HBV vaccine for infants and children is usually 3-4 doses given over a 6 to 18-month period depending on vaccine type and schedule. For adults the HBV vaccine is 2 doses, 1 month apart or 3 doses over a 6-month period (depending on manufacturer).

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is almost always chronic and spreads only by blood. Hepatitis HAV and HBV can be prevented by vaccine. There is no vaccine for HCV. HCV is transmitted primarily through sharing contaminated needles, syringes, or other equip-

ment to inject drugs. HCV is less commonly transmitted through birth by an infected mother, sexual contact with an infected person, unregulated tattooing and needle-sticks or other sharp instrument injuries. Chronic infection develops in over 50% of newly infected people. The CDC estimated there will be over 50,000 new HCV infections in 2020. It's also estimated there are over 2.4 million people living with HCV. All adults age 18 and older should get tested for HCV at least once. All pregnant women should get tested during each pregnancy. People who currently inject drugs and share needles, syringes or other drug preparation equipment should get tested periodically. 90% of people with hepatitis C can be cured regardless of HCV genotype within 8-12 weeks of oral therapy.

The symptoms for all hepatitis infections can include yellowing of the skin, yellowing of your eyes, nausea, fever, loss of appetite, joint pain, clay colored stool, vomiting, dark urine and fatigue. Chronic hepatitis may have no symptoms and may last for many years. This can lead to cirrhosis of the liver. This can cause your liver to become heavily scarred and less functional.

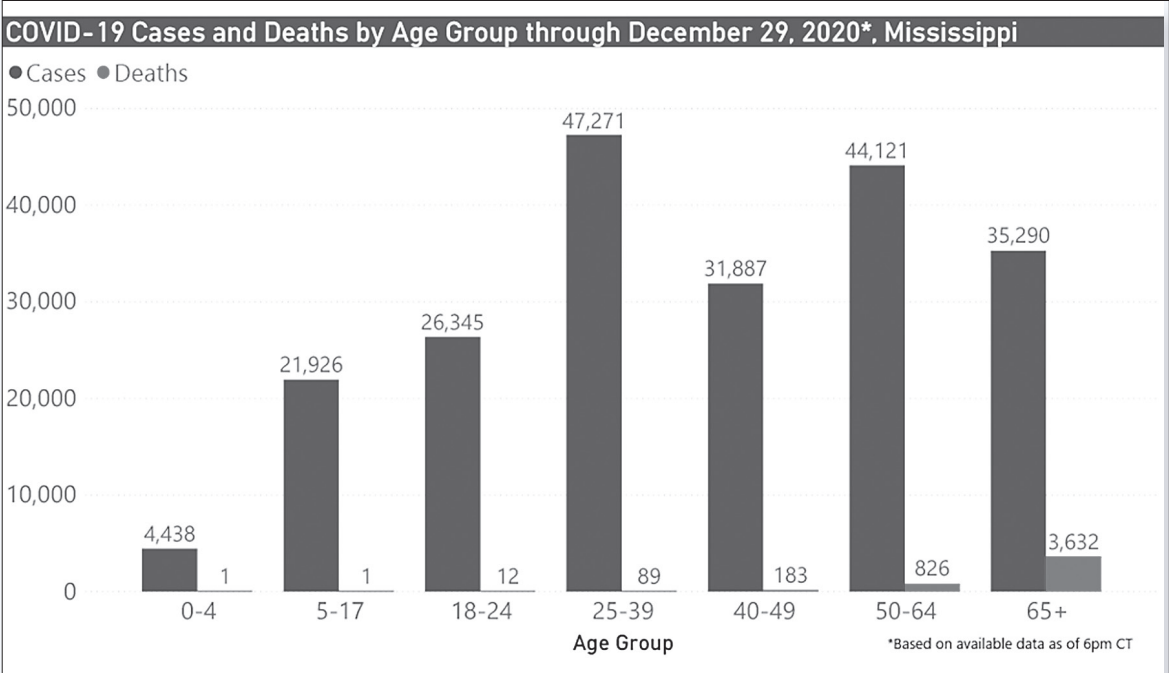
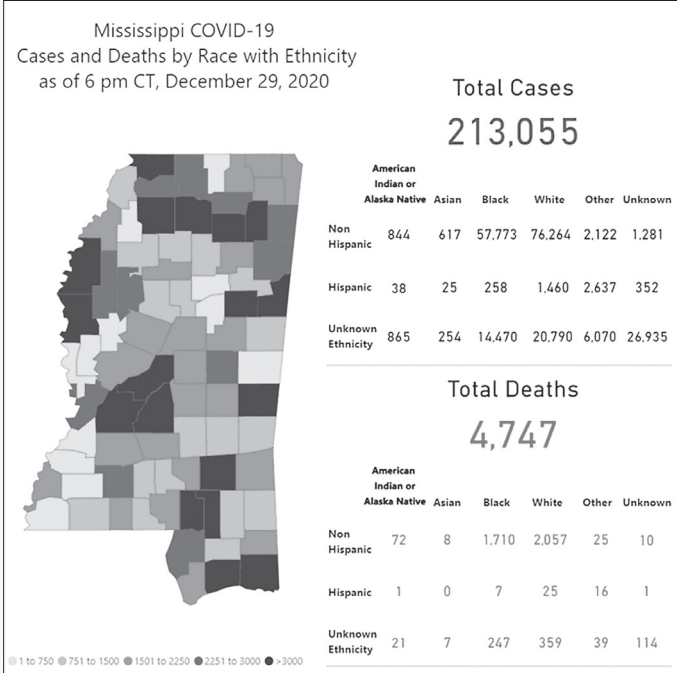
The liver is the largest internal organ of the body and is located on the right side of the abdomen, beneath your diaphragm and is protected by the lower right ribs. It is about the size of a football. The liver is divided into two sections and needs a good blood supply. This blood comes from two sources, the portal vein which delivers blood from the gastrointestinal tract (stomach, intestine, colon) and spleen, and the hepatic artery supplies blood from the heart.

The liver has over 500 functions. It makes many of the chemicals required by the body to function normally, it breaks down and detoxifies substances in the body, and it also acts as a storage unit. Hepatocytes found in the liver are responsible for making many of the proteins in the body that are required for many functions, including blood clotting factors, and albumin, required to maintain fluid within the circulation system. The liver is also responsible for manufacturing cholesterol and triglycerides. The liver is responsible for turning glucose into glycogen that can be stored both in the liver and in the muscle cells for energy. The liver also makes bile that helps with food digestion. The liver plays an important role in detoxifying the body. It converts ammonia, a by-product of metabolism in the body, into urea that is excreted in the urine by the kidneys. The liver also breaks down medications and drugs, including alcohol, and is responsible for breaking down insulin and other hormones in the body. The liver also stores vitamins and chemicals that the body requires as building blocks.

To prevent getting infected with a viral hepatitis:

- Get vaccinated.
- Avoid interpersonal contact with someone with viral hepatitis.
- Wash hands after going to the toilet and before eating.
- Practice safer sex.
- Don't share fits or other equipment when injecting drugs.
- Avoid blood-to-blood contact.
- Avoid backyard tattooists and piercers.
- Only use shops that follow proper sterile procedures.
- Avoid needle stick injuries.

MISSISSIPPI COVID-19 UPDATE



Happy New Year: The Word of God Top Priority!

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



Psalm 119 shows us that the Word of God should have top priority in our lives. Since the Book of Psalms is the longest book in the Bible, it shows us the priority of praise and worship to God. Because the Bible is God's authoritative, reliable and powerful Word, we should make it top priority in our lives. When God speaks, He does not mumble. The Bible is God's reliable Word. You can trust God's Word. It doesn't change with the times. One of the amazing things about the Bible is that it speaks with practical relevance to every culture in every period of History.

