

## Making COVID-19 vaccination a family affair yielded great success for Simms Family



Simms siblings vaccinated same day (L-R) Georgia Pearl Simms, Casaundra Simms McCullough, Rev. James Simms, Juanita Simms Doty

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

Juanita Simms-Doty said that as of Jan. 22, all members of her family living in Mississippi, who qualified to get the COVID-19 vaccine, have gotten their first shots and are looking forward to receiving their second shots.

Yet, we have heard many reports from residents of the state that even though they now qualify to get their vaccines, they are not able to do so. Calling the Health Department to register for an appointment or going online to register for an appointment have brought them no results because appointments are booked immediately after announcements are made that specific groups are eligible to receive the shot.

In a phone interview with *The Mississippi Link*, Simms-Doty said that of her seven family members that have been vaccinated, four siblings had appointments twenty minutes apart on that Friday morning. The four siblings, Georgia Pearls Simms, Casaundra Simms McCullough, Rev. James Simms and Simms-Doty, each were excited to get their shot at the Madison County Health Department in the family's hometown of Canton, MS.

Early on, when Governor Tate Reeves first announced that individuals 75 years and older could get the

vaccine, one sister, Shirley Simms Christian and her husband, Charles Christian, who is a veteran, went to the Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Center and the VA to get their vaccines. Another sister, Dr. Kimberly Smash, who is a family medicine physician, was able to get her appointment and vaccine January 14 at Trustmark Park in Rankin County.

Simms-Doty said, "Our appointments were twenty minutes apart. Through a group text, we received updates on when each one was on the way and when each had gotten the vaccine. It was exciting to get vaccinated in our hometown."

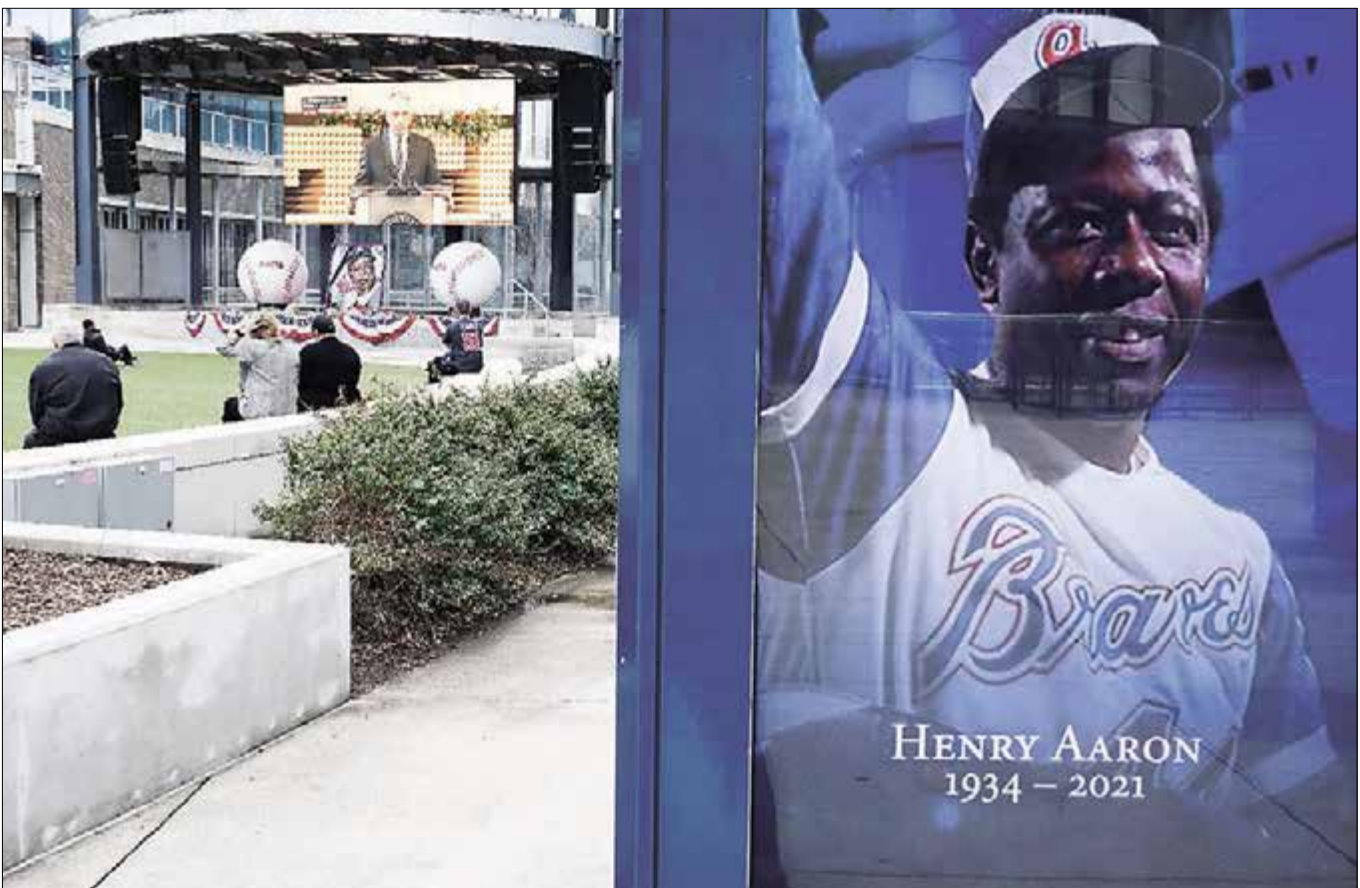
How did it happen that four adult siblings, not living in the same household, were able to get appointments at the same place and very close to the same time? Simms-Doty answered, "As soon as the governor announced that individuals 65 or over could make appointments to get the vaccine, I started trying to register online to make my appointment and my siblings were trying to make their appointments as well but none of us could get through."

So Simms-Doty, who was determined, hatched a plan.

Governor Reeves in his press conference January 19 said that there

*Simms-Doty*  
Continued on page 3

## Hank Aaron, baseball's one-time home run king, dies at 86



Hank Aaron signage is seen as people watch a memorial at Truist Park, home of the Atlanta Braves, to attend the memorial for Baseball Hall of Famer and Braves legend Hank Aaron, Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021, in Atlanta. Just 2-1/2 weeks before his death Friday, Jan 22, 2021, at age 86, Aaron joined civil rights icons to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. He wanted to spread the word to the black community that the shots were safe in the midst of a devastating pandemic. AP PHOTO/BRYNN ANDERSON

By Paul Newberry  
AP National Writer

Hank Aaron, who endured racist threats with stoic dignity during his pursuit of Babe Ruth's home run record and gracefully left his mark with 755 homers and a legacy as one of baseball's greatest all-around players, died Friday. He was 86.

The Atlanta Braves, Aaron's longtime team, said he died peacefully in his sleep. No cause was given.

Aaron made his last public appearance just 2-1/2 weeks ago, when he received the COVID-19 vaccine. He said he wanted to help spread the word to black Americans that the vaccine is safe.

"Hammerin' Hank" set a wide array of career hitting records during a 23-year career spent mostly with the Milwaukee and Atlanta Braves, including

RBIs, extra-base hits and total bases.

But the Hall of Famer will be remembered for one swing above all others, the one that made him baseball's home-run king.

It was a title he would hold for more than 33 years, a period during which the Hammer slowly but surely claimed his rightful place as one of America's most iconic sporting figures, a true national treasure worthy of mention in the same breath with Ruth or Ali or Jordan.

Former President Jimmy Carter, who often attended Braves games, described Aaron as "a personal hero."

George W. Bush, a one-time owner of the Texas Rangers, presented Aaron in 2002 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom – the nation's highest civilian honor.

"The former Home Run King wasn't handed his throne," Bush said. "He

grew up poor and faced racism as he worked to become one of the greatest baseball players of all time. Hank never let the hatred he faced consume him."

On April 8, 1974, before a sellout crowd at Atlanta Stadium and a national television audience, Aaron broke Ruth's home run record with No. 715 off Al Downing of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

But Aaron's journey to that memorable homer was hardly triumphant.

He was the target of extensive hate mail as he closed in on Ruth's cherished record of 714 – much of it sparked by the fact that Ruth was white, Aaron was black.

Aaron was shadowed constantly by bodyguards and forced to distance himself from teammates. He kept all those hateful letters, a bitter reminder of the

*Aaron*  
Continued on page 3

## The rise of Vice President Kamala Harris



VP Kamala Harris receives the oath of office on bible held by husband Doug Emhoff during the inauguration

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

Vice President Kamala Harris will be the most influential vice president of the 49 that we have had, declared a proud Howard University President Wayne A.I. Frederick.

With 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans seated in the Senate, Vice President Harris holds the tiebreaking vote, which adds to the power she now wields.

"The power in politics is from influence," Frederick remarked.

"I think, for that reason, she could potentially be the most influential vice president in our history."

Following President Joe Biden and Vice President Har-

ris's inauguration, The Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel on Howard's campus rang its bell 49 times to honor Harris.

More than 3,000 miles away, in San Francisco, many remember when the nation's first black vice president cut her teeth as a valiant prosecutor.

The daughter of a Jamaican immigrant father who taught at Stanford University, Vice President Harris' mother, a cancer researcher, was the daughter of an Indian diplomat.

And, the new vice president has never forgotten her roots, nor has she forgotten those who helped her achieve the American dream.

During a 2018 National

Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) award ceremony honoring Harris as "Newsmaker of the Year," Vice President Harris talked about her years as a San Francisco's district attorney.

As San Francisco's top prosecutor, Vice President Harris worked to reduce recidivism by offering nonviolent, low-level drug trafficking defendants' job training and other life skills education as an alternative to jail.

Her office reported that during the first two years of the program, "less than 10 percent of those who graduated from the program were re-offenders"

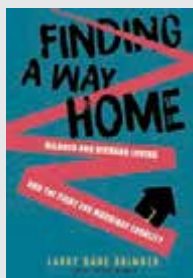
*Harris*  
Continued on page 3

Inside  
General Lloyd Austin  
is first black U.S.  
Secretary of Defense



Page 15

Finding a  
Way Home



Page 14

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## A celebration of life William Lloyd Etheredge

*March 28, 2001 - January 15, 2021*

William Lloyd Etheredge, 19, of Montgomery, AL, died January 15, 2021 due to a tragic climbing accident. He was born March 28, 2001 in Flowood, MS, the son of former Mississippi residents, Tod Steven Etheredge and Crystal Lorraine Stamps Etheredge of Pike Road, AL.

His parents named him after his two maternal grandfathers. He was affectionately known to all as Lloyd.

Lloyd attended schools in Madison, MS and graduated from Saint James School in Montgomery, AL where he received many band and creative writing awards. He loved classical music and often composed jazz and classical pieces on the piano. Lloyd was also a talented trumpet and piano player. Lloyd's goal was to continue following his passion for music by becoming a composer for film and theater scores.

At the time of his death, Lloyd was attending Troy University in Troy, AL where he was majoring in music industry.

Lloyd's parents raised him in a loving Christian home. He was dedicated to God at Temple Baptist Church in 2002 in Nashville, TN. He later attended Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church in Madison, MS. In 2007, Lloyd was baptized into the Christian faith at Anderson



Etheredge

United Methodist Church in Jackson, MS with his loving godmother, Andrea Singleton of Atlanta, GA. At the time of his death, Lloyd was a member of Frazier United Methodist Church in Montgomery, AL where he was an active member of the youth ministry.

A memorial service held January 21, 2021 at Frazier United Methodist Church, Montgomery, AL and a private graveside

service for family and close friends was held at Garden Memorial Park, in Jackson, MS, January 23. It was followed by a repast at Anderson United Methodist Church in Jackson.

Face coverings and social distancing were observed due to COVID-19 at each service.

Funeral arrangements were handled by Westhaven Memorial Funeral Home in Jackson, MS.

## Remembering Dr. Ernest Edward Slaughter Sr.

*February 10, 1967 - January 23, 2021*

### A Time to be Born

Dr. Ernest Edward Slaughter Sr., was born February 10, 1967, in Long Island, New York to Willie Davidson and Katie Smith. He moved to Jackson, MS in 1976. He lived in Memphis, TN for four years and Woodland, MS before moving back to Jackson, MS in 1987. Dr. Slaughter accepted Christ as his personal savior at Pleasant Ridge Missionary Baptist Church in Sparta, MS under the leadership of Pastor Kevin Crum.

### A Time to Serve

Dr. Slaughter confessed his call into the gospel ministry in December of 1991 at the Johnson Chapel Baptist Church in Jackson. He preached his first sermon in January of 1992. He was ordained August 23, 1992.

The Spirit of God moved him to unite with the New Canney Creek Missionary Baptist Church March 23, 1993. He was elected interim pastor in May of 1993 after the passing of Rev. J.S. Sutton Sr. He was finally elected as the senior pastor of New Canney Creek Missionary Baptist Church July 30, 1993.

Dr. Slaughter graduated from St. Thomas Christian College in Jacksonville, FL in May of 2008, where he received his Doctorate of Divinity.

### A Time to Love

On November 28, 2014, Rev. Ernest E Slaughter Sr. united in Holy matrimony to the love of his life, Beatrice Monique Louie, whom he affectionately called "BB." She remained by his side until his untimely departure.

### A Time to Mourn

On January 23, 2021, at approximately 12:30 a.m., God whispered in Pastor Slaughter's ear, "My child come on home."

He was proceeded in death by his father Willie Davidson.

He leaves to cherish his memories his wife, Beatrice Slaughter; children, Darius Friday,



Slaughter

Ernest E. Slaughter Jr., Erin Slaughter and E'Niyah Slaughter; mother, Katie Smith; siblings, Tommy Slaughter (Cortissa), Bobby Slaughter, Debora (Roosevelt Steele), Joyce Slaughter, Ruby (Donald Williams, Sr.), Patricia Hill and LeeAnn (Weldon Whitlock); a loving aunt, Vernon Evans; and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.

  
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## Simms-Doty

Continued from page 1



Dr. Kimberly Smash

were 20,000 available appointments for individuals over 65 and for those with pre-existing conditions. He said there were more to come after that.

After not being able to get online during the day, Doty set her alarm for 12 midnight. She got up and went online again to register for an appointment. This time she was successful. There were 368 people in the que ahead of her but the countdown went quickly and in about ten minutes she had registered and was given an appointment. To Simms-Doty’s surprise, after she received her appointment, she was asked if she wanted to register anyone else and was able to register her three other siblings that lived in the city. Fortunately, she was able to recall their ages, dates of birth, home addresses and other required information.

Simms-Doty said since the pandemic started the family had been having ZOOM meetings where her niece, Dr. Smash, told them to ‘stay-in’ ‘mask-up,’ ‘practice social distancing’ and to follow all of the recommended COVID-19 protocol.

Simms-Doty stated, “We all listened to Dr. Smash and followed all of her instructions. She had been encouraging us on ZOOM to get the vaccine and we followed through.”

Simms-Doty said all of the family members are doing well after taking the vaccine. “The vaccination process was smooth and easy and we are waiting for our second dose. We are encouraging everyone not to give up. Keep going online or calling to make your appointment. Our lives depend on all of us getting vaccinated.” She added, “It should be a family affair.”

# Reeves: Mississippi ‘unconquerable’ amid virus and disasters

By Emily Wagster Pettus  
*The Associated Press*

Mississippi is “unconquerable” after a year dominated by the coronavirus pandemic and natural disasters including tornadoes that cut wide paths of destruction last Easter, Republican Gov. Tate Reeves said in his State of the State speech Tuesday.

Speaking on the south steps of the Capitol, Reeves renewed his call for eliminating the state’s personal income tax and said he would sign a bill to increase teachers’ pay. He called on legislators to make “wise investments” in workforce training.

And, he vowed that Mississippi will vaccinate people against the coronavirus as quickly as possible.

“We need to crush this virus and get back to our way of life,” Reeves said. “The virus is still here, and it cannot be solved by ignoring it. We have to defeat it, because Mississippians are done. We’re done burying loved ones who were lost to this virus. We’re done with overwhelmed hospitals. We’re done with the fearful talk of lockdowns and shutdowns. We’re ready for community again.”

Reeves served eight years as state treasurer and eight as lieutenant governor before becoming governor last January. His first year in the state’s highest office was dominated by the pandemic, with the first virus cases found in Mississippi in March.

“I am here to say that our state is unconquerable,” Reeves said Tuesday. “We have taken every hit that can be thrown. We’ve been tested by every force of nature, disease and human frailty.”

The governor said when he released his state budget proposals in November that eliminating the 4% and 5% personal income tax brackets would help Mississippi compete against other states in trying to attract new jobs.

Republican Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann told reporters in December that eliminating the 4% income tax would cost about \$250 million to \$300 million and “we would have to make up somewhere.” He said erasing the entire income tax would cost about \$1.9 billion to \$2 billion. The state budget is about \$6 billion.

Reeves on Tuesday defended his tax proposal.

“There are still many who say that we can’t lower taxes because

it puts new government spending at risk,” Reeves said. “And I understand that it is often good politics to act like something from the government is a gift. In fact, the far left has played that tune for generations. But we have to be clear: The government doesn’t have anything that it does not first take from a taxpayer.”

Reeves’ predecessor as governor, Republican Phil Bryant, signed a 2016 law that phases out the 3% income tax bracket, starting in calendar year 2018 and ending in 2022. Reeves was lieutenant governor then, and he helped push the plan to reality.

In the Democratic response to the governor’s speech, Sen. Derrick Simmons of Greenville renewed his party’s call for Mississippi to expand Medicaid, which is an option under the health care law signed in 2010 by then-President Barack Obama. Reeves and other Republican leaders have said they don’t want to put more people on a government program.

“The shortsighted politics of Mississippi Republicans have cost Mississippi billions of dollars and left our hospitals hanging on by a thread,” Simmons said. “If Gov. Reeves will not expand Medicaid, it is past time for him and Republican leaders to come up with an alternative.”

The State of the State speech is usually held inside the Capitol, with senators, representatives, state Supreme Court justices and other officials sitting shoulder-to-shoulder in the House chamber. The speech was moved outside because public health officials recommend that people avoid crowded indoor events because of the highly contagious virus.

Reeves closed his speech Tuesday by saying his personal goal is to “cultivate empathy,” which he said is in short supply in politics.

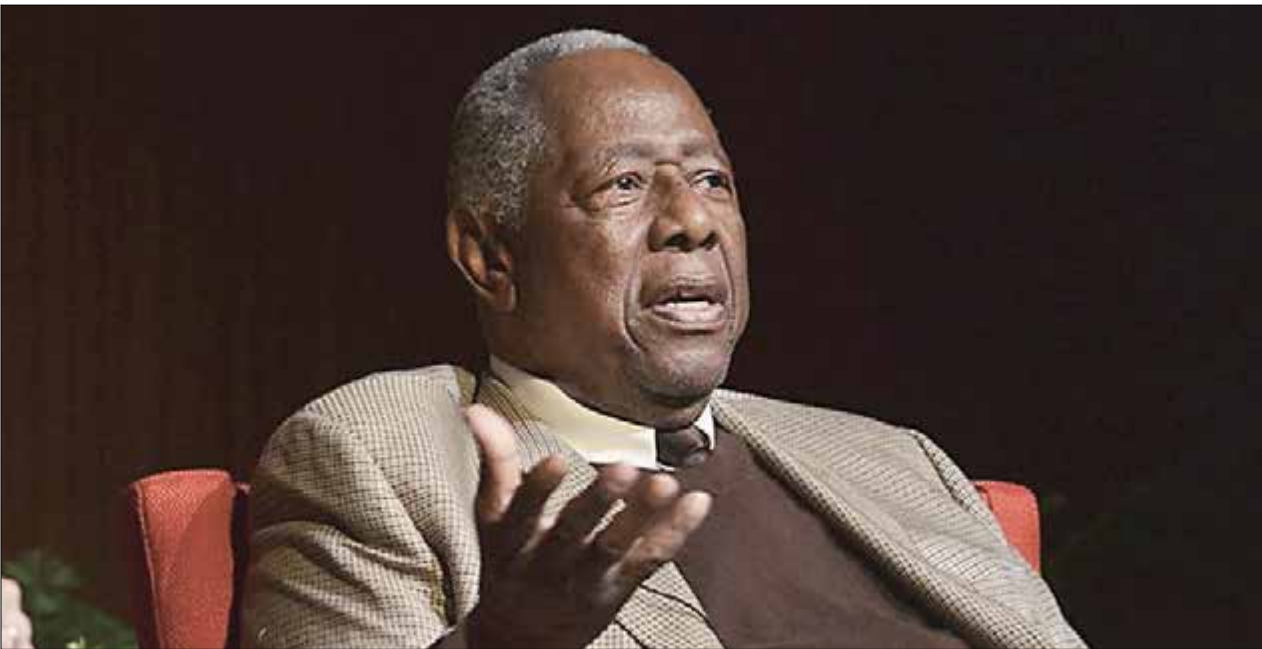
“Every Mississippian, every American, is on the same team,” Reeves said. “We all want to be treated with grace. And we’re all created in the image of a perfect God.”

Simmons also called for a change in “corrosive” politics.

“As legislative Democrats, we are recommitting ourselves to the truth,” Simmons said. “That means we will be honest when we get it wrong, and we will make sure to show gratitude when Republicans get it right.”

## Aaron

Continued from page 1



Hank Aaron, Photo: Texas Rangers VIA TRADINGCARDDB.COM / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

abuse he endured and never forgot.

“This is just the way things are for black people in America,” he once said. “It’s something you battle all of your life.”

Aaron spent 21 of his 23 seasons with the Braves – first in Milwaukee, then in Atlanta after the franchise moved to the South in 1966. He finished his career in Milwaukee, traded to the Brewers after the 1974 season when he refused to take a front-office job that would have required a big pay cut.

While knocking the ball over the fence became his signature accomplishment, the Hammer was hardly a one-dimensional star. In fact, he never hit more than 47 homers in a season (though he did have eight years with at least 40 dingers).

But it can be argued no one was so good, for so long, at so many facets of the national pastime.

He posted 14 seasons with a .300 average, the last of them at age 39, and claimed two National League batting titles. He finished with a career average of .305.

Aaron also was a gifted outfielder with a powerful arm, something often overlooked because of a smooth, effortless stride that his critics mistook for nonchalance. He was a three-time Gold Glove winner.

In addition, Aaron posted nine straight seasons with double-figure stolen bases, including a career-best of 31 in 1963 when he joined Ken Williams and Willie Mays as only the third member of the 30-30 club – players who have totaled at least 30 homers and 30 steals in a season.

Six-feet tall and listed at 180 pounds during the prime of his career, Aaron was hardly an imposing player physically. But he was blessed with powerful wrists that made him one of baseball’s most feared hitters.

Aaron hit 733 homers with the Braves, the last in his final plate appearance with the team on Oct. 2, 1974. Exactly one month later, he was traded to the Milwaukee Brewers.

Aaron became a designated hitter with the Brewers, but managed just 22 homers over his last two seasons. He retired after hitting .229 in 1976.

Even so, his career numbers largely stood the test of time. The home run mark lasted until Barry Bonds hit his 756th Aug. 7, 2007.

Bonds retired with 762 homers, but many consider Aaron the true home-run king because of steroid allegations that continue to hound his successor.

Aaron still has more RBIs (2,297), extra-base hits (1,477) and total bases (6,856) than anyone in baseball history. He ranks second in at-bats (12,354), third in games played (3,298) and hits (3,771), and fourth in runs scored (tied with Ruth at 2,174).

He was never one to swing for the fences. He just happened to hit a lot of balls that went over the fence.

“I feel like that home run I hit is just part of what my story is all about,” Aaron said.

He was NL MVP in 1957, when the Milwaukee Braves beat the New York Yankees in seven games to give Aaron the only World Series title of his career. It also was his lone MVP award, though he finished in the top 10 of the balloting 13 times.

## Harris

Continued from page 1

compared to 53 percent of drug offenders statewide who returned to prison or jail within two years of release.”

In 2010, she defeated Steve Cooley to become the first woman, the first African American, and the first Indian American in California history to win the attorney general’s seat.

She later joined other state attorneys general in brokering a \$25-billion nationwide settlement deal with the nation’s five largest mortgage institutions for improper foreclosure practices during a housing market crash.

Born October 20, 1964, in Oakland, the overachiever attended Howard University, where she earned a degree in political science and economics.

Three years later, she earned a law degree from Hastings College in Nebraska.

The tenacious California native entered the national spotlight in 2012 when she delivered a remarkable address at the Democratic National Convention in North Carolina.

During the address, she touted President Barack Obama’s desire to hold Wall Street accountable and argued how everyone deserves a chance to live the American dream.

“The American dream belongs to the student in Sacramento who doesn’t have much money but who goes to bed each night dreaming big dreams. It belongs to the men and women across this country who know it shouldn’t be against the law to marry the person you love,” the then-aspiring Senator Harris proclaimed.

“It belongs to the immigrants, young and old, who come to this country in search of a better life. And it belongs to little girls who have the joy of watching their mother, like I did, buy her first home. The American

Aaron was selected for the All-Star Game 21 consecutive years – every season but his first and his last. His only regret was failing to capture the Triple Crown.

Aaron never received the attention he deserved until late in his career. He played in only two World Series and was stuck far from the media spotlight in Milwaukee and Atlanta.

He became more appreciated with the passing of time.

Aaron was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1982 – his first year of eligibility and just nine votes short of being a unanimous choice.

In 1999, baseball began honoring its top hitter with the Hank Aaron Award, akin to the Cy Young for pitchers.

Henry Louis Aaron was born in Mobile, Alabama, Feb. 5, 1934. He headed a long list of outstanding players who came from that Gulf Coast city in the segregated South – Satchel Paige, Willie McCovey, Billy Williams and Ozzie Smith among them.

Initially hitting with a cross-handed style, Aaron was spotted by the Braves while trying out for the Negro League’s Indianapolis Clowns. The Giants also were interested but Aaron signed with the Braves.

Aaron’s big league debut in 1954 was hardly glowing: he struck out twice and hit into a double play. By season’s end, the rookie had put up promising numbers: 13 homers, 69 RBIs, a .280 average.

Aaron was a full-fledged star in 1957, when he led the Braves to a World Series victory over Mantle’s Yankees. The following year, Milwaukee made it back to the Series, only to blow a 3-1 lead and lose to the Yankees in seven games.

He never came so close to a championship again.

After retiring as a player, Aaron made amends with the Braves. He returned as a vice president and director of player development, a task he held before settling into a largely ceremonial role as senior vice president and assistant to the president in 1989.

He ventured into business, buying fast food chicken franchises, doughnut shops and an automobile dealership. He also dipped into politics as brother-in-law David Scott’s campaign treasurer in a successful race for the U.S. House.

Aaron enjoyed getting out to the ballpark well into his 80s, even after hip replacement surgery forced him to use a walker to get around.