Satan is always trying to undermine the credibility of God's Word. If he cannot do it by attacking the inerrancy of Scripture, he does it by subtly eroding belief in the sufficiency of Scripture. The Bible is God's powerful Word. Down through the centuries, the Bible has had life-transforming effects in the lives of countless people from every conceivable walk of life. The Word brings us into a living relationship with the Living God. We do not study the Bible to become scholars. Nor do we study it simply to learn and follow its moral precepts, although we should do it. We study the Bible to seek God, Himself. The Word of God brings us into spiritual life and sustains us in that life when our hearts grow cold. Since God is the

Author of Life itself, His Word has life-giving power, both to bring the spiritually dead person to life and to renew the believer. If you know Christ as your Savior, but are going through a difficult or dry time, seek God through His Word. God will use it to revive you. If you do not yet know Christ, read the Word and ask God to reveal Himself to you. He will and you will be born again to a living hope. There is life-giving power in the Word because it brings a person into a living relationship with the Living God. The Word gives us stability in trials, and the Word give us direction in life. We all make hundreds of decisions that determine the outcome of our lives. Some are minor, some are major; but they all are

clump together to shape our lives. In the complex world in which we live, we desperately need God's wisdom for making sound decisions. The Word gives us joy and delight. Wherever the Word of God has gone, no matter how pagan the culture, it has transformed lives. The Word of God is authoritative; it is reliable, and it is powerful to change the hearts of sinners into saints. The Bible deserves top priority in our live. We must learn God's Word, we must obey God's Word, and we must love God's Word. Happy New Year! 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 Perfectly Yielded in 2021

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



I'll exercise (more). I'll stop doing _____. I'll get (more) organized. Sound familiar? At least for me, these are all the usual New Year's resolutions that I've made in the past. However, a few years ago, I decided that even after getting plenty of practical and impractical tips, it was hard to maintain some of those changes for more than a few months. And considering all of the chaos of 2020, it seems like the tradition of making New Year's resolutions for 2021 might not be enough to change things for the better. New Year's resolutions are connected to the ancient tradition of year ending bonfires meant to chase away the demons of the past. Part of the reason why the rituals were so elaborate is that the unstated assumption was that you would need to perform the same ones next year because those old habits would have returned. Making the same New Year's Resolutions every year is the modern-day equivalent of those yearly bonfires. Making a resolution won't change your behavior. However, making better choices is one way that will change your behavior. And, as we have seen this past year with the Covid-19 pandemic, we may make progress in one area of our lives but lose ground in another. How do you maintain or regain what seems to be lost ground? For starters, stay focused on the right thing. All too often when we decide to completely change our lives, it's because of what someone said that may have wounded us. We then get frustrated when

we don't see the changes fast enough to get the attention of those same people (whose opinions really shouldn't have that much control over our lives). Maybe it's a weakness in human nature, but we become in some cases obsessed with what and who others say we are or are not. Or even worse, we speak equally destructive words to ourselves. Instead of repeating what others say we are or are not, we should spend more time saying yes to God and who he says we are. But so many of us can't hear who God says we are because we are too busy telling him who we aren't and what we can't do. One interesting definition for the word resolution is answer. The question is who or what are you answering in 2021 with your New Year's resolutions? There should be only one answer to God as you begin every new year: Yes. "Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you," comes from Job 22:21. YES means that we agree with who God says we are. But it also means that we are yielded, expectant and submitted. Yielded to his direction, Expecting his presence and Submitted to his purpose. It's not about being perfect; it's about being yielded. Don't make changes to be perfect. Make changes so that you can be perfectly yielded. God's Blessings, Peace and Success to you in 2021! Shewanda Riley is a Fort Worth, Texas based author of "Love Hangover: Moving from Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends" and "Writing to the Beat of God's Heart: A Book of Prayers for Writers." Email preservedbypurpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.



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Americans need the stimulus package, and it is not here yet

By James B. Ewers Jr.
President Emeritus
Teen Mentoring Committee of Ohio



The American people have been in an economic slump for several months. Stores have lost revenue and workers have been displaced or had to accept reduced hours. Clearly, COVID-19 has caused immeasurable harm to our way of living. Basic necessities like food, clothing and shelter are in short supply. Communities are in crisis because we cannot get what we so desperately need. Terms like food insecurity have become a part of our lexicons. We are down and need a hand to help us. That hand is the federal government. Some months ago we, the people, received stimulus checks of \$1200 and unemployment benefits. Businesses were able to hang on and pay their employees. Now those funds have run out. They are gone.

During the recent weeks, Congress has been feuding over another stimulus package. These talks have been spirited and full of vitriol. They have essentially gone nowhere. A lot of talk but no real action. Just days ago, however, they did agree on a \$900 billion stimulus package. Included in this package would be a \$600 check for each American who earned up to \$75,000 in 2019 or \$1200 for couples filing jointly who made up to \$150,000. The president was expected to sign this bill into law. It would have provided some welcomed relief from this economic pothole America finds itself. Instead, as is the custom and practice of Mr. T, he is holding the United States of America hostage. Reports are that the bill was flown down to the “Southern White House,” Mar-A-Lago, Florida. While Americans are teetering on collapse, he is playing golf. This is despicable and repulsive. He is in the lap of luxury

while we languish in near economic poverty. Now, if you voted for Trump four years ago or four weeks ago, is he still your hero? Do you still want to crown him the king? Nancy Pelosi said, “On Monday, I will bring the House back to session where we will hold a recorded vote on a stand-alone bill to increase economic impact payments to \$2000. To vote against this bill is to deny the financial hardship that families face and to deny them the relief they need.” Well, the House of Representatives will pass it and the Senate will reject it. Unfortunately, that refrain has been the case for many years now. As a result, we are at a standstill. Common ground has been hard to reach. This crossroads of indifference has stifled us and made us stumble along with no direction. We are ships passing in the night with no port of call. So here we are with a president whose meanness knows no limits. In my opinion, there are three

scenarios that are on the table. First, he will sign it in the next few days. This will be the best of what could happen. Second, there will be some package that will be agreed upon by the House and Senate. Third, he will not sign it and America will be in a free fall. While dangerous, I would not put it past him because he believes in mass misery. Bring on Biden and Harris. The optics for hope are much better with them. We will have a chance with them. We had no chance with him. Looking forward, the vaccine will keep us healthy and well. Our families will be re-united. Bless our brothers and sisters who passed away in 2020. The economy will rebound, and our citizens will return to work. An American shoutout to our first responders and to our military. It is with hope and optimism that I look forward to 2021. **Breaking News.** The president signed the stimulus package Sunday evening, December 27, 2020.