Aaron also spoke out from time to time on some of the game’s most pressing issues. He lobbied against putting Pete Rose in the Hall of Fame. He bemoaned the lack of blacks in upper management. He called on baseball to adopt a tougher drug-testing policy.

But Aaron never singled out Bonds, even making a congratulatory video that was shown the night the home-run record passed to the San Francisco Giants star.

“Records are made to be broken,” Aaron said. “I did my share, whatever I could do, and that’s it.”

On Friday, Bonds offered thanks to Aaron “for everything you ever taught us, for being a trailblazer through adversity and setting an example for all of us African-American ball players who came after you.”

dream belongs to all of us.”

In 2017, Harris easily won election to the U.S. Senate from California, taking the seat that once belonged to the popular Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer.

Just ahead of Vice President Harris’ inauguration, Frederick said her ascension to the second-highest office in America is also a testament of Howard University and HBCUs’ exact role in holding politicians and others accountable.

“HBCUs have always been at the forefront of holding America to account and insisting on better. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has always embodied our ideals of truth and service. We can find no better role model for all leaders and institutions to emulate,” Frederick remarked.

When Harris accepted her 2018 Newsmaker Award from the NNPA, she urged everyone never to forget the community and always lend a hand.

She also spoke about the importance of unifying a nation divided by racism and classism.

“We all come from somewhere, and it’s important that we remember from whence we came,” Harris concluded.

“The Black Press best represents the vehicle in which real and important stories can and have been told. All of the black newspapers know that the best way our voices can be heard is when we use our voices to tell our stories instead of leaving others to tell it.

“The Black Press always played a role in making sure that our community has something it can trust. I cannot think of a moment in time when it’s been more important than ever to support the Black Press. Especially in the face of powerful voices trying to sow hate and dissension in this country.”



# Kamala Harris' Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority sisters celebrate

By Laurel Thrailkill  
and Gabriela Szymanowska  
Associated Press

As Kamala Harris took the oath of vice president Jan. 20, her Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. sisters across Mississippi celebrated the historic moment.

AKA South Eastern Director Mitzi Dease Paige said that many members were “tickled pink and green” to see the first woman of color become vice president.

“Alpha Kappa Alpha is used to being groundbreakers and trailblazers, because we were the first African-American sorority founded in 1908,” Paige said. “So this is not a surprise to me that a member of our organization would be sworn in as the vice president of the United States.”

Paige said many members wore the sorority’s signature pink and green colors, pearls and Chuck Taylor shoes to support Harris.

Juanita Sims Doty, a 49-year member of the sorority, said she wore her pearls as she watched the inauguration. For Doty, who lives in Jackson, the historic moment is something she looks forward to sharing with the sixth-grade students she mentors.



V.P. Harris' Alpha Kappa Alpha sisters from across Mississippi gather in Jackson to celebrate her election in pink and green, pearls and Chuck sneakers.

“I think I’m going to use that with the children that we serve to say that we see Vice President Harris, we see President Obama,” Doty said. “They were the first, but they certainly won’t be the last.”

Candie Simmons, president of the sorority’s Beta Delta Omega Chapter in Jackson, said the inauguration is a his-

toric day.

“I think that today is a great day because now, we as black women, officially have a seat at the table,” Simmons said. “We made history by having one of our members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc. become the vice president of the United States.” Simmons said she is celebrating at home because of

COVID-19.

“But I assure you if COVID were not in the air, you’d see pink and green all over restaurants, in the streets and all types of celebrations going on today,” Simmons said.

Gloria Salters, president of the sorority’s Rho Lambda Omega Chapter, said she participated in a virtual watch

party where she said tears and cheers were shared among members.

“I think the emotions were all over the place, but it was because we just had so much pride,” said Salters, whose chapter also is based in Jackson. “So many of the members just said they just never thought that they would ever

see this and for us to see this with our very own sorority sister, we were just overjoyed.”

Salters said Harris’ inauguration shines a light on the power of black women and that anything can be accomplished by women working together.

“Vice President Harris has said it over and over again, she couldn’t have done this by herself,” Salters said.

Wednesday evening, Jan. 20, Simmons said a virtual celebration was planned for members with 75 or more years of service who would make special tributes to Harris.

The organization is also flooding social media with a special social media frame they created and photos of themselves wearing pearls and pink.

“We have a saying – ‘Got my pearls,’ meaning I have my pearls, replicating our founders and what they stood for,” Simmons said, adding that she has on her pearls in support of Harris.

The significance of Jan. 20 also resonated with younger girls not yet a part of the organization, as Salters said her 9-year-old goddaughter wore her own pearls in honor of the historic moment.

## MPB's THE BLACK CHURCH virtual panel discussion

Mississippi Link Newswire

“THEBLACKCHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG” is a two-part documentary series that will premiere in February 2021 on PBS stations nationwide. This intimate four-hour series is from executive producer, host and writer Henry Louis Gates Jr.

Partnering with the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, a panel discussion on the series will be held Tuesday, Feb. 9, 7-8:15 p.m., via Zoom. Persons interested can register through Eventbrite. (Website [www.ps.org/show/black-church/](http://www.ps.org/show/black-church/)) (Hashtag: #BlackChurchPBS).

Comedienne/musician Rita Brent will moderate the discussion. Participating choirs/ensembles from JSU, Tougaloo and Rust College will send in their performances.

MPB Television will compile 4-5 interstitials of individuals answering such questions as:

- What does your church mean to you?
- How has your church influenced your life?
- Do you have a favorite memory or experience from church?
- How do you describe the value of the black church today compared to during the Civil Rights Movement?

Part One traces the

400-year-old story of the black church in America, beginning with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the extraordinary ways enslaved Africans preserved and adapted their faith practices under the brutal realities of human bondage. Part Two focuses on the role of the black church in addressing social inequality and ministering to those in need, from the exodus out of the Jim Crow South during the Great Migration to the heroic phase of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and ‘60s.

The series examines the church as a living institution, and the changing nature of worship spaces.

The churches Gates visits are both a world within a world, where black Americans could be themselves, and the epicenter of the freedom struggle.

The series includes interviews with prominent figures including Oprah Winfrey, Jennifer Hudson and John Legend; Bishops Michael Curry, Yvette Flunder and Vashti Murphy McKenzie and Rev. William Barber.

### Other Details

In addition to the production, there will be a publicity, social media and community engagement campaign, as well as the development of educational materials.

### Production Credits

THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG is a production of McGee Media, Inkwell Media and WETA Washington, D.C. in association with Get Lifted.

Henry Louis Gates Jr. is the writer, host and executive producer. Dyllan McGee, John Legend, Ty Stiklorius and Mike Jackson are executive producers. John F. Wilson is the executive producer in charge for WETA. Bill Gardner is the executive producer in charge for PBS. Stacey L. Holman is the series producer and director. Christopher Bryson and Shayla Harris are producers/directors. Deborah C. Porfido is the supervising producer. Kevin Burke is producer. Robert L. Yacyszyn is the line producer. Christine Fall is the archival producer.

### Funding Credits

Major corporate support for THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG is provided by Johnson & Johnson. Major support is also provided by the Lilly Endowment Inc., Ford Foundation and by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS and public television viewers.

### Airdates

The two-part series air dates and times are 8-10 p.m. Feb. 16 and Feb. 17 on MPB Television.

HOSTED BY HENRY LOUIS GATES JR.

## THE BLACK CHURCH

THIS IS OUR STORY. THIS IS OUR SONG.

THIS FEBRUARY PBS

Join  
Mississippi Public Broadcasting  
Mississippi Civil Rights Museum  
Museum of Mississippi History

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Panelists

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Pamela Junior - Two Mississippi Museums

Lannie Spann McBride - Music Minister, Retired Educator and Composer

Moderator  
Cherita Brent - Comedienne/Musician

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# New Stage Theatre announces Arts-in-Education virtual productions for streaming in classrooms

## Mississippi Link Newswire

New Stage Theatre, a professional theatre located in Jackson, Mississippi, announces virtual productions for its statewide Arts-in-Education program available to schools, libraries and community centers during the winter and spring of 2021. New Stage is offering the productions to schools and communities for \$35/classroom or \$250/school. A comprehensive study guide for teachers is provided prior to the performance.

This season, New Stage will present *Who Are You Calling Ugly? A Modern Duck Tale*, *If Not Us, Then Who? Freedom Rides to Freedom Summer*, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Andrea & the Lion: A Gratitude Story*, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Debate for Democracy* as virtual productions. All six shows will be available for Mississippi schools via secure links.

### **Who Are You Calling Ugly? A Modern Duck Tale**

Written by Sharon Miles; featuring Ellie Boisseau, Jaymi Horn, Devin Hunter and Christopher Sferra

This contemporary adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's *Ugly Duckling* will ignite the imagination and engage young audiences everywhere. This updated, fast-paced version follows the story of Una, a young duckling struggling to find her way in the 21st century. Children are invited to interact with the cast as they follow Una along her journey of self-discovery; meeting a host of colorful characters and acquiring new vocabulary and problem-solving skills in this 50-minute story. This show is best suited for elementary school audiences.

### **If Not Us, Then Who? Freedom Rides to Freedom Summer**

Written by Sharon Miles; featuring Ellie Boisseau, Jaymi Horn, Devin Hunter and Christopher Sferra

This original play with music chronicles two historic events that made an unforgettable impact on American history and Mississippi. In 1961 thirteen "Freedom Riders" began a journey to fight racial segregation. In 1964, Mis-



sissippians and out-of-state volunteers alike organized "Freedom Summer," a massive voter registration drive to give African Americans a voice in politics. Interspersed with freedom songs from the movement, this production encourages us to remember that America is at her best when we are working for the common good of all of its citizens. Featuring stories from famous participants like Fannie Lou Hamer and Senator John Lewis, as well as lesser-known heroes like James Zwerg and Diane Nash, whose brave stories culminated in one historic summer will forever inspire us all. *If Not Us, Then Who?* is best suited for middle and high school audiences.

### **Macbeth**

Written by William Shakespeare, adapted by Francine Thomas Reynolds; featuring Ellie Boisseau, Jaymi Horn, Devin Hunter and Christopher Sferra

*Macbeth* follows the story of a Scottish nobleman approached by three weird sisters with a prophecy that he shall be king. Encouraged by his wife, he begins to embrace and create the future that was seemingly promised. Driven and inspired by the desire for power, *Macbeth* struggles with his conscience and chooses a tragic path. In this timely play, Shakespeare closely examines the soul of a man as he succumbs to ambition, the seduction of unchecked power, and fate verses free will. This physically and emotionally charged 60-minute abridged production is a superb introduction to the classic tragedy of Shakespeare's *Mac-*

*beth*. This show is best suited for middle and high school audiences.

### **Andrea & the Lion: A Gratitude Story**

Written by Sharon Miles; featuring Ethan Hartfield, Josiah Hite, Rylee McKenzie, Oluchi Nwaokorie, Marshall Robertson and Chloe Vizier

Aesop's folktale classic, *Androcles and The Lion* has been produced in multiple countries all over the world. This story of gratitude, full of adventure, fun and vital life lessons – comes to life in this new original stage adaptation; *Andrea and The Lion!* *Andrea's* parents have to work late, leaving her home to care for her younger, stir-crazy, zoom fatigued siblings – in the midst of a global pandemic. Everyone is miserable. *Andrea* must think fast on her feet before the entire evening goes off the rails. This new, fast-paced, story-within-a-story celebrates the resourcefulness of the human spirit through selfless acts of kindness, compassion and team work. Join us for *Andrea and The Lion*, an innovative story of rediscovering the gift of gratitude. This show is best suited for elementary school audiences.

### **A Midsummer Night's Dream**

Written by William Shakespeare; adapted by Francine Thomas Reynolds; featuring Chance Anding, Lauren Gunn, Caleb Henry, Devin Hunter, Varah Potter, Jasmine Rivera and Ben Rodenmeyer

One of William Shakespeare's most popular works, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is widely performed across the

world. Francine Thomas Reynolds' adaption keeps the beauty of Shakespeare's language and places the story in the soil of the Mississippi Delta – the heart of American Blues music. *Hermia* is brought in to see *Theseus* and *Hippolyta* because she wants to marry *Lysander* but her father expects her to marry *Demetrius* who *Helena* is in love with. The four lovers escape to a forest where they fall victim to *Oberon* and *Titania's* storm and where a company of blue-collar mechanicals are rehearsing a play for the *Theseus'* wedding day. What could possibly go wrong? This adaptation of *Midsummer* captures the heart of the Delta Blues and delivers an engaging performance for all to enjoy. This show is best suited for middle and high school audiences.

### **The Debate for Democracy**

Written by Sharon Miles; featuring: Ashia Benford, Devin Hunter and Sharon Miles

The fight for democracy will always be led by the oppressed. During the monumental civil rights movement, national, and local leaders were unwavering in their belief that the promises foretold in the U.S. Constitution should apply to all its citizens. While the mission was unified, there was often heated debate about the best approach to change. In August 1964, a coalition of grassroots activists from Mississippi challenged the racially-exclusive political system of America. Mississippi blacks seeking the right to vote were subjected to violence and intimidation. Therefore, when barred from participating in the state's Democratic Party, The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was founded. The Debate for Democracy documents this landmark activism that questioned the morals and ethics of America. Explore behind-the-scene conversations, decisions, and the meeting that led MFDP delegates to decline President Lyndon B Johnson's two seat compromise. The Debate for Democracy examines the position of national civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., renowned com-

munity organizer *Ella Baker* and Mississippi's own *Fannie Lou Hamer*.

New Stage is offering these productions to schools and communities for \$35/classroom or \$250/school. A comprehensive study guide for teachers is provided. Various virtual workshops for students and teachers are available with or without a performance, as well.

Past workshops have included Creative Drama, Basic Acting, Stand Up with Shakespeare, Dramatizing Stories, Playwriting 101 and Stage Combat.

Teacher Workshops are available for schools as professional development as well.

New Stage has a strong reputation for presenting quality performances and has been touring successfully to high school and middle schools since 1990. The tours typically travel throughout the state, from Clarksdale to New Albany to Gautier and most of the public school districts New Stage visits are to underserved audiences. In the 2018-2019 season, the professional apprentice company performed to 77 schools.

Winner of the 2019 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, New Stage Theatre was chartered as a not-for-profit organization in 1965, producing its initial season in the winter/spring of 1966. Founded by Jane Reid-Petty with the assistance of the American National Theatre Academy and Actor's Equity Association, dedication to professional excellence in theatre arts was part of the theatre's original mission. New Stage's education department was founded in 1989 and received the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1995 for its efforts to introduce tens of thousands of young Mississippians to live theatre.

The New Stage Arts-in-Education virtual program is sponsored by Entergy Mississippi, The Chisholm Foundation, and the Fountain Family Foundation.

*For pricing, more information or to schedule a tour or workshop contact Education Director Sharon Miles at 601-948-3533 ext. 232 or smiles@newstage-theatre.com.*



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# 90-year-old cancer survivor a Mississippi town’s superwoman

By Ernest Herndon  
The Associated Press

Zenell Ott turned 90 Jan. 26. She has survived three different types of cancer and a fall that broke her pelvis and tailbone. Yet she still walks two miles a day.

Well, she did up until it got cold and windy. That knocked her back to a mile – still not bad for someone missing part of her lungs.

“I’ve avoided the word ‘can’t’ all my life. I just feel like I can do things,” Ott said.

“I was walking two miles before it got cold. That’s my goal, to get back to two miles.”

That attitude is an inspiration to her younger friends.

“She doesn’t use her health as an excuse for not doing something,” said Diane Harrell of Osyka. “She’s the first one there, and she’s going to be there as soon as she can.”

Ott got her COVID-19 vaccination on her birthday and said it was her birthday present.

Just because she’s 90 doesn’t mean she’s old-fashioned.

“She’s a huge Lynyrd Skynyrd fan,” Harrell said. “She made Lynn (Williams) take her out to the monument.”

When they got there, Nell recognized the title of the song “Gimme Three Steps” and recited the story behind the song, Williams said.

## Cancer, Round 1

Zenell Raborn Ott was born and raised in Osyka. “The church and school were the activities,” she said. “I was just blessed to have good Christian teachers.”

She went to Southwest Mississippi Community College on a basketball scholarship and got her bachelor’s degree at Southeastern Louisiana University.

She substitute-taught, and she and her late husband Wiltz would take kids swimming after Wiltz got off his mail route.

“He would run all over Osyka picking up kids to take to the Tangipahoa River,” said Diane Harrell’s husband Jamie. “It’s no telling how many they learned how to swim.”

“When they took them out, they made them behave,” added Lynn Williams.

Ott took graduate courses at University of Southern Mississippi – until cancer intervened.

“At 37 was when I had my first bout of cancer. Then it was just kind of tough with four children,” she said, referring to Richard, Wesley, Ginny and Ross. “The oldest was 14 and the youngest was 4.”

She was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy.

“Back then it was one out of three that survived. Look at the survival rate now,” she said.

“I’ve lived to see miraculous things in the medical field. God gave those people the knowledge. That’s a gift from God. I just don’t know how people survive who don’t have God in their lives, and family. I couldn’t make it without my family.”

Ott is a lifelong member and former Sunday school teacher at Osyka Baptist Church, where Wiltz – who died in 2001 at age 89 – was a deacon and treasurer. She has eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and two on the way.

“I think one of the greatest joys of being old is my grandkids are adults,” she said. “It’s so great for us to sit here and have a conversation.”

## Cancer, Rounds 2 And 3

In the late 1980s, Ott came down with a sore throat.? When Wiltz felt her neck, he noticed her lymph glands were enlarged. They went to Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans, where she was diagnosed with lung



Ott

cancer.

Friends told her they didn’t know she smoked.

“I didn’t,” she said. “It was second-hand smoke. Back then all my friends smoked except me.”

She underwent surgery to remove the upper part of her lungs and was put on the cancer-fighting drug Tamoxifen, taken in pill form.

Diane Harrell recalls when Nell was about to undergo the surgery.

“Wiltz came in the bank and it was a couple days before her surgery,” said Harrell, a retired banker. “He teared up and he said, ‘If it could just be me that was having this surgery and not Nellie.’”

“The next day Nell came in, not knowing Wiltz had been in. She teared up and said, ‘I’m not worried about myself. I’m worried about Wiltz.’”

Nell was worried about Wiltz driving back and forth to New Orleans to tend to her.

“One was so worried about the other one, and I will never forget that. They had lived their life like that,” Harrell said.

“They were so influential in Osyka. ... I respect her more than anybody I know.”

Nine years ago, Ott went to see a nurse practitioner because of abdominal trouble. The nurse sent her to the emergency room at Ochsner, where she was diagnosed with uterine cancer.

“I told them I am 80 years old, my first trip to an emergency room,” she said.

She underwent surgery within a week. As usual, she looked on the bright side.

“The oncologist said usually it’s breast to lung to brain,” she said.

She underwent several rounds of radiation, which were excruciating at first. But they worked. Two weeks ago her oncologist told her she’s cancer-free and doesn’t need to come back.

## Broken Pelvis

Ten months ago Ott was getting ready to hand the Waste Management garbage collectors some money to buy themselves pizza for lunch when she tripped and fell in her living room.

“Wes (her son) had his radio on and didn’t hear my phone, so I called Linda Williams. She’s my go-to.? She got help,” Ott said.

“We went to McComb. I couldn’t ask for better treatment at that hospital (Southwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center). We are blessed to have them.”

She learned she had broken her pelvis and tailbone. She spent four weeks at Camellia Estates undergoing physical therapy.

“Those therapists were wonderful,” she said. “The sitting was the thing. That hurt worse than anything.”

“You don’t know how thankful and how blessed I have been. God got my attention.”

As she sees it, she had been overly prideful about her ability to walk without tripping. The fall was her comeuppance.

But she’s back on the move, walking and watching the birds and wild-life through the window of her den.

And visiting.

“In Osyka, to everybody I’m Aunt Nell or Mama Ott,” Ott said. “It’s kind of difficult to explain to people how we’re related.”

# I AM A MAN Photography Exhibition opens Jan. 30

The Mississippi Link Newswire

The special exhibition I AM A MAN: Civil Rights Photographs in the American South, 1960-1970 will open Saturday, January 30, at the Two Mississippi Museums. The exhibition will feature a wide range of images that captured key events of the Civil Rights Movement across the South. The exhibit takes its name from a slogan featured on protest signs carried by sanitation workers on strike in Memphis.

First shown in Montpellier, France, at the Pavillon Populaire in 2018, the photographs in I AM A MAN document the hope and determination of the Civil Rights Movement in the face of oppression and violence. William R. Ferris – Joel R. Williamson Eminent Professor of History Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, former chairman of the National Endowment of the Humanities, and founding director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi –curated the original exhibition.

The exhibition’s Mississippi focus will include photographs of James Meredith’s integration of the University of Mississippi in 1962, events surrounding the murder of Vernon Dahmer in 1966 and the Poor People’s Campaign in 1968.

“These photographs are vessels of truth – truth about the courage of protestors who faced unimaginable violence and brutality,” said Ferris. “The photographs capture the quiet determination of elders and the angry commitment of the young, and they also remind us how far we have to go. Photographs taken in Mississippi underscore Governor William Winter’s



The African American Burial Grounds initiative would provide grant opportunities and technical assistance to local communities as they work to recover and preserve those historic sites.

remark that we are “halfway home, and a long way to go.”

The twelve photographers include Norman Dean, Doris Derby, Roland L. Freeman, Robert Langmuir, James “Spider” Martin, Calvert McCann, Winfred Moncrief, Jim Peppler, Bruce Roberts, Art Shay, Don Sturkey and Ernest C. Withers.

A discussion of the I AM A MAN exhibit featuring Ferris and Two Mississippi Museums director Pamela D.C. Junior will be held virtually at 11 a.m., January 30. The program will stream live from the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum Facebook page. The I AM A MAN exhibit will run through August 21, 2021.

Safety precautions at the museums include requiring all visitors to wear masks and observe social distancing

guidelines. Masks are available on-site. All public spaces have been sanitized, and thorough cleaning will continue every day. Hand sanitizing stations are provided and staff are on-site to ensure that social distancing guidelines are maintained. A limited number of visitors are allowed inside the museums at one time.

Visitors are encouraged to purchase their tickets online at tickets.mdah.ms.gov. The maximum number of people per group is twenty. Regular museum hours are Tuesday-Saturday 9 a.m.–4 p.m. The museums are open free of charge on Sundays from noon–4 p.m.

The museums are located at 222 North Street in Jackson.

For more information email info@mdah.ms.gov.

# Health Dept: Weekly vaccine allocation remains consistent

The Associated Press

Mississippi is expecting to receive around 37,000 doses of coronavirus vaccine this week from the federal government, the same allocation the state has received for the last several weeks, state Department of Health spokesperson Liz Sharlot said Tuesday.

“Of course, additional vaccine would be wonderful but for now, we are receiving what we expected,” Sharlot wrote in an email.

Sharlot said health officials haven’t noticed any changes to Mississippi’s vaccine allocation in the last week since newly-inaugurated President Joe Biden

took office.

Mississippi is using 19 drive-thru facilities, clinics and hospitals to complete vaccinations for those 65 and older, healthcare workers and those who are at least 16 and have health conditions that might make them more vulnerable to the virus.

Since the state began vaccinating residents, appointments at drive-thru clinics have been limited due to high demand. As of Tuesday, 175,417 people in Mississippi have received their first dose of vaccine, and 18,012 have received their first and second dose, according to data provided by the Department of Health.

Mississippi has a population of around 3 million.

The department reported Tuesday that Mississippi had 1,452 new confirmed cases of the virus as of Monday evening. The department also reported 75 deaths Tuesday, 49 of which happened between Jan. 15 and Monday. The state has reported about 266,598 cases of the virus and 5,852 related deaths since the start of the pandemic.

People eligible to receive the coronavirus vaccine can try to make an appointment at COVIDvaccine.umc.edu or by calling the COVID-19 call center at 1-877-978-6453.

# Mississippi county to put up marker for lynching victims

Associated Press

A Mississippi county will put up a marker to remember black men who were lynched by white mobs between 1885 and 1935. It will be near a statue that honors Confederate soldiers.

Lafayette County supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to approve the memorial for seven black men known to have been lynched in the county during the 50-year span.

The vote originally was scheduled for December, but it was delayed because one supervisor, David Rikard, said he did not want to memorialize a man who was accused of killing a white woman in 1908.

News outlets reported that Rikard

met with a committee that planned the marker, and they agreed that the marker would say Lawson Patton was “accused in the murder of a white woman.” The original proposal was to say the man was “accused in the death of a white woman.” The metal sign will go outside the county courthouse on the Square in Oxford, near a marble statue of a Confederate soldier that was put up in 1907.

Calls to remove the Confederate monument have intensified in recent months amid the national discussion over racial injustice, but the all-white Board of Supervisors has said the soldier statue will remain.

Many lynching victims in the U.S. were black people who were accused –

sometimes falsely – of committing a violent crime.

Patton never went to trial because a white mob seized him from the Lafayette County Jail and lynched him. Patton was sometimes called Nelse Patton in documents. According to the New York Times’ 1908 account of the lynching, W.V. Sullivan, a former U.S. senator from Mississippi, led the lynch mob.

The group that got approval to put the marker on the courthouse lawn is the Lynching Memorialization in Lafayette County Committee, which has worked with the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal aid organization seeking to reshape the narrative around lynchings and acts of racial terror.



# Low blood sugar-hypoglycemia

By Vince Faust  
The Mississippi Link Newswire

Most people worry about having high blood sugar levels but having low blood sugar levels can also be dangerous. Hyperglycemia means that you have too much blood glucose. It happens when your blood glucose level is around 200 mg/dL or higher. Low blood sugar called hypoglycemia is 70 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or lower.

Early symptoms of hypoglycemia include:

- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Feeling shaky
- Hunger
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Pounding heart; racing pulse
- Pale skin
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Weakness
- Anxiety

Without treatment you might get more severe symptoms that include:

- Poor coordination
- Poor concentration
- Numbness in mouth and tongue
- Passing out
- Seizures
- Nightmares or bad dreams
- Coma

According to the CDC there are many reasons why you may have low blood sugar called hypoglycemia that include:

- Taking too much insulin
- Not eating enough carbs for how much insulin you take
- Timing of when you take your insulin
- The amount and timing of physical activity
- Drinking alcohol
- How much fat, protein and fiber are in your meal
- Hot and humid weather
- Unexpected changes in your schedule
- Spending time at a high altitude
- Going through puberty
- Menstruation

Hypoglycemia can cause real life problems. Driving a car, working out, operating machinery or just walking down steps can become a big issue. A study of drivers that suffer from low blood sugar found that one in 14 had been involved in a car accident because of a low blood sugar incident. All of the symptoms for hypoglycemia suggest that caution should be made when you've had a hypoglycemia incident. Most health care professionals recommend you



should be cautious even the next day if you've had problems with hypoglycemia because the cause of your low blood sugar issue may still be affecting your blood sugar levels.