Pandemic relief and the Georgia elections

By Ben Jealous
People For the American Way



Fair warning: this isn’t a traditional Christmas-week column. If we think of clarity as a kind of gift, though, we can be grateful that the effort to pass a much-needed COVID-19 relief bill in the waning days of this Congress makes one thing crystal clear: hurting families and small businesses will be abandoned if Republicans keep control of the U.S. Senate by winning Georgia’s January 5 runoff elections. There is some good news. The \$900 billion package includes emergency relief for renters, families, small businesses, and more. That relief, that, includes direct help to individuals, is urgently needed. It will extend some protections against evictions for another month. It will give small business owners a little more breathing space to try to survive the pandemic. About 12 million unemployed people who were going to be cut off at the end of the year will receive \$300 weekly in federal support and an extension of the unemployment assistance program until mid-March. All this is necessary. But it is a temporary fix that falls far short of addressing the pain people are experiencing and

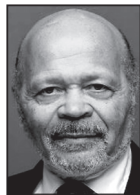
truly setting us on the road to recovery. Almost 12 million renters will be behind on their rent by an average of almost \$6,000 at the end of this month, according to one study. The Census Bureau says that about 29 percent of black families are behind on rent. Much of the back rent has piled up since unemployment benefits under the CARES Act – the first relief bill – expired during the summer. According to some estimates, as many as 20 million tenants – about the population of Florida – are at risk of eviction. With a problem that huge, David Dworkin, CEO of the National Housing Conference, told MarketWatch that the bill’s \$25 billion in rental assistance is just a band-aid, “a practical start for staving off the immediate threat of mass evictions across the country.” Because the bill falls short of what is needed, some people are blaming “Congress” generally. Let’s get real. If congressional Republicans had their way, there would have been no bill – or a far worse one. Republicans have been resisting a meaningful relief bill for months. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told President Trump not to make a deal with Democratic lawmakers before the election. He tried to hold the current bill hostage to a provision that would make it harder

to hold big companies accountable for providing unsafe workplaces. Another Republican senator held up the bill to try to impose restrictions on the Biden administration’s options for encouraging economic recovery. Look at what the Senate Republicans proposed at the beginning of December. Their plan had no new money for federal employment and a January 31 cutoff for extensions in unemployment insurance. The Republican plan had zero dollars – zero –for rental assistance. The Republican plan had zero dollars – zero – for direct relief to individuals and families. The Republican plan had zero dollars – zero – for the SNAP nutritional assistance program often known as food stamps. Millions of people will get emergency help because Democratic congressional leaders refused to accept Republicans’ demands. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is famous for using and abusing his power to stop legislation dead in its tracks. I believe there is only one reason he agreed to the compromise: he knew that throwing millions of Americans off unemployment and out of their homes just before Christmas would have encouraged Georgia voters to make sure that Republicans and McConnell don’t hang onto power in the next Senate. But

Georgia voters are smarter than that and will see through McConnell’s schemes. President-elect Joe Biden, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, and Democratic congressional leaders, know that much more is needed to help Americans get through the current economic crisis. They’ll only be able to give Americans what we need if we give them what they need – victory in the Georgia Senate races and a Democratically-controlled Senate. So, try to find some time this holiday season to join one of the many efforts that are encouraging black voters in Georgia to show up for the Senate runoff elections the way they did in November. It’s not very often that voters have a chance to shift the direction of the country twice in just two months. Let’s make it happen. Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way and People For the American Way Foundation. Jealous has decades of experience as a leader, coalition builder, campaigner for social justice and seasoned nonprofit executive. In 2008, he was chosen as the youngest-ever president and CEO of the NAACP. He is a graduate of Columbia University and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and he has taught at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania.

We will sit at the children’s table

By Oscar H. Blayton
Pres. Black Chamber of Commerce



Joe Biden continues to assure the world that America is ready to take its place at the head of the table and lead the nations of the world. But this hubristic assertion makes one wonder if the soon to be 46th president of the United States has been dozing for the past 47 months. The people who voted Donald Trump into office in 2016 and tried to give him a second term in 2020 are still running amuck in the “U.S. of A.” and they are getting more unruly by the hour. It does not take a great deal of scholarly research to realize that very few nations would be willing to follow the lead of the United States going forward.

It is too easy and too simplistic to blame Donald Trump for all the ill that befell the global community during America’s delinquency during the past four years. And no one, other than the smug self-satisfied proponents of the myth of American exceptionalism, is buying the argument that “this is not who we are.” For four years, we have made it very clear that this is exactly who we are as a country – “greedy,” “ruthless,” “unempathetic,” “uncharitable,” “hateful” and “narcistic.” These are just a few words that come to mind when describing the American character that has been laid bare by Trumpism. Not only is America not deserving of sitting at the head of the world table, it will have to sit at the children’s table along with the other anti-democratic republics led by autocrats. And if this country tries to use bullying tactics to bend other nations to its will, it will suffer the same humiliation that met the French government when it assumed it could return to Vietnam in 1945 and resume colonial control after abandoning the Vietnamese to the cruelties of the invading Japanese in the early days of World War II. Under Trump, America abandoned the rest of the world when it came to working to solve global warming, poverty, human rights, the worldwide refugee crisis and many more problems facing humanity. No one will

willingly follow a fraud and a hypocrite. And every disgusting characteristic Donald Trump exhibited during his term in office reflects those of a large swarth of the American public that supported him with their votes. Even now, freedom-loving Americans hold their collective breath while Republicans try to lock in their hateful agenda by maintaining control of the U.S. Senate. Those Republicans slavishly following Trump have made it clear that they do not care about American values to which we claim to aspire. Nor do they care about the U.S. Constitution or the American people it was designed to protect. The nations watching us from the far shores of the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans and our neighbors to the north and south are keenly aware of the weakness of our character and our moral bankruptcy. We have squandered our good name on a cruel buffoon intent on bullying his way across the world stage with a huge economy and the largest military on earth to back him up. We did not denounce him soon enough when he was clearly in the wrong. We overlooked his lies and his evil ways for months on end while they were in plain view. It is often said that you show people who you are by what you do, not by what you say. No matter what Joe Biden says, the world has had ample opportunity to witness the harm America is capable of inflicting on our fellow man. We can strut and preen in a self-congratulatory promenade celebrating the ousting of Trump, but we still will have to sit at the children’s table because it is clear that Trump was merely a boil that rose and erupted when the pus of white supremacy and other evils were allowed to fester beneath the skin of America’s body politic. We have lanced the boil, but we now know that the corruption that gave rise to Trump is still in America’s bloodstream and we must work diligently to find the cure. Until we find that cure, we will be relegated to the children’s table. Oscar H. Blayton is a former Marine Corps combat pilot and human rights activist who practices law in Virginia.

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Cardona nominated by President-Elect Biden for Education Secretary



Cardona PHOTO: CEA.ORG

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

On Wednesday, December 23, President-elect Joe Biden selected Connecticut Education Commissioner Miguel Cardona as his nominee for education secretary. Cardona’s nomination delivers on Biden’s campaign pledge to appoint an individual with public school experience, following President Donald Trump’s education secretary, Betsy DeVos, who championed private schools and mostly turned a blinds-eye to the plight of underserved students. The nomination also demonstrates Biden’s intentions on having what he’s called the most diverse administration in U.S. history. Cardona would be just the nation’s second Puerto Rican education secretary. “In Miguel Cardona, America will have an experienced and dedicated public school teacher leading the way at the Department of Education – ensuring that every student is equipped to thrive in the economy of the future, that every educator has the resources they need to do their jobs with dignity and success, and that every school is on track to reopen safely,” Biden said in a statement. “He will help us address systemic inequities, tackle the mental health crisis in our education system, give educators a well-deserved raise, ease the burden of education debt, and secure high-quality, universal pre-K for every three- and four-year-old in the country.” Biden called Cardona a “lifelong champion of public education.” Cardona was appointed Con-

necticut’s commissioner of education in 2019 after more than two decades as a public school educator. He began his career as an elementary school teacher and later served ten years as a school principal. In 2013, Cardona became the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. “Given the significant educational and economic declines impacting the nation this year, the new secretary of education, is a pivotal component of the overall success of the Biden administration, and for African Americans progress in particular,” Nicole L. McDonald, the assistant vice provost for Student Success Strategies at the University of Houston, wrote in an email to the Black Press. “Moving forward, African Americans should expect President-elect Biden to position education and educational attainment as part of the front-line defense in the nation’s economic recovery and workforce development, commitment to social justice and criminal justice reform, and in improving the accessibility of health and human services,” McDonald wrote. She continued: “Moving past what minorities have endured under Secretary Betsy DeVos, requires a secretary of education with the experience, commitments, and especially the innovation, to be a secretary of education for African Americans, and other minoritized and poor people. The way to move the needle for the United States educationally and economically, the way to lift all boats – is to lift from the bottom.”