It's important that your family members and friends know you have had a low blood sugar reaction.

If you see someone having a severe hypoglycemic reaction, call 911 or take them to the nearest hospital for treatment. Do not try to give an unconscious person food, fluids, or insulin as they may choke.

If you have hypoglycemia the CDC recommendations include:

- Follow your meal plan
  - Eat at least three evenly spaced meals each day with between-meal snacks as prescribed
  - Plan your meals no more than 4 to 5 hours apart
  - Exercise 30 minutes to 1 hour after meals. Check your sugars before and after exercise and discuss with your doctor what types of changes can be made
  - Double-check your insulin and dose of diabetes medicine before taking it
  - If you drink alcohol, be moderate and monitor your blood sugar levels
  - Know when your medicine is at its peak level
  - Test your blood sugar as often as directed by your doctor
  - Carry an identification bracelet that says you have diabetes
- People taking medication to lower their blood sugar need to be aware of any symptoms of oncom-

ing hypoglycemic episodes.

Everyone list regular exercise as an item for the prevention, treatment or part of the cure for diseases. Hypoglycemia is one of the conditions that exercise can help, prevent and control.

If you have never worked out or you're out of shape see your doctor to get approval to start a program. You have to work your way into a program gradually. If you're coming back from a long lay off (over 6 weeks) due to an injury or similar reason you need to be very careful and follow your doctor's orders.

A good beginner workout would consist of a light aerobic workout like brisk walking and basic calisthenics like push-ups for the shoulders, chest, back and triceps, crunches for the abdominal area, squats for thighs and calve raises for calve muscles.

An aerobics workout will help you burn fat after 20 minutes of continuous movement. It takes the body 20 minutes to switch from anaerobic exercise to the fat burning stage during a workout. Some examples of aerobic work-

outs include 20 minutes or more of brisk walking, jogging, bicycling, skating, swimming, walking in a pool, aerobics, dancing, racquetball and jumping rope. Workouts, which include a lot of stop and go movements will burn calories but are not considered aerobic. These include karate, volleyball, weight training, sprinting, tennis, ballet and gymnastics.

Ideally you should do an aerobic workout to burn fat and some strengthening resistance exercises to develop and tone muscle tissue.

If you're a beginner have someone who knows what they're doing take you through your first few workouts. Lifting weights can be dangerous if you don't do the exercises correctly. Always concentrate on what you're doing. Being careless and taking your movements for granted can cause injury. Concentrating on each repetition when you workout will also recruit more muscle fibers to do work making each repetition more efficient.

A complete workout should include exercises for each body part. This will include the chest, shoulders, triceps, back, biceps, forearm, thighs, calves and your abdominals (midsection). Start with 2 or 3 different exercises for each body part. Gradually work up to 8-12 repetitions for each exercise. Do each exercise 1-3 times to start. If you can do more than 12 repetitions for a set the weight is too light. If you can't do at least 8 repetitions for a set the weight is too heavy.

If you've had a low blood sugar episode, make sure you share your blood sugar, insulin, physical activity and food logs with your doctor. Your healthcare professional may be able to see patterns and help prevent lows by adjusting the timing and amount of your medications, physical activity and meals. You should know how to identify low blood sugar. Hypoglycemia can be dangerous if left untreated.



## Mississippi opens new drive-thru vaccination site in Jackson

By Leah Willingham  
Associated Press/Report for America

Mississippi has opened its first drive-thru site for coronavirus vaccinations in the capital city, a move that officials said they hoped would make shots more accessible to African Americans, who have received the vaccine in much smaller numbers than whites.

The state's 19th drive-thru site opened Thursday at Smith-Wills Stadium in Jackson, said Jim Craig, senior deputy and director of health protection at the state Department of Health.

"It was welcome to see a lot of Mississippians who had appointments coming in to get their shots," Craig said during a Department of Health briefing.

The department has operated 18 drive-thru vaccination sites in different regions of the state for three weeks. Shots are available for healthcare workers, people 65 and over and those who are at least 16 and have health conditions that might make them more vulnerable to the virus. Vaccinations are also continuing at long-term care facilities through a program run by CVS, Walgreens and the federal government.

The state previously allocated small numbers of doses to some private clinics and community health centers in the Jackson area. Until Thursday, however, there was no vaccination site in Jackson or in the rest of Hinds County, the state's most populous, and also majority black. Residents reported traveling upwards of an hour for vaccinations because of an influx of demand at the sites nearest to the capital.

Only 15% of the vaccinations administered so far in Mississippi have been to black residents, compared to around 70% of vaccinations for white residents, according to the Health Department. Blacks represent 38% of the population.

A drive-thru site at Trustmark Park in the city of Pearl in nearby Rankin County was originally opened to serve both counties. Craig said the Health Department looked to open drive-thru clinics in areas that already had state drive-thru testing sites. However, officials realized a drive-thru site in Hinds County was necessary to meet the demand. The Smith-Wills Stadium site will be used for vaccinations only.

Craig said the state is looking at adding more vaccination sites in the coming weeks.

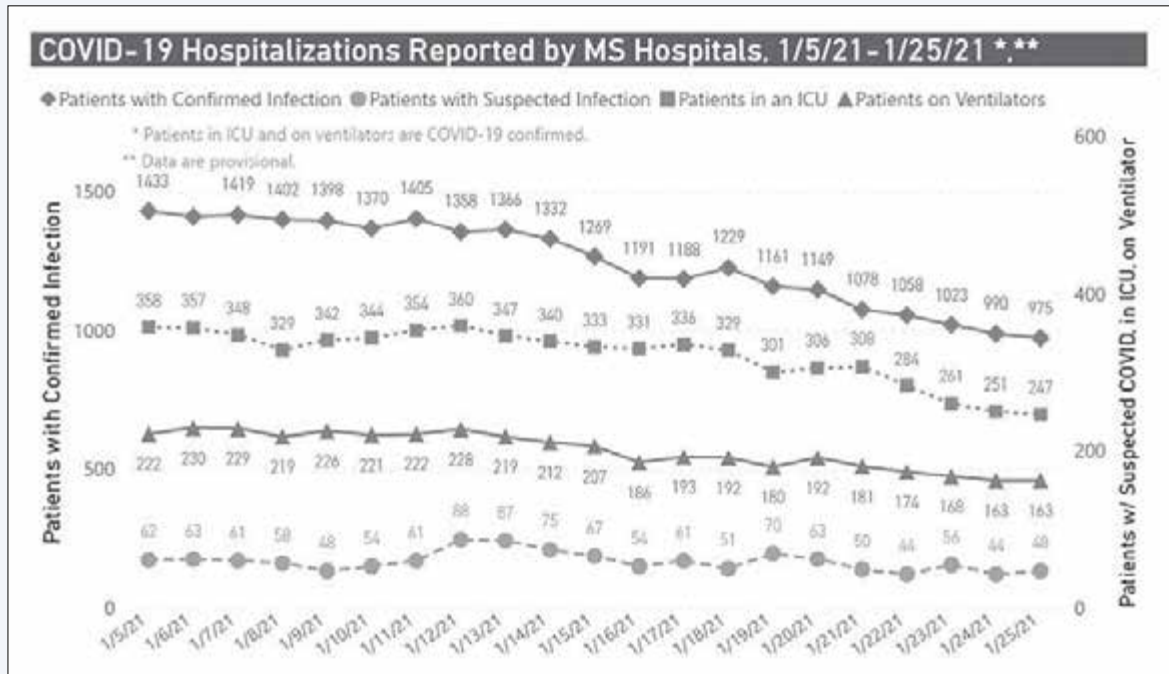
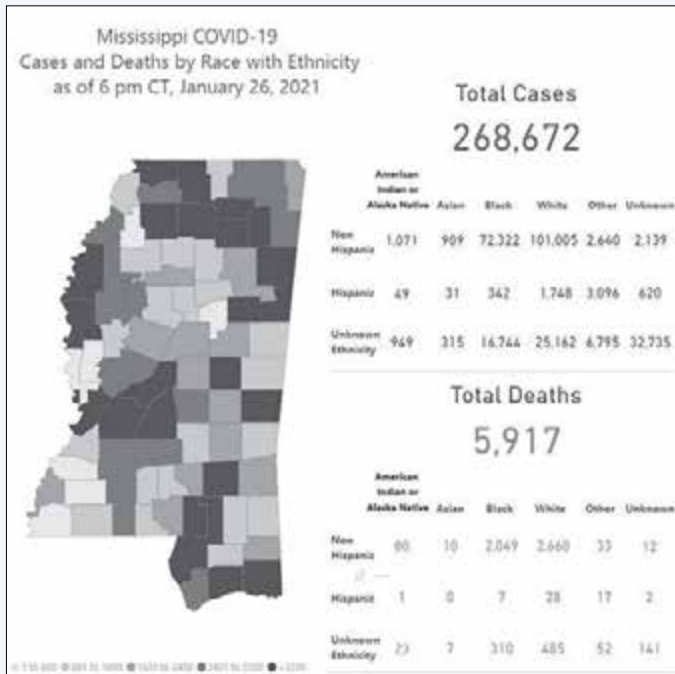
"We would like to increase geography and we're going to work with some partners to try to help do that," Craig said. "But with the limited doses that are available in our state, there's really just no way to have vaccine available everywhere in the state at the same time."

Mississippi is receiving approximately 37,000 doses a week from the federal government, the Health Department said.

The department reported Thursday that Mississippi had 2,290 new confirmed cases of the virus as of Wednesday evening. The department also reported 30 deaths Thursday, 28 of which happened between Jan. 8 and Wednesday. The state has reported nearly 259,117 cases of the virus and 5,668 related deaths since the start of the pandemic.

People eligible to receive the coronavirus vaccine can try to make an appointment at COVID-vaccine.ume.edu or by calling the COVID-19 call center at 1-877-978-6453.

## MISSISSIPPI COVID-19 UPDATE





# Watch and Pray

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



God's work is not finished. That which we have accomplished thus far is only a stepping stone in the sense that every high place gained for God is just a step to go on to do greater things in the Kingdom of God. If we are saved, we have been called into the service of the Master. Going on to great victories in the service of God takes total, unreserved cooperation by all who are involved.

Nehemiah triumphed because he was doing a work that God had started, and God empowered the work through the Holy Spirit. Jesus lets us know that without Him we can do nothing. God empowers His people to do

the work that is necessary in the Kingdom of God.

Nehemiah's job would never have been a success without the origin of his work being in the heart of God. Our God has one great and burning passion upon His heart, and that is to find men and women all over the world so he can fill them with His Holy Spirit that they might become channels to do the greatest work that God has ever wrought, which is the salvation of mankind.

God's plan is to save men and women from the flesh and from the devil, before it is too late. Certainly, we as God's people have that burden. If we are truly saved and the Holy Spirit is dwelling within our hearts, we have a passion to see souls saved. That passion will sometimes awaken us in the night and stir us to see the needs of the

multitudes.

This world that we are living in is quickly ripening for the day of final judgment. The work that God has wrought, that of the salvation of souls, should be our one great concern. It is the job of the Holy Spirit, working through the saints, to rescue the perishing from an eternal hell before God's final hour of judgment strikes. God's desire is that we be used in the Kingdom of God.

The completion of the wall at Jerusalem marked a tremendous victory and a great achievement for Nehemiah and God's people, but there was no time for relaxation on the part of the builders. Throughout all the country surrounding Jerusalem were enemies of God's people who were eager to attack in spite of the wall. Jerusalem was in perpetual danger from her en-

emies. Saints, let us beware. Our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion is walking about, seeking whom he may devour.

We are the children of light, so let us watch, be sober, and pray. Let us maintain the battlements within our personal lives. Let us maintain our personal convictions. Fight the good fight of faith and press the battle on so that we can say as the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course."

My prayer is that we will watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. (Read Nehemiah, Old Testament and 1st & 2nd Timothy, New Testament).

Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joynea Road Church of God, 31 Joynea 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

## First things first... Revisited: Prayers for the president

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



Back in 2009, I wrote that regardless of whether you greeted the inauguration of President Barack Obama with great jubilation or fear, one of the best things we could do to support him was to pray. Now that we have a new president who appears more authentic about his faith, I want to remind us about the importance of praying for those who rule over us (like President Biden) found in 1 Timothy 2:1-2: I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Keeping this in mind, I want to share this prayer written by late Rev. Dr. Jerome McNeil, Jr. for the inauguration of former President Obama that I think still applies. I've modified for our current President Joe Biden:

Dear Lord,  
We come before your precious name with thanksgiving and sincere appreciation for the answer to the prayers of your people. We thank you for answering the cries of your people for a new presidential administration that is sensitive to the needs of people and no longer dismissive. We surrender all anxiety to your providential care as we continue this transition in leadership. We pray, dear Lord, that you will guide President Biden in every aspect of his life and decisions. Lord, keep him dependent on you and unashamed to represent you before the masses. We seek your counsel on his behalf in matters of justice, peace and finance. May you grant him favor

with the unfavorable and a fervent sense of balance in the affairs of the nation. Give him spiritual insight into the turbulent affairs of the world and special grace with leaders throughout this nation. Please become the final voice in all his deliberations and awaken his conscience in matters of supreme importance. Lord, let him maintain the trust of the people as he trusts you. Surround him with men and women of high integrity and spare him from those who are seekers of selfish desires. Cover him with your love and provide him times of renewal and soul searching. Grant total care of his family and allow them some normalcy in the midst of the mayhem of leadership responsibilities. Provide them with friends that will truly keep them balanced and dependent upon you. Lord, keep the Biden family safe and joyful and able to generate a sense of your presence at all times. We also pray for wisdom, insight and protection for Vice President Kamala Harris and her family. Allow your mercy, wisdom and strength to overshadow Mr. Biden in his role as President of the United States of America. Continue to speak to him and given him divine insight and revelation as he develops and implements solutions to the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, divisive racial injustice and the disconnecting delusions and deceptions that have blinded the eyes of some citizens of the United States. We pray, believe and expect this in the name of our rock and savior in Jesus we remain. Amen.