NNPA hosts series of interviews on closing education achievement gap



Thanks to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) has embarked on a public awareness program to close the public school and the higher education achievement gap. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO / NNPA

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

Not only have K-12 students felt the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but college students also have been forced to perform under the toughest of conditions. For the African-American students and others in underserved communities, the already vast digital divide has been further exacerbated by distant learning, and individuals of color at all grade levels have struggled. Thanks to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) has embarked on a public awareness program to close the public school and the higher education achievement gap. This month, NNPA President and CEO Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., conducted videotaped interviews with education experts, community activists, and college students to help determine whether students in underserved communities are having their needs met during the pandemic. Chavis discussed the various challenges faced by students of color and the working class, as the pandemic continues to grip America and place a stranglehold on education. “One thing I’ve noticed is kind of a communal struggle where some of the pick-ups are not easily solved as it would be if we were on campus,” said Carrington York, a Howard University sophomore. “There are also tech issues with the computer. If something is broken, students can no longer go to the computer lab that’s available on campus, and they can’t go to a public library to use computers there,” York added. “What we’re seeing is that we lack in availability and accessibility in technology. It’s been a bit of a struggle.” Peggy Brookins, the CEO of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, who was appointed to President Barack Obama’s President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excel-

lence for African Americans, noted the deepening disparity in educating children of color. “When we think of what has happened with COVID, we [also] see what has happened to teachers around the country, Brookins stated. “We jumped in and pivoted our work quickly to help every teacher in the country, and their need to understand the technology and to bring synchronous learning to students in a way they were not previously afforded,” Brookins stated. On the bright side, Brookins noted that COVID had provided parents with a window into teaching complexity. “It’s given parents a window into the classroom, and it gave us a newfound appreciation of what teachers do. I think we have to pay teachers what they’re worth,” Brookins remarked. Hilary O. Shelton, the Washington Bureau director and senior vice president of Advocacy and Policy for the NAACP, proclaimed that the pandemic has significantly impacted Americans as a whole. Still, African Americans comprise just 13 percent of the population but have been affected at a much higher rate than anyone else, he said. Shelton noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention examined hospitalization records from 14 states and found that Hispanic and black children are hospitalized the most with COVID. He said the property tax system that helps fund schools needs revamping. “We have to fix this system. It’s broken, and some communities still have a system that, if you live in a poor neighborhood, they take money only from your community,” Shelton remarked. He noted further the need for more African-American teachers. “No one can communicate better with our students than someone who looks like them,” Shelton declared. Patricia Edwards, a distinguished professor of Language and Literacy at Michigan State University and a member of the Reading Hall of Fame posited that the achievement gap is widening, and schools and parents need to communicate better. “I do think a lot of schools didn’t have good connections with families before COVID,” Edwards opined. “Now, more than ever, they’re realizing the importance of family engagement, and they need to make those connections.” Edwards continued: “People need to realize that not all parents are the same. We don’t have the picket fence, the two children and the dog and cat, and the stay-at-home mom. Some schools think that way. “Teachers have to reformat and think of other innovative and creative ways to teach online. One-on-one instructions have been complicated by COVID, and it becomes a problem when there’s not an adult there to guide the student.” Otha Thornton, a past-president of the National Parents Teachers Association and a national education advocate, told Chavis that he’s advising organizations nationwide on mental issues in the African-American community. He said there’s been an increase in mental health problems since the pandemic began. “It’s being aggravated because of the challenges due to mental health,” Thornton mentioned. “Kids with special needs are getting their needs met, and we have a large number of kids falling behind their grade level.” He continued: “The education gap is widening because these kids don’t have support within the public school. Education begins at home, whether informal or formal. If the child comes from a home that doesn’t have resources, even magazines to read, it sets back reading skills and abilities. “Parents are working or stressed because they don’t have jobs. One of the things I’m pushing as an advisor is to focus on mental issues because it’s my assessment that when [in-person learning] returns, students will be behind.”

Panicker receives Organic Achievement Award from the American Society of Agronomy

Special to The Mississippi Link
Alcorn State University

Girish Panicker, professor and director of Conservation Research, was recently honored with the 2020 Organic Achievement Award from the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) during its international annual meeting, held virtually November 9-13. Sponsored by the ASA Organic Management Systems Community, this award acknowledges leadership and accomplishments in education and research that advance and contribute to the organic agricultural community. “This is one of the greatest achievements of my career,” said Panicker, who is thrilled to

be nationally recognized for his contributions within the past two decades. “I have been a member of the ASA for 37 years, and I must say that I am honored to have received one of the most prestigious awards that this society offers.” Panicker was among four shortlisted recipients and was carefully elected by the ASA community through an online poll of nominated candidates. A majority of his research interests stem from working in organic and sustainable agriculture systems. His past and current studies have focused extensively on understanding how cropping and management practices affect erosion rates with a special

emphasis in cover-management factor (C-factor) calculation and residue management. Some of his most notable achievements include increasing Vitamin C levels in organic blueberries for public consumption, collaborating with U.S. Army scientists to produce a premier organic fertilizer, and getting Alcorn’s organic muscadine vineyard selected by the United States Department of Agriculture for soil health studies. Not only has Panicker contributed significantly to the organic field of research, but he has educated and mentored students both locally and globally, helping them to learn organic practices and produce organic food.



Panicker

PUBLIC NOTICE

TECHNOLOGY FUND (004)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Supplies & Materials	\$ 2,188,597	\$ (53,587)	\$ 2,135,010
Other Services & Charges	4,277,840	1,159,553	5,437,393
Debt Services	86,335	-	86,335
Transfers and Other Functions	1,446,000	-	1,446,000
Capital Outlay	2,695,273	311,977	3,007,250
Total	\$ 10,694,045	\$ 1,417,943	\$ 12,111,988

The Technology Fund had several encumbrances to roll forward to the FY'21 budget relating to the Tyler Project Phase I (Financial Software) and Phase II (Public Safety).

SENIOR AIDE (0012)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ 458,514	\$ (169,080)	\$ 289,434
Supplies & Materials	2,600	6,413	9,013
Other Services & Charges	3,000	3,115	6,115
Total	\$ 464,114	\$ (159,552)	\$ 304,562

Senior Aide budget reduction occurred due to the grant Senior Community Service Employment Program awarded the City of Jackson. The grant was given for three months and additional grant was given for three more months.

KELLOGG FOUNDATION (0076)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ 130,866	\$ -	\$ 130,866
Supplies & Materials	83,987	(13,813)	70,174
Other Services & Charges	783,838	351,409	1,135,247
Capital Outlay	175,000	(31,719)	143,281
Total	\$ 1,173,691	\$ 305,877	\$ 1,479,568

The Kellogg Foundation reduction is due to reconciliation after the fiscal year began on 10/1/2020.

Seizure & Forfeiture-State (0002)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000
Supplies & Materials	40,433	(1)	40,432
Other Services & Charges	26,632	54,000	80,632
Capital Outlay	35,789	382,630	418,419
Total	\$ 152,854	\$ 436,629	\$ 589,483

Money from auction in September 2020 was used to increase the Seizure & Forfeiture budget. The money was pulled from fund balance.

FIRE PROTECTION (0010)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Supplies & Materials	\$ 291,300	\$ -	\$ 291,300
Other Services & Charges	117,841	-	117,841
Capital Outlay	1,397,270	4,060,000	5,457,270
Debt Service	34,506	-	34,506
Total	\$ 1,840,917	\$ 4,060,000	\$ 5,900,917

Fire Protection budget increased due to the re-budgeting of the fire trucks that weren't received and paid for until fiscal year 2021.