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 preservedby-purpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.

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231-A John Day Road • Off Hwy 16 East • Canton, MS 39046  
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# The Republican Party made of recycled parts

By Leon Williams  
Contributing Writer

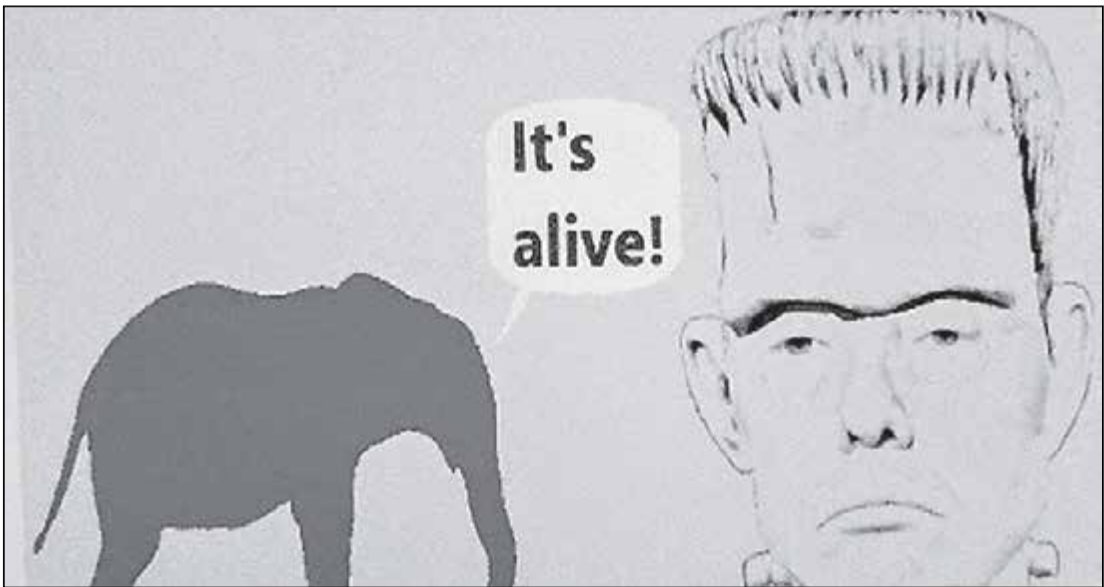


Republicans often refer to Ronald Reagan as the standard-bearer in modern-day American politics. This characterization is troubling, considering Reagan was never accepted as a guardian of African-American causes. In fact, from the outset of his candidacy, much like Trump, he used race as a springboard by launching his initial bid for the presidency at a rally before an all-white throng in Neshoba County, Mississippi; just minutes from the site where three civil rights workers, Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney, were brutally murdered by a white mob which included members of local law enforcement.

In truth, Reagan was the chauffeur for The Republican Party's journey to its current state of turmoil. His success at being a specialist in dog-whistle politics created the underground universe that has allowed racism to surreptitiously propel the Republican party for decades. Despite countless warning signs, the party continued its downward spiral, disregarding shifting American demographics. The party's failure to rein in its anti-American elements set into motion the autoimmune disorder currently personified as Donald Trump.

Now the Republican establishment is in upheaval as to the best route forward. Their unwillingness to acknowledge their own complicity in the rise of Trump is the linchpin; and it does not appear any such recognition, at least publicly, is imminent.

In 1818 Mary Shelley wrote



the novel *Frankenstein*, the story of a monster created in a laboratory from recycled human body parts taken from corpses. Ironically, much like the Republican Party's failure to acknowledge Trump as their creation, Shelley originally wrote the novel under a pseudonym. The essence of the story deals with the super-human Frankenstein monster breaking loose in a laboratory housed in a castle. Once the monster was free, it immediately turned on its creators. Trump, created from recycled ideological parts of Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, demonstrates his extraordinary political potency by his public disparagement of Americans by race, class and gender with seemingly no apparent negative repercussions.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Democrats recognized Trump as a destructive force to the substructure of American democracy. However, they made two critically incorrect calculations: one, that Trump would never reach the White House in the first place;

and the other, that he would self-destruct, bringing the Republican Party down with him. While Democrats watched, Trump, during his initial presidential campaign, terrorized sixteen other Republican presidential candidates and the Republican establishment. Their hope was he would never get out of the laboratory.

Additionally, Democrats and Republicans alike failed to foresee that, just as in the *Frankenstein* novel, once out of the castle-enclosed laboratory, the monster did not have the ability of political discernment and would be coming after everyone. Women, Gold Star families, NFL players, the media, The Pope, Republican operatives, Muslims, Hispanics, the disabled and African Americans all share the common distinction of having been beset upon by Trump.

Shelley's novel ends with the monster realizing it has no future. It voluntarily floats away on an iceberg and is never seen again. The creator of the monster, Dr. Victor Frankenstein,

meets his death running away from the creature. In a similar fashion, the Republican party approaches self-destruction as it scrambles to distance itself from Trump. Americans must use every political and legal apparatus at their disposal to ensure the solvency of the American Democracy. It is highly unlikely Trump will voluntarily board that iceberg; and the act of America running away will result in peril.

The upcoming impeachment of Trump is a good first step in the Democratic Party's attempt to hold Trump and the Republican political lab that created him accountable. President Joe Biden's broad-based approach at unity and racial equity is an impressive first step toward insuring that Trump-like creatures remain on the drawing board and never again reach the laboratory.

*Leon Williams is a 1971 graduate of Columbia University, New York, NY. He has a degree in English Literature. Williams is a native of Bronx, N.Y. and now resides in Jackson, MS.*

# President Biden, thank you for telling us the truth

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



The truth has been missing in the White House for four years. Lies and falsehoods permeated the atmosphere.

The previous president and his lie carriers felt no ways tired in giving out misinformation.

They did it on a regular basis and they had no shame. Those misfits spewed out information that damaged our country. However, we survived the onslaught on our democracy.

Now there is a new day.

We have a president of the United States of America who is a truth teller. Don't you think we should take telling the truth for granted? I believe this is a fundamental tenet of America.

The truth has a history. It has been in our homes, our neighborhoods, our places of worship and our schools. Truth has always been the bright light of decency

that has guided us along the way.

Truth has sometimes been sidetracked, but it always comes back stronger than ever.

While temporarily sidelined, it came back November 3, 2020. On January 20, 2021, it took its place in the White House. President Biden said, "Our better angels have always prevailed."

Having a president who will be honest with the American people will be a welcomed relief. The road ahead is daunting, but we can be daring because truth and honesty will be with us.

Reports say there are over 418,000 Americans that have passed away from COVID-19. Our fellow Americans have already received over 20 million doses of the vaccine. More people must receive the vaccine if the goal of 100 million doses is to be achieved.

At this moment, it is too early to tell if this goal will be met. We are hopeful.

Having students return to in-person learning within the first

100 days is also another of the administration's goals. I do think it will be interesting to see if the environment is safe enough for their return.

The president has already signed more than 20 executive orders. Chief among them are orders to implement more food assistance programs and to enhance the system for sending out stimulus checks.

"We have to act now," said President Biden prior to signing the orders. He added, "We cannot, will not, let people go hungry."

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) maximum benefit will be increased by 15%. As a result, according to reports, a family with 3 children could receive an increase of \$100 per month.

The most recent stimulus checks were simply not enough. The president will ask the Congress for additional money so that families can get back on their feet.

In the coming days, Senators

Shumer and McConnell will have to figure how to handle the power struggle. While the Democrats have the tiebreaker in the Senate, Republicans have not gone away. For example, Wisconsin Senator Ron Johnson (R) is still chairman of the Homeland Security Committee. He said, "I'm still chairman. They haven't hung my picture in the cloakroom yet so that's a good sign I guess."

The president said, "Politics does not have to be a raging war." We can all agree that it has been. It is time to turn a new page and to close a dismal chapter.

Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate gave a riveting poem entitled, "The Hill We Climb" at the inauguration. She said, "We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside."

Let's help our president set a new course based upon the truth and high ideals. Ah the truth... it's a beautiful thing.

# The horse he rode in on

By Oscar H. Blayton  
Pres. Black Chamber of Commerce



"Good ride to bad news and the horse he rode in on."

That's a saying in the corner of the world where I spent my early youth.

We have rid ourselves of the bad news that was the Donald Trump presidency, but more bad news could ride in on that same old horse.

America will make no real progress unless we ask ourselves how we came to stumble so badly into "the age of Trump" and how we prevent it from ever happening again.

This nation cannot bury its head in the sand and ignore the fact that 74 million Americans voted for Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election despite his dismal failure as a national leader – or even as a decent human being.

What did those 74 million Trump voters expect to gain from four more years of Donald Trump setting the national agenda and steering the ship of state?

With Trump's disastrous response to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens, it is unlikely that his supporters believed that he would ensure their personal safety.

The Trump presidency wrecked our economy, trashed America's reputation as a world leader and thumbed its nose at both the international efforts to save the planet from environmental disaster and the need for sober diplomacy to avoid nuclear holocaust.

Donald Trump's presidency left most Americans poorer, less safe and facing a bleak future of internal strife. So, what were his 74 million supporters voting for when they cast their ballots for him in 2020?

The answer to this question is ingrained so deeply in the DNA of the body politic of this nation that we must cut into the very marrow of our cultural bones to expose the cancer that has inflicted this land for more than 400 years.

When Donald Trump gave his famous "What Do You Have to Lose" speech during the 2016 presidential campaign, he was not trying to convince African Americans why they should vote for him. Instead, he was reminding bigoted whites that they needed to put him in the Oval Office to protect white supremacy.

Donald Trump mounted the horse of racial hatred when he announced his candidacy in 2015 and falsely declared that Mexicans coming to America were drug dealers and rapists. He galloped through the land espousing American exceptionalism while calling professional football players "sons of bit\*\*s" for quietly kneeling during the playing of the national anthem and accusing Black Lives Matters marchers of being "thugs" for peacefully demonstrating

against police brutality and the racial hatred he promoted.

Trump's capacity for spewing racist venom was further demonstrated when he declared that there were "very fine people" among the neo-Nazis and rabid racists whose protests in Charlottesville, Va., resulted in the murder of a counter protester.

Now that Trump has left Washington and the White House has been fumigated, Republican politicians want us to pretend that these past four years never happened. Taking a page out of the old South's playbook that submerged the historical fact that 11 states mounted a treasonous rebellion to continue to enslave human beings, most of today's Republican officeholders want to rewrite recent history to exonerate themselves from any wrongdoing.

But the elected Republican officials are just the tip of the iceberg.

No longer constricted by the expected norms of human decency, those 74 million voters who put their support behind Trump, and now comprise the base of the Republican Party, will continue to demand racial, ethnic and religious intolerance in return for their votes. And they will want the LGBTQ community labeled "Enemy No. 1."

The white supremacy Trump rode in on is no more a noble steed than the mounts bearing the four horsemen of the apocalypse who bring war, famine, pestilence and death to the world. Riding atop his white supremacy beast, he more deeply inflicted those four horrors that have always stalked communities of color in America.

For blacks, Latinx, people of the First Nations and other non-white people in America, the realities of our lives are murderous police waging war on innocent men and women, food deserts resulting in empty stomachs, inadequate health care leaving people susceptible to disease and illness and diminished life expectancies bringing untimely deaths.

Even now, white supremacy remains saddled and ready to run. And Trump wannabes like U.S. Sens. Joshua Hawley of Missouri and Ted Cruz of Texas have already tried to mount it.

History has taught us you cannot fix a problem until you admit you have one – and the widespread race-based hatred and bigotry within American culture is our greatest problem.

But armed with rampant denial, whitewashing and gas lighting, and astride white supremacy, the worst of America's politicians will fight to protect white privilege.

Their disarmament will be neither swift nor easy. The time to begin our resistance is now, or the next storming of the U.S. Capitol may succeed.

*Oscar H. Blayton is a former Marine Corps combat pilot and human rights activist who practices law in Virginia.*



LEGAL

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION  
BUREAU OF BUILDING, GROUNDS AND  
REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT  
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received electronically via MAGIC or physically delivered to the office of the Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management, 501 North West Street, Suite 1401 B, Jackson, Mississippi, 39201, until 2:00:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 02/23/2021, for:

RE: GS# 390-001 High Street and Lamar Street Improvements  
High Street and Lamar Street  
RFx #: 3160004114

at which time they will be publicly opened and read. Contract documents may be obtained from:

Professional: Neel-Schaffer, Inc. - Jackson (Jackson, Mississippi, through the Office listed herein)

Address: Post Office Box 22625  
Jackson, MS 39225-2625  
Phone: 601-948-3178  
Email: jonathan.kiser@neel-schaffer.com

A deposit of is required. Bid preparation will be in accordance with Instructions to Bidders bound in the project manual. The Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management reserves the right to waive irregularities and to reject any or all bids. NOTE: Telephones and desks will not be available for bidders use at the bid site.

Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management  
1-21-2021, 1-28-2021

LEGAL

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The City of Jackson is seeking individuals to work as poll workers from the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for the upcoming 2021 Municipal Elections to be held on the following dates:

Primary, April 6, 2021  
Primary Run-off, April 27, 2021  
General, June 8, 2021

Each poll worker will be required to attend a two (2) training class. All interested parties should contact Kathy Cole, Deputy City Clerk at (601) 960-1033 or Linda Sanders, Chairperson of the Municipal Election Commission at (601) 960-1021 for additional information.

1-21-2021, 1-28-2021, 2-4-2021

LEGAL

Notice of Sale  
Abandoned Vehicle

Notice of Sale is hereby given in accordance with the Mississippi Statutes governing the sale of abandoned motor vehicles that the following vehicle will be sold for repair and storage charges and for cost of this sale.

2011 Niss ATR Vin #1N4BL2APOBN516085  
Registered to: Smith, Patricia A. Caldwell, Dominique  
Well Fargo Dealer Service, Lien Holder  
Date of Sale: Feb. 19, 2021  
Place of Sale: Archie Towing Services; 6700 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS 39213

Sellers reserve the right to bid on the above property and to reject any and all bids.  
Time: 10:00 A.M.

1-28-2021, 2-4-2021, 2-11-2021

LEGAL

Advertisement for Electronic Bid  
Bid 3164 General Improvements at Oak Forest

Sealed, written formal bid proposals for the above bids will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) February 26, 2021, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning the project General Improvements at Oak Forest will be held at Oak Forest Elementary School, on February 5, 2021 at 10:00 A.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE  
JACKSON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE JACKSON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (JHPC) WILL HOLD ITS MONTHLY MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021 AT 12:00 NOON IN THE ANDREW JACKSON CONFERENCE ROOM (RM. 105) OF THE WARREN HOOD BUILDING, 200 SOUTH PRESIDENT STREET, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI.

I. APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
A. NEW BUSINESS  
1. CASE NO. 2021-02, REQUESTED BY: ROBERT E. FARR TO CONSTRUCT AN ADDITION TO THE HOUSE AT 1211 ST. ANN ST. LOCATED IN THE BELHAVEN HISTORICAL DISTRICT.

2. CASE NO. 2021-04, REQUESTED BY: LAURA AND PATRICK TAYLOR TO KEEP THE NEWLY REPLACED THREE FRONT DOORS AND THE NEW WOODEN DECK WITH STAIRS AND RAILINGS, AND TO CONTINUE THE UNFINISHED EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS AT 1021 MONROE ST. LOCATED IN THE BELHAVEN HEIGHTS HISTORICAL DISTRICT.

II. OTHER ITEMS  
1. ADMINISTRATIVELY APPROVED COAS

III. ADJOURN

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE, COMMISSIONERS AND APPLICANTS WILL ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING BZHAO@JACKSONMS.GOV TO REGISTER PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 3, 2021.

1-21-2021, 1-28-2021

LEGAL

Notice of Sale  
Abandoned Vehicle

Notice of Sale is hereby given in accordance with= the Mississippi Statutes governing the sale of abandoned motor vehicles that the following vehicle will be sold for repair and storage charges and for cost of this sale.

2003 Kia Spectra  
Vin: KNAFB121135247659  
Registered to: Thomas, Destiny  
McKenzie Check Advance of Mississippi, LLC, Lien Holder  
Date of Sale: Feb. 5, 2021  
Place of Sale: Archie Towing Services; 6700 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS 39213

Sellers reserve the right to bid on the above property and to reject any and all bids.  
Time: 10:00 A.M.

1-21-2021, 1-28-2021, 2-4-2021

LEGAL

Notice of Sale  
Abandoned Vehicle

Notice of Sale is hereby given in accordance with the Mississippi Statutes governing the sale of abandoned motor vehicles that the following vehicle will be sold for repair and storage charges and for cost of this sale.

1989 Caprice  
Vin: 1G1BL5178KA147889  
Registered to: Dykes, Robert L.  
Georges Place, Inc., Lien Holder  
Date of Sale: Feb. 5, 2021  
Place of Sale: Archie Towing Services; 6700 Medgar Evers Blvd., Jackson, MS 39213  
Sellers reserve the right to bid on the above property and to reject any and all bids.  
Time: 10:00 A.M.

1-21-2021, 1-28-2021, 2-4-2021

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

LEGAL

Advertisement for Electronic Bids  
Bid 3162 Brinkley Middle School Renovations  
Bid 3163 Powell Middle School Renovations

Sealed, written formal bid proposals for the above bids will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) February 17, 2021 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning the Brinkley Middle School Renovations project will be held at 3535 Albermarle Road, Jackson, MS 39213 on February 08, 2021 at 9:30 AM; that for the Powell Middle School Renovations project will be held at 3655 Livingston Road, Jackson, MS 39213 on February 10, 2021 at 9:30 AM. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at [www.jpds-projects.com](http://www.jpds-projects.com). A \$ 150.00 Non-refundable deposit shall be required on each printed set of bid specs/documents. A \$100.00 Nonrefundable deposit shall be required on each digital PDF set of bid specs/documents. Documents must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders, please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Charles Bunniran at Allen & Hoshall, Phone: 601-813-8993, Fax: 601-949-4344 or Email: [cbunniran@allenhoshall.com](mailto:cbunniran@allenhoshall.com).

1-21-2021, 1-28-2021

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
METERING AS A SERVICE

The City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City of Jackson") is soliciting proposals for Metering as a Service.

Proposals will be received at the Office of the Municipal Clerk or electronically until 3:30 P.M. CT, March 2, 2021, at which time proposal will be publicly opened at the City Hall located at 219 South President Street (City Council Chambers).

Copies of the request for proposals may be obtained from Carla Dazet, Water-Sewer Business Administration, 1000 Metrocenter, Suite 100, Jackson, Mississippi 39209 or through Central Bidding at their website, [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com). A copy of the request for proposals is also available for review through the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle 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, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provision of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Executive Order. Failure to comply with the City's EBO 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 601-960-1055. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications, and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson 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 other entities doing business within the City, as well as those who seek to contract with the City on various project or conduct business in the City to assist the City in achieving its goal by strongly considering City residents for employment opportunities.

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, sex, or disability in consideration for an award.

Sealed, signed proposals must be received no later than 3:30p.m. Central Standard Time, on March 2, 2021, whether submitted electronically or as physical copies. All proposals submitted as physical copies shall be submitted to the attention of:

If by hand delivery: City of Jackson  
Office of the Municipal Clerk  
219 South President Street  
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

If by mail: City of Jackson  
Office of the Municipal Clerk  
Post Office Box 17  
Jackson, MS 39205-0017

Proposals may also be submitted electronically. An electronic proposal can be submitted at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com). For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

A pre-proposal conference will be held on February 16, 2021 at 10:00 am. The pre-proposal meeting may be held as a virtual meeting or as an in-person meeting, depending upon situation that exists at that time. Details about the pre-proposal meeting will be provided to all entities requesting a copy of the RFP and may also be obtained by contacting Carla Dazet through the contact information provided below.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. The City also reserves the right to waive any and all informalities with respect to any proposal submitted. Proposal awards will be made to the best proposer based on the evaluation criteria in the request for proposals. For technical questions about this proposal contact Carla Dazet by telephone at (601) 960-2387 or by email at [cgammill@jacksonms.gov](mailto:cgammill@jacksonms.gov).

Robert Blaine, Ph.D.  
Chief Administrative Officer

1-28-2021, 2-4-2021

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# Mississippi eases some education mandates amid pandemic

By Emily Wagster Pettus  
*Associated Press*

Because of disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Mississippi third graders and high school students will still take state-mandated exams this semester but will not be penalized for poor performance.

And, although schools will be assessed based on their performance, they will not be assigned new A through F “report card” grades this academic year.

The state Board of Education decided recently to set aside the new report card grades for schools and the requirement for students to earn passing grades on the third grade reading assessment and high school end-of-course exams.

“This year’s statewide assessments will provide valuable information about the impact of COVID-19 on learning and will help identify where accelerated learning opportunities for students are most needed,” State Superintendent of Education Carey Wright said in a news release. “The policy suspensions are intended to support schools through this intensely challenging year for educators and students.”

Schools will keep the report card grades they earned in the 2018-19 school year. The school assessments were not done for 2019-20 because of the pandemic.

Mississippi usually requires third graders to show they can

read proficiently before they are promoted to the fourth grade.

Passing grades also are usually required on end-of-course exams in algebra I, English II, biology and U.S. history so students can graduate. Students must still fulfill other state and local requirements to earn a high school diploma, the state Department of Education said in the news release.

An executive order signed by Gov. Tate Reeves months ago allows the state Board of Education to suspend rules and regulations to cope with the pandemic.

Reeves closed schools for in-person instruction in March, after the first virus cases were found in Mississippi, and schools remained closed through the end of the 2019-20 academic year. The abrupt switch to online classes was challenging because some students lacked laptops or tablets and did not have internet access at home.

For the 2020-21 school year, each school district has set its own policy of having in-person or online classes, or a mix of the two. The state used some of its federal coronavirus relief money to make a bulk purchase of laptops and tablets, and those devices were distributed to students during the fall semester. Some students, though, are still struggling with internet access, particularly in poor or rural areas.

# Why a tech career might be right for you

*StatePoint*

If you have an interest in innovation, a passion for helping people and the confidence to let your creativity shine, there are exciting and rewarding career opportunities available to you in technology in almost every industry. From supporting the development of critical vaccines; building the next generation of electric vehicles; creating new and engaging ways to deliver distance learning; keeping air, food and water safe and sustainable; or bringing efficiencies to the delivery of government services, there is a career in tech waiting for you.

Even better, you don’t necessarily need to be a computer whiz or math genius to land one of these jobs, as technical skills can often be taught, but professional and personal skills are often more difficult to find. Those in the know say that a growing number of employers are more interested in creativity, organization, verbal and written communications skills and a willingness to be a team player and less in technical acumen.

“That’s true for people joining the labor force for the first time, returning to the workforce, burned out or hitting a ceiling in their current job, or downsized out of a job through no fault of their own,” said Todd Thibodeaux, president and CEO of CompTIA, the Computing Technology Industry Association.

It’s a field that offers a certain amount of job security, too. The economic and employment disruptions brought on by the



COVID-19 pandemic have had an impact on tech occupations, though not nearly to the degree that other industries have been affected. The unemployment rate for IT occupations in the U.S. stood at 2.4% in November 2020, below the national unemployment rate of 6.7%.

Employers across the country continue to advertise job openings for tech workers – there were nearly 200,000 listings in November 2020. These openings were spread across many industries outside the technology sector, including financial services, manufacturing, retail, government, healthcare and education.

You’ll also find great variety in the types of positions companies need to fill. They include

application and software developers; tech support professionals, whose roles are increasingly important as more people work and learn from home; network analysts, architects and engineers; cybersecurity pros responsible for securing our data, devices and networks; and project managers tasked with keeping mission-critical projects on track.

There are a number of free resources available to help you learn more about tech careers:

- The Future of Tech (futureoftech.org) is a free and growing library of resources to get you up to speed on what’s new and next in the world of technology.

- Cyberstates (cyberstates.org) is the definitive guide to

information on the U.S. technology industry and workforce.

- If you’re interested in cybersecurity, CyberSeek (cyberseek.org) has detailed information on the U.S. job market, including guidance on career paths and professional certifications.

- CompTIA (comptia.org) offers many tech career planning tools, including salary calculators and job search help.

“There are career options available that allow you to combine an interest in technology with something you are passionate about,” Thibodeaux said. “With the right access, encouragement and opportunity, anyone can maximize their digital knowledge and skills so they can achieve their life’s ambitions.”

# Biden revokes Trump report promoting ‘patriotic education’

By Collin Binkley  
*AP Education Writer*

President Joe Biden revoked a recent Trump administration report that aimed to promote “patriotic education” in schools but that historians mocked and rejected as political propaganda.

In an executive order signed Jan. 20, in his first day in office, Biden disbanded Donald Trump’s presidential 1776 Commission and withdrew a report it released Jan. 18. Trump established the group in September to rally support from white voters and as a response to The New York Times’ “1619 Project,” which highlights the lasting consequences of slavery in America.

In its report, which Trump hoped would be used in classrooms across the nation, the commission glorifies the country’s founders, plays down America’s role in slavery, condemns the rise of progressive politics and argues that the civil rights movement ran afoul of the “lofty ideals” espoused by the Founding Fathers.

The panel, which included no professional historians of the United States, complained of “false and fashionable ideologies” that depict the country’s story as one of “oppression and victimhood.” Instead, it called for renewed efforts to foster “a brave and honest love for our country.”

Historians widely panned the report, saying it offers a false and outdated version of American history that ignores decades of research.

“It’s an insult to the whole enterprise of education. Education is supposed to help young people learn to think critically,” said David Blight, a Civil War historian at Yale University. “That report is a piece of right-wing propaganda.”



Trump officials heralded the report as “a definitive chronicle of the American founding,” but scholars say it disregards the most basic rules of scholarship. It offers no citations, for example, or a list of its source materials.

It also includes several passages copied directly from other writings by members of the panel, as one professor found after running the report through software that’s used to detect plagiarism.

Matthew Spalding, the panel’s executive director and a vice president at the conservative Hillsdale College, defended the report, saying it calls for “a return to the unifying ideals stated in the Declaration of Independence.” He said in a statement that the report “wasn’t written for academic historians but for the American people, and I encourage them to read it for themselves.”