2017 ED BRYNE MEMORIAL (0361)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Capital Purchase	\$ -	3,843	\$ 3,843
Total	\$ -	\$ 3,843	\$ 3,843

The grant was reconciled after the beginning of new fiscal year with unpaid encumbrance.

DOJ CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY (0377)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ -	\$ 548,906	\$ 548,906
Supplies & Materials	-	200,000	200,000
Total	\$ -	\$ 748,906	\$ 748,906

This is a new grant that Jackson Police Department received from the Department of Justice to assist with operation during this health crisis.

2019 ED BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE (0378)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Other Services & Charges	\$ -	\$ 7,692	\$ 7,692
Grants, Contributions	-	11,305	11,305
Capital Outlay	-	225,074	225,074
Total	\$ -	\$ 244,071	\$ 244,071

This is a new grant that JPD was awarded by United State Department of Justice

WATER/SEWER CAPITAL IMPOROVEMENT FUND (0032)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Supplies & Materials	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ 1
Other Services & Charges	27,285,484	23,498,399	50,783,883
Grants, Contributions	3,000,000	(2,196,318)	803,682
Transfers and Other Functions	-	1,160,000	1,160,000
Total	\$ 30,285,485	\$ 22,462,081	\$ 52,747,566

Capital Improvement increased due to \$22,462,081 of encumbrances rolled over from the previous fiscal year.

1% INFRASTRUCTURE TAX (0173)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Other Services & Charges	\$ 30,105,982	\$ 9,597,424	\$ 39,703,406
Grants, Contributions	4,160,782	-	4,160,782
Capital Outlay	8	-	8
Total	\$ 34,266,772	\$ 9,597,424	\$ 43,864,196

Infrastructure Tax had \$9,597,424 of encumbrances to roll over from the previous fiscal year.

WATER SEWER B&I 2013 (0220)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Debt Service	\$ 5,520,633	\$ 1,160,000	\$ 6,680,633
Total	\$ 5,520,633	\$ 1,160,000	\$ 6,680,633

Water Sewer B&I Debt Service increased

HAIL DAMAGE 2013 (0223)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Other Services & Charges	\$ 247,194	\$ 128,712	\$ 375,906
Total	\$ 247,194	\$ 128,712	\$ 375,906

Hail Damage had \$128,712 of encumbrances to roll over from the previous fiscal year.

FLOODING 2020 (0370)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Other Services & Charges	\$ 738,140	\$ 409,039	\$ 1,147,179
Total	\$ 738,140	\$ 409,039	\$ 1,147,179

Flooding had \$409,039 of encumbrances that rolled over from the previous fiscal year.

ASPEN INSTITUTE/NLC CAO GRANT (0373)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Supplies & Materials	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Other Services & Charges	-	15,000	15,000
Total	\$ -	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000

New grants awarded to the City of Jackson through the CAO Office.

MS HOME CORPORATION (0120)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ 118,265	\$ -	\$ 118,265
Supplies & Material	9,800	-	9,800
Other Services & Charges	14,012	-	14,012
Grants, Contributions	2,739,882	595,977	3,335,859
Total	\$ 2,881,959	\$ 595,977	\$ 3,477,936

The Planning Department received a new grant under MS Home Corporation called Habitat For Humanity. The new grant is for the Broadmoor Subdivision Rehab.

JATRAN (0187)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Personal Services	\$ 745,380	\$ -	\$ 745,380
Supplies & Material	930,900	(491,766)	439,134
Other Services & Charges	10,959,713	(7,758,592)	3,201,121
Capital Outlay	5,145,919	12,773,100	17,919,019
Total	17,781,912	4,522,742	22,304,654

JATRAN budget increased due to the FTA Cares Act in the amount of \$9,982,862. In Capital Maintenance, \$2,790,238 increase in Capital Outlay. JATRAN also has a decrease in Operating Assistance (Division 56510)

MHC BLIGHT ELIMINATION PROGRAM (0360)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Debt Service	\$ 1,060	\$ -	\$ 1,060
Grants, Contributions	322,000	733,293	1,055,293
Total	\$ 323,060	\$ 733,293	\$ 1,056,353

MHC Blight Elimination Program received additional funding for the following sub-recipients: Design Build (\$201,920), Voice of Calvary (\$230,873), and Midtown Partner (\$300,000).

ESG COVID CARES ACT (0379)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Grants, Contributions	\$ -	\$ 517,706	\$ 517,706
Total	\$ -	\$ 517,706	\$ 517,706

ESG COVID CARES ACT funding was awarded to the City of Jackson for sub-recipient Salvation Army.

HOPWA COVID CARE (0380)

	Adopted Budget for 2020-2021	Proposed Amendments	Amended Revised Budget 2020-2021
EXPENDITURES			
Grants, Contributions	\$ -	\$ 208,960	\$ 208,960
Total	\$ -	\$ 208,960	\$ 208,960

HOPWA COVID CARES funding was awarding to the City of Jackson for sub-recipients Grace House (\$104,345) and MUTEH (\$104,345)

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

City of Jackson, Mississippi

**48" Water Transmission Main,
Silas Brown Street to I-20**

City Project No. 17B0103.901

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi, at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 219 South President Street, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. Local Time, on February 2, 2021, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for construction of the 48" Water Transmission Main, Silas Brown Street to I-20, City Project No. 17B0103.901.

Contract time shall be 360 consecutive calendar days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. The amount of liquidated damages per day will be \$1,000.00 plus any additional costs above \$1,000.00 incurred by the Owner. These additional costs include, but are not limited to, engineering, inspection and other construction related costs resulting from the Contractor's failure to complete the work on schedule.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and female business enterprises will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. The bidders attention is further directed to Special Notice to Bidders, included in the Equal Business Opportunity Plan which is a part of the contract documents for this project. (Special Notice to Bidders relates to the utilization of small business concerns (MBE's/FBE's) on this project.)

The City of Jackson is committed to the principal of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, every contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan Application with the bid submission, in accordance with the provisions of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Executive Order. Failure to comply with the City's Executive Order shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract.

For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1856. Copies of the EBO Executive Order, EBO Plan Application, EBO Program, the MBE/FBE Directory and the MBE/FBE Certification Affidavit are available at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4, that all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, in consideration for an award.

The City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City") is committed to cultivating and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens, through various programs, employment, initiatives, and assistance. The City encourages all persons, corporations, and/or entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various projects and/or conduct business in the City to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

A pre-bid conference will be held on Friday, January 15, 2021 at 11:00 A.M. in the 1st floor Andrew Jackson Conference Room of the Warren Hood Building, 200 South President Street, Jackson, MS. All potential contractors, subcontractors, and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Bidders must be qualified under Mississippi Law and show current Certificate of Responsibility issued by the Mississippi State Board of Public Contractors establishing his classification as to the value and type of construction on which he is authorized to bid.

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal form provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for 48" Water Transmission Main, Silas Brown Street to I-20, City Project No. 17B0103.901". Each bidder shall write his Certificate of Responsibility Number on the outside of the sealed envelope containing his proposal.

Bids and EBO Plans shall be submitted in triplicate (bound/stapled separately), sealed and deposited with the City Clerk, City Hall, Jackson, Mississippi, prior to the hour and date hereinbefore designated. No bidder may withdraw his bid within 90 days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

Official Bid Documents, including the Contract Documents and Drawings can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic Bids may be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions related to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Each bidder must deposit with his bid a Bid Bond or Certified Check in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his bid, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. Bidders shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the City of Jackson. The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Payment Bond and Performance Bond each in the amount of 100% of the contract amount.

Each bidder must submit with his bid a separate attachment stating his qualifications to perform the work. The Statement of Qualifications shall list projects of similar size and nature, a list of references with name and telephone number, a list of key personnel who will perform the work, and other information supporting the bidder's qualifications.

Awarding public contracts to non-resident Bidders will be on the same basis as the non-resident bidder's state awards contracts to Mississippi Contractors bidding under similar circumstances. Current state law, Mississippi General Laws of 2010, Chapter 383, section 31-3-21 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, requires a non-resident bidder to attach to the bid a copy of the Bidder's resident state's current laws pertaining to such state's treatment of nonresident contractors. Non-resident bidders must attach to their bid a copy of any bid preference law of the state, city, county, parish, province, nation or political subdivision where they are domiciled. If there is no such law where they are domiciled, all non-resident bidders shall attach a letter to their bid stating that there is no bid preference law where they are domiciled. The bid of any non-resident bidder who fails to attach to its bid a copy of its domicile's bid preference law or a letter stating that its domicile has no such bid preference law, whichever is applicable, shall be rejected and not considered for award.

The ENGINEER is Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 125 South Congress Street, Suite 1100, Jackson, Mississippi 39201, 601-948-3071, Fax No. 601-948-3178.

Contract Drawings, Contract Specifications, Instructions to Bidders and Bidders Proposal forms are on file and open to public inspection in the office of the Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, City of Jackson, Mississippi and the Office of the City Clerk.

"Mississippi Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, [Current] Edition" as referred to herein, may be purchased from the Mississippi Department of Transportation.

Minority and women's business enterprises are solicited to bid on this contract as prime contractors and are encouraged to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities, equipment, material and/or supply needs.

The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

By: Dr. Charles Williams, PhD, PE

12-31-2020, 1-7-2021

LEGAL

Wait List/Applications

Mississippi Regional Housing Authority VI (MRHA VI) will open its Wait List for Hickman Heights Apartment, located at 150 Angle Drive, Jackson, MS. This new development, scheduled to open in the Summer 2021, will include 100 rent subsidized units with a mix of 80 one-bedrooms and 20 two-bedrooms. Persons interested in applying for housing assistance must make application during the open period, Monday, December 14, 2020 @ 8:00 am and will remain open until further notice. All applications must be made online at: <https://mrhavi.apply4housing.com/>. Preference will be given to persons ages 55 and over. Questions contact (601) 373-7040.

12-17-2020 12-24-2020, 12-31-2020, 1-7-2021, 1-14-2021, 1-21-2021, 1-28-2021, 2-4-2021

ALERT

ELMIRON®

If you or someone you know was prescribed **ELMIRON®** for a chronic **BLADDER** condition, interstitial cystitis or painful bladder syndrome and after long term usage suffered serious eye problems including:

Maculopathy, vision impairment, retinal disease or other serious optic injury requiring medical attention; you may have a potential claim against the drug manufacturer.

Contact:

JOHN HUNTER STEVENS

Attorney at Law, Jackson, MS

1-800-556-6770

(601) 366-1900

Jstevens91@aol.com

No fees unless we collect for you.

More information available upon request. Call us for a free consultation.

We also handle personal injury and workers' compensation claims.

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Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
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ACROSS

1. Fish hook
5. Brand of sandwich cookie
9. Exploiter
10. Heartache
11. Father
12. End
13. ___ cab
15. Bind
16. TV rating
18. Inner floral leaves of flower
21. Tell a tall tale
22. Esoteric
26. Birds "thumb"
28. Scat!
29. Particle
30. Grain
31. Preparation (abbr.)
32. Hit

DOWN

1. Spurt
2. Continent
3. Spore plant
4. California city
5. Globe
6. What a mob does
7. Strange
8. Many times
10. Boldly
14. Petroleum retailer
17. Cowboy's ropes
18. Holding device
19. Oil tanker
20. Utilize
23. Unfreeze
24. Small particle
25. Purchase amount
27. Chop

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Sudoku

The challenge is to fill every row across, every column down, and every 3x3 box with the digits 1 through 9. Each 1 through 9 digit must appear only once in each row across, each column down, and each 3x3 box.

	3	4			6		5	8
	6			7	4		2	
			5		8		6	
	4	7	8		5			
3						6		
					2			
	9							
				3			8	
		8	1		7	4		

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Crossword Solution

G	A	F	F		O	R	E	O
U	S	E	R		G	R	I	E
S	I	R	E		A	B	O	R
H	A	N	S		O	M	T	I
			N	I	E	L	S	E
C	O	R	O	L	L	A		
L	I	E		M	Y	S	T	I
A	L	U	L	A		S	H	O
M	E	S	O	N		O	A	T
P	R	E	P			S	W	A

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Sudoku Solution

2	3	4	9	1	6	7	5	8
8	6	5	7	4	3	2	1	9
7	1	9	5	2	8	3	6	4
1	4	7	8	6	5	9	3	2
3	8	2	4	9	1	6	7	5
9	5	6	3	7	2	8	4	1
5	9	3	6	8	4	1	2	7
4	7	1	2	3	9	5	8	6
6	2	8	1	5	7	4	9	3

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DOLLAR GENERAL

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DOLLAR GENERAL

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IN MEMORIAM: Dr. Susan Moore

— The death of black doctor of COVID-19 sets off alarms

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

“He made me feel like a drug addict,” Dr. Susan Moore, 52, said on a video days before her death due to coronavirus. The black Indiana doctor states on a Facebook video that she had received poor treatment from white caregivers because she was African American. Her message reached over a million people on social media as of December 24.

Dr. Moore died December 20. “This is how black people get killed, when you send them home and they don’t know how to fight for themselves,” Dr. Moore said on the video. Moore asserted that her doctor attempted to discharge her at ten at night.

Moore’s Facebook live post received wide attention and a lengthy segment on Roland Martin Unfiltered on December 23. Dr. Moore knew what to ask for



Moore

as she was being treated for coronavirus and strongly felt she was not receiving the best treatment.

Moore said that despite telling her doctor that she was in pain

she received medication after tests proved what she had been saying since she arrived at the hospital.

“I put forth, and I maintain, if I

was white, I wouldn’t have to go through that,” Moore said in her social media video.

On December 24, The Grio reported that Indiana Univer-

sity Health Hospital, “addressed claims of mistreatment in how Dr. Moore was treated in the days before her death.”

Indiana University Health Hospital, in a statement said, “We are very sad to hear about her passing,” adding, “IU Health respects and upholds patient privacy and cannot comment on a specific patient, their medical history or conditions. As an organization committed to equity and reducing racial disparities in healthcare. We take accusations of discrimination very seriously and investigate every allegation.”

Black people have died at 3.6 times the rate of white people, and Latinos at 2.5 times the rate of white people, according to an analysis by the Brookings Institution. Moore cared for her mother, who has dementia, and her 19-year old son. A GoFundMe

page is hoping to raise \$100,000 to assist the Moore family. It has raised over \$109,000 so far. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/dr-susan-moores-family-assistance?qid=0b67322adabedeba722b9f6d0429414b>

The coronavirus pandemic has hit the U.S. hard and has now become the most deadly event in U.S. history since the Civil War. Over 327,000 Americans have died from COVID-19 in 2020. An average of 2,000 people are dying a day in the U.S. due to coronavirus.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist for NNPA and the host of the podcast BURKEFILE. She is also a political strategist as Principal of Win Digital Media LLC. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke

Educators say they must act during the pandemic to close widening learning gap

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The lack of a quiet place to work and resources like internet service often hamstrings students of color’s ability to adequately learn during the pandemic, according to education experts who share their frustration about the inequities in education faced by minorities and those in underserved communities.

“There also may be familial responsibilities like caring for a younger sibling or parent,” said Adrienne Oddi, the dean of admissions and financial aid at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.

“Homes and residential dwellings are often more congested with family, making it difficult to focus. We see these demands in our own students at Trinity, too,” Oddi further asserted.

“It is a problem that isn’t simply at the K-12 levels but also in higher education. One of the main reasons we welcomed our students back to campus in the fall was to help combat inequity issues that may exist in a student’s home. We were able to help provide our students with the resources and space they needed to focus on their education.”

Oddi acknowledged that the task is not easy for every student who wants an education.

“Assuming students can prioritize themselves and their education is the admissions officer’s equivalent of ‘Put your mask on first before assisting others,’” he illustrated.

“It’s a luxury that not every student and family can afford. “But the onus is not on the student. It is on everyone. As the dean of admissions and financial aid, the onus is on me, too.”

Oddi demanded that those in higher education need to examine their practices and ask themselves – “Who is here? Who is missing?”

“We need to be able to work toward equitable education for



all, leveling the playing field for those most at risk of being left behind, and close the gap that data shows are widening during the pandemic. We need to work toward helping now, and helping always,” he said.

José Viana, former director of the U.S. Department of Education’s office of English-language acquisition and Senior Education Advisor at Lexia Learning, told NNPA Newswire that current circumstances caused by the pandemic have resulted in English language learners – many of whom are students of color – being at a significant disadvantage.

“For example, opportunities for oral language typically developed through speaking are infrequent due to the lack of in-person instruction,” Viana remarked.

“In addition, many school districts continue to modify educational plans due to ever-changing state mandates, causing emergent bilingual students to be left out – either due to missing essential discourse opportunities with peers and teachers in the classroom or lacking the assistance and technology needed to learn effectively through remote instruction.”

He continued:

“It is also important to consider that home and school re-

lationships are a cornerstone of working with emergent bilingual students, and that school districts across the nation often lack interpreters that reach the family members of students while distance learning.”

Thanks to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s continued partnership, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) has carried on a public awareness program to close the public school and the higher education achievement gap.

NNPA President and CEO Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., has conducted videotaped interviews with education experts, community activists and college students to help determine whether students in underserved communities have their needs met during the pandemic.

During the interviews, Chavis discussed the various challenges students of color and the working-class face as the pandemic continues to grip America and place a stranglehold on education.

The NNPA also continued publishing a series of articles to draw attention to America’s education gap.

“I’m a tutor, and elementary school speech-language pathologist, and I work with students of color where I see various challenges for some of my students,”

offered Jessica Bonner-Gomez, founder, owner and tutor with For Other Prizes Consulting.

“The biggest challenge is the inability to get online at a set meeting time during the week,” Bonner-Gomez stated.

“For the children who attend their online speech therapy sessions inconsistently, the barrier is that the parent is a night-shift worker and sleeps during the day, has to rely on daycare staff to get the child online if the parent works throughout the day, or cannot remember to get the child online due to already tending to other children and responsibilities.”

Bonner-Gomez said children who perform noticeably better at school and around their peers are more likely to turn off when they are only learning virtually.

“As some of these children are already behind and may be aware of it, they tend to be the least attentive,” Bonner-Gomez noted.

“Consequently, this lack of attention puts them ever further behind their peers. This reality is exacerbated when some parents are too exhausted to provide one-to-one assistance to their child or find they cannot grasp the school content to be of help. Further, parents may not have the funds to hire a tutor even if they know their child is noticeably behind.”

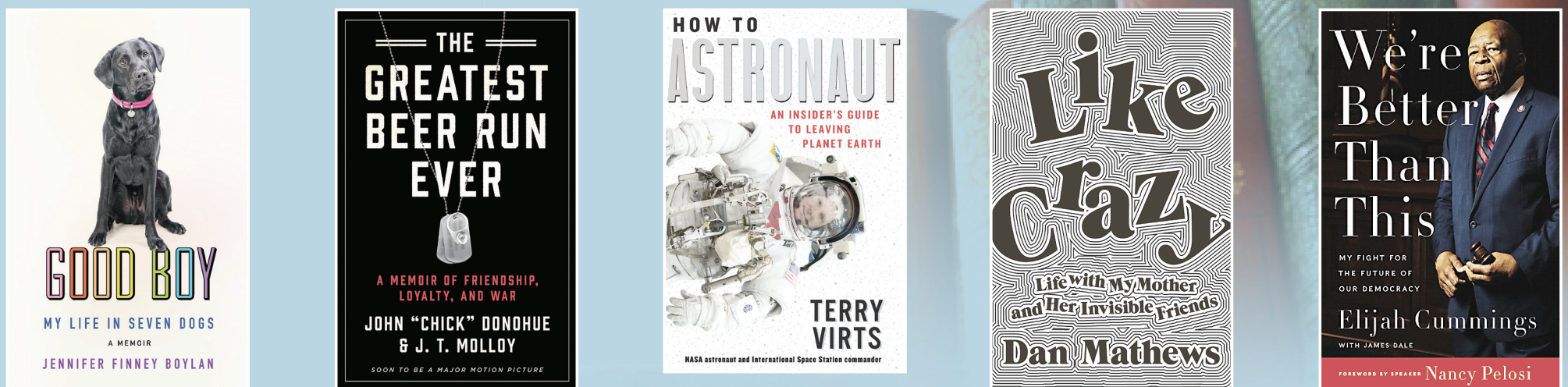
Happy Kwanzaa from AATCLC



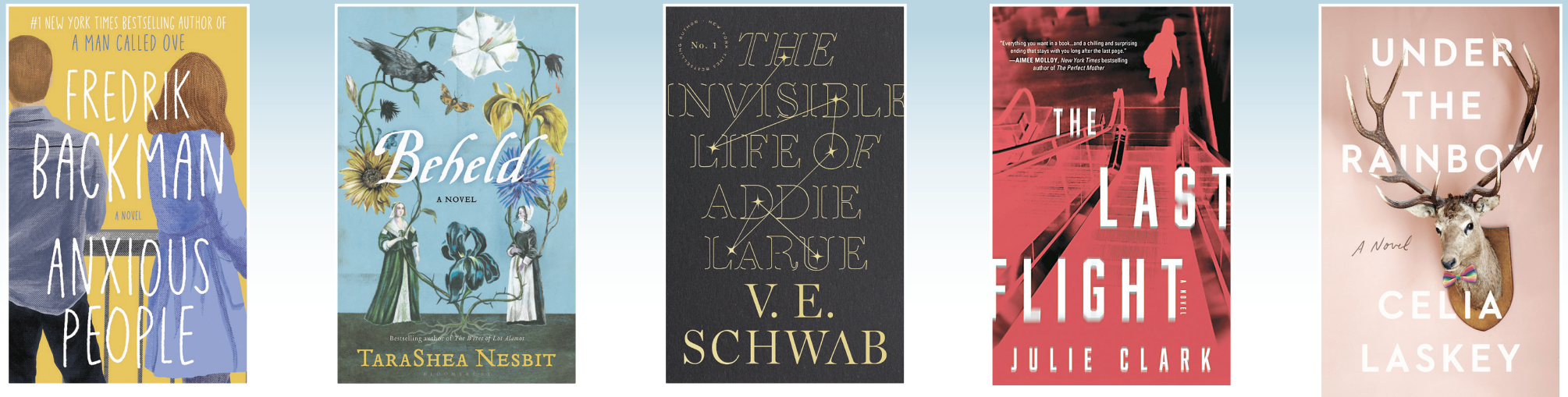
The year 2020 certainly challenged all (7) Principles of KWANZAA. This time last year we could have never imagined how 2020 would unfold. As we near 2021, let’s move forward with Imani-Faith to work towards an equitable and just society for all. Let’s move forward with determination and embrace the hard lessons of 2020. Let’s Build Back Better!

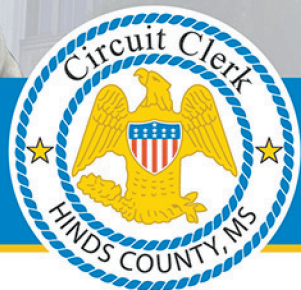
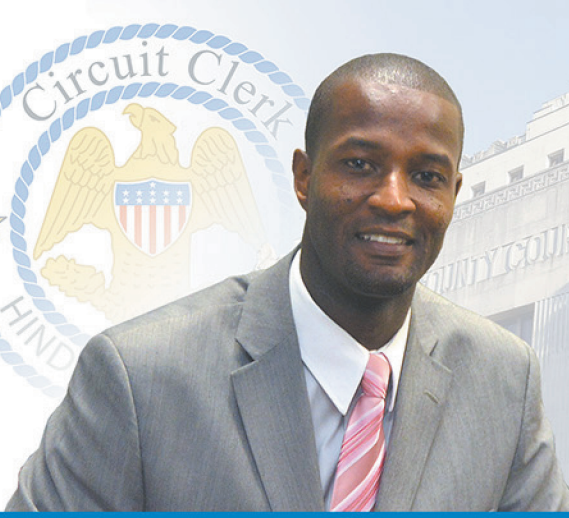
Umoja  Unity	Kujichagulia  Self Determination	Ujima  Collective Work & Responsibility	Ujamaa  Cooperative Economics
Nia  Purpose	Kuumba  Creativity	Imani  Faith	Kwanzaa Yenu Dwe Na Heri  Happy Kwanzaa!

BEST OF 2020 ADULT NONFICTION BOOKS



BEST OF 2020 ADULT FICTION BOOKS





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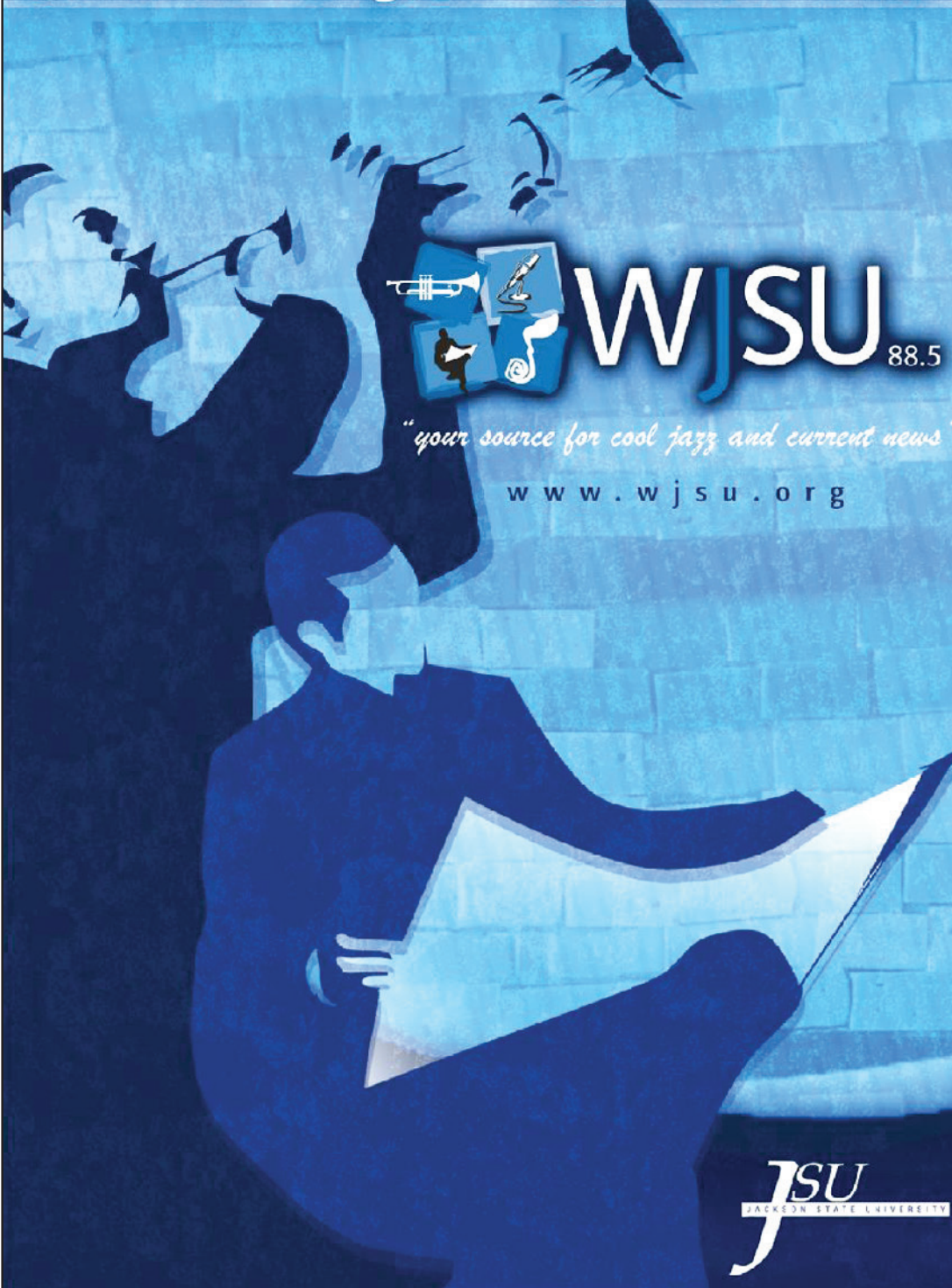
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Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE



Dr. Delesicia Martin,
Superintendent of Education

Dear HCSD Staff, Parents and Community Supporters

As a District, we have much to be thankful for despite the incredible challenges our families, schools and communities have faced over these past seven months.

Our students have shown tremendous resilience in the face of many challenges and have demonstrated optimism that has inspired me daily. Our faculty and staff have been committed and equally resilient, and they continue to be flexible as they work incredibly hard in an increasingly anxious environment. Our parents and guardians have been understanding, and patient as we have worked to provide our students with a safe learning environment.

Nothing about the past six months have been easy, but I am so thankful for the efforts and

problem-solving spirit that has continued to help us get through this together.

During this very hectic time of year, it is easy to lose sight of what really matters in life. I hope you will find some time to reflect on what is important to you and to enjoy time with your family and friends. As superintendent, I am asking everyone to make your health and safety a priority over the coming holiday break. Please wear a mask and practice social distancing. If you feel sick, please stay home except to receive medical care.

On behalf of the Board of Education and the district’s administrative team, I wish everyone a peaceful, safe and restful blessed holiday season and best wishes for the New Year!

Sincerely,

Delesicia Martin, ED. D.
Superintendent of Education

“May the special joys of the season be yours today and always.”



Superintendent's Administrative Team



Child Nutrition Team



Technology Team



Business Services and Human Resources Team



Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Team



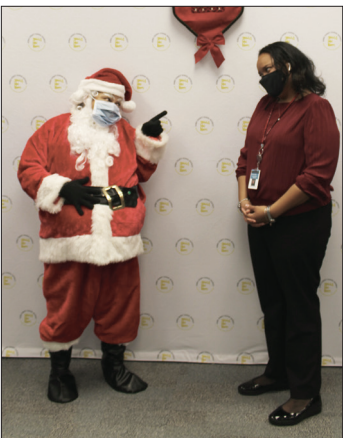
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Santa and Dr. Neal



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