One of the group’s chairs, Carol Swain, a former law and political science professor at Vanderbilt University, said that if the commission had been allowed to continue its work, it would have added

more members and issued a report with more than just “the highlights.”

“Professional historians take themselves too seriously,” she said in an interview. “I see the criticism as being ideologically driven.”

In documents announcing Biden’s executive order, administration officials said the panel “sought to erase America’s history of racial injustice.”

The American Historical Association condemned the report, saying it glorifies the founders while ignoring the histories and contributions of enslaved people, Indigenous communities and women. In a statement also signed by 13 other academic groups, the organization said the report seeks “government indoctrination of American students.”

The sharpest criticism of the report was directed at its presentation of slavery and race. The report attempts to undermine allegations of hypocrisy against Founding Fathers who owned slaves even as they espoused equality. It also attempts to soften America’s role in

slavery and explain it as a product of the times.

“Many Americans labor under the illusion that slavery was somehow a uniquely American evil,” the panel wrote in the 20-page report. “The unfortunate fact is that the institution of slavery has been more the rule than the exception throughout human history.”

Blight, at Yale, compared it to “a sixth- or seventh-grade kind of approach to history – to make the children feel good.” He added: “But it’s worse than that, because it comes out of an agenda of political propaganda.”

The authors argue that the civil rights movement was distorted to advance programs promoting inequality and “group privilege.” It complains, for example, about affirmative action and other forms of “preferential treatment.”

Ibram X. Kendi, a scholar and historian of racism at Boston University, called the report “the last great lie from a Trump administration of great lies.”

“If we have commonly been given preferential treatment, then why do black people remain on the lower and dying end of nearly every racial disparity?” Kendi said on Twitter. “Whenever they answer this question, they express racist ideas of black inferiority while claiming they are ‘not racist.’”

Other scholars underscored what was left out. The report includes nothing of Native American history, and its only reference to Indigenous people is a racial slur quoted from the Declaration of Independence.

In one passage jeered by historians, the authors draw a comparison between the progressive movement in America and fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

James Grossman, executive director

of the American Historical Association, said the report is intended to discredit contemporary public policies rooted in America’s progressive reform movement. He worries that, even after Biden dissolved the commission, its report could end up in some classrooms.

“Historians need to be paying attention to curriculum conversations in localities and at the state level,” Grossman said. “The nonsense that’s in this report will be used to legitimate similar nonsense.”

In a public meeting of the commission this month, some members held out hope that Biden would keep the commission alive. But others said they needed to push the report to state and local education officials.

“It’s really going to be up to governors and state legislators and school board members and parents and higher education commissioners even students to take this charge and carry this work forward,” said Doug Hoelscher, a White House assistant under Trump.

After the report was removed from a White House website, some of its authors moved to make it available on conservative websites. In an opinion piece published by the Heritage Foundation, one of the commissioners, Mike Gonzalez, said the members “intend to continue meeting and fulfilling the charges of our two-year remit.”

The report ultimately demands a shift in teaching at schools and at U.S. universities, which the panel describes as “hotbeds of anti-Americanism.” It denounces any teaching that breeds contempt for American ideals, blaming that kind of “destructive scholarship” for the nation’s divisions and for “so much of the violence in our cities.”



# African-American Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman performs at inauguration

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Amanda Gorman was born in Los Angeles and studied sociology at Harvard University.

In 2017, the now 22-year-old became the first national youth poet laureate.

On Wednesday, Jan. 20, Gorman, an African American, was the youngest poet to perform at a presidential inauguration. Gorman performed alongside Lady Gaga, who sang the national anthem, and Jennifer Lopez.

The young poet delivered “The Hill We Climb,” which included lines about the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

“We’ve seen a force that would shatter our nation rather than share it, / Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy. / And this effort very nearly succeeded. / But while democracy can be periodically delayed, / It can never be permanently defeated,” Gorman has writ-

ten.

It is not the first time Gorman will have a national stage. In 2017, she read at the inauguration of the 22nd U.S. poet laureate, Tracy K. Smith. She has also performed for Al Gore, Hillary Clinton, Malala Yousafzai and Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Reportedly, First Lady Jill Biden selected Gorman to perform during President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris’ inauguration.

“I wasn’t trying to write something in which those events were painted as an irregularity or different from an America that I know,” Gorman told the *Los Angeles Times*.

“America is messy. It is still in its early development of all that we can become. And I have to recognize that in the poem. I cannot ignore that or erase it. And so, I crafted an inaugural poem that recognizes these scars and these wounds. Hopefully, it will move us toward healing them.”



Reportedly, Jill Biden selected Amanda Gorman to perform during President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris’ inauguration.

## ‘A Sorority of Pain’ Jacob Blake, Breonna Taylor Family push for new laws

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Jacob Blake Sr. will never forget the long and anxious drive from Charlotte, North Carolina, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, shortly after the August 2020 police shooting of his son.

“The longest 13 and a half hours of my life,” Blake told NNPA Newswire.

“It was pure dread as a father having heard what had just happened to my son.”

Blake, 29, was left partially paralyzed after a police officer shot him seven times in the back in a residential area of Kenosha, Wisconsin, Aug. 23, 2020.

The officer, Rusten Sheskey, is white, and Blake is black.

Some reports suggested that Blake, whose three young children watched Sheskey shoot their father, was a peacemaker.

Others indicated that a former girlfriend had reported a domestic disturbance and implicated Blake.

Either way, Blake Sr. said his son should not have been so viciously filled with bullets – brutally being shot in the back in front of his small children.

Earlier this month, local prosecutors declined to bring charges against Sheskey.

That is one reason why the elder Blake, his brother Justin, and Bianca Austin, the aunt of Breonna Taylor, traveled to Washington, D.C., during the week of the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

The three told NNPA Newswire that they were there to finalize a meeting with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.).

“We hope that there will be federal charges against the officer,” Blake Sr. interjected.

“But, more importantly, we’re going to be taking this all the way to Congress so that we can change some of these laws and address some of these problems that allow police officers to shoot black people down like this.”

Blake Sr., his brother Justin, and Austin declared the need for Congress’ support.

Each said law enforcement officers must begin to realize the



Jacob Blake Sr. sits with NNPA member publication, the Chicago Defender’s interim managing editor, Danielle Sanders (right), for an interview in October 2020.

consequences of indiscriminately discharging their weapons – particularly toward black people.

“You’ve got to take away the immunity that the police possess,” Blake Sr. stated.

“If you don’t, they will always be able to do whatever they want to and get away with scot-free.”

Blake and Breonna Taylor’s families have supported each other since the August shooting of the younger Blake, who grew up in Evanston, Illinois, and moved to Kenosha just a few years earlier to build a better life for him and his children.

At the time Sheskey shot him, Jacob Blake was training to become a mechanic.

Taylor, an EMT, was 26 when Louisville, Kentucky, police officers burst into her apartment in March 2020, shooting wildly and killing her.

The officers claimed they were carrying out a search warrant and erroneously tied Taylor to an ex-boyfriend’s alleged drug activities.

While a grand jury indicted Officer Brett Hankison on charges of wanton endangerment because he discharged his weapon through the window of a nearby apartment, none of the other officers involved were charged.

“It’s been tough,” Bianca Austin remarked.

“The two families have been supportive of each other, and it’s genuine. There’s so much concern and the pain that both of our families are going through – we are like this sorority of pain.”

Austin echoed Blake’s remarks about their trip to the nation’s capital.

“We are here trying to make a change. We’ve got to get these laws

passed so that other families will not have to go through what we are going through,” she announced.

Blake reflected on the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and offered a comparison of law enforcement’s reaction to the mob of former President Donald Trump’s supporters who left death and destruction in their wake, to the peaceful Black Lives Matter protestors.

“Look, my three grandchildren were in the car when they shot my son. Breonna Taylor was in her house, and George Floyd wasn’t doing anything to anyone,” Blake remarked.

“All three of them – Breonna, George, and my son, were shot for a lot less than what those [insurrectionists] who ran up into the U.S. Capitol did.”

Blake added that his son currently is “holding up.”

“We take it one day at a time, one step at a time,” Blake said. “We have to be able to accept everything that happens, so you have to learn how to deal with everything accordingly.”

Austin said there remains a vital message all Black America needs to heed.

“We need to start teaching our kids the tools they need to be successful. I am raising a young king, and I get scared for him every day. I can’t imagine him being the next Jacob Blake” Austin stated.

“We have to stand up and come together as a collective. There’s so much work to be done, but we have got to start somewhere. The time is now. We have resources, and we have the tools. We just need to start using them to our advantage.”

## Biden repudiates white supremacy, calls for racial justice

By Kat Stafford  
and Aaron Morrison  
*Associated Press*

After taking the oath of office Jan. 6, President Joe Biden issued a rare repudiation of white supremacy and domestic terrorism seen on the rise under his predecessor’s watch.

In his inaugural address, Biden denounced the “racism, nativism, fear, demonization,” that propelled the assault on Capitol Hill by an overwhelmingly white mob of Donald Trump supporters who carried symbols of hate, including the Confederate battle flag.

“A cry for racial justice some 400 years in the making moves us,” Biden said in the nearly 23-minute-long speech promising to heal a divided nation. “A cry that can’t be any more desperate or any more clear. And now a rise of political extremism, white supremacy, domestic terrorism that we must confront and we will defeat.”

Compared to his immediate predecessors, three of whom attended the inauguration, Biden is the first president to directly address the ills of white supremacy in an inaugural speech. In his second inaugural address in 1997, former President Bill Clinton called out racial divisions as “America’s constant curse,” but stopped short of naming culprits.

Biden’s words follow months of protests and civil unrest over police brutality against black Americans, as well as a broader reckoning on the systemic and institutional racism that has plagued nonwhite Americans for generations.

“To be perfectly clear, it was incredibly powerful,” Rashad Robinson, president of Color of Change, a national racial justice organization, told The Associated Press. “We shouldn’t underestimate the cultural change that had to take place, in order for that to happen on one of the biggest political stages in the world.”

“I think it’s just really important that, as a result of our movement, racial justice became a majoritarian issue this summer,” Robinson added. “Now the work begins in translating that rhetorical issue into a governing issue.”

Biden delivered his inaugural address on the very platform that the insurrectionist mob scaled two weeks ago to breach the Capitol building, vandalizing federal property and taking selfies on the Senate floor. The riot left at least five people dead, including a Capitol police officer.

The rioters, some espousing racist and anti-Semitic views and conspiracy theories, were incited by baseless claims of widespread voter fraud in the November presidential election. Some attempted to stop Congress from certifying the Electoral College results, in which black and Latino voters played a significant role in handing victory to Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Voter suppression, along with other forms of systemic racism, are top of mind for civil rights groups and supporters of

Black Lives Matter, which last year became the largest protest movement in U.S. history.

“To overcome these challenges, to restore the soul and secure the future of America requires so much more than words,” Biden said in his speech. “It requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy. Unity.”

Biden also highlighted the historic nature of the swearing in of Harris, the first woman and first black and South Asian person to hold that office.

“It is exciting to see a black woman become vice president, and yet we must hold her and President Biden accountable to ensure black liberation and the eradication of white supremacy,” said Patrisse Cullors, co-founder and executive director of Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation.

“We must heal from anti-black racism and the heavy health and economic impacts from COVID-19,” Cullors said in a statement. “Then, we can focus on thriving black lives through investments in health, education, housing and environmental justice.”

Biden began addressing some of these issues in a series of executive orders signed after the inauguration.

They order federal agencies to prioritize racial equity and review policies that reinforce systemic racism, which the BLM foundation said mirrors a proposal contained in the BREATHE Act, proposed legislation championed by the foundation and the Movement for Black Lives. It calls for sweeping federal reforms, including overhauling police, the criminal justice system and immigration enforcement.

Susan Rice, Biden’s incoming domestic policy adviser, said the new president would also revoke the just-issued report of Trump’s “1776 Commission,” downplaying the historic legacy of slavery in the United States. The commission was created in response to *The New York Times’* “1619 Project,” which highlights the long-term consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans.

Biden’s remarks also came a day after the nation marked yet another grim milestone surpassing 400,000 deaths as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has disproportionately killed black Americans and other people of color and laid bare longstanding racial disparities in the country’s health system.

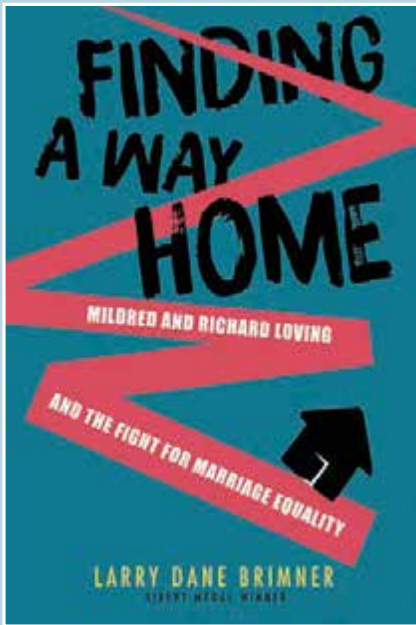
“We are entering what may be the toughest and deadliest period of the virus,” Biden said. “We must set aside politics and finally face this pandemic as one nation.”

In his speech, Biden invoked Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation committing to freeing enslaved Africans during the Civil War.

“When he put pen to paper, the president said, and quote, ‘If my name ever goes down into history, it will be for this act and my whole soul is in it. My whole soul is in it,’” Biden said.

“Today, on this January day, my whole soul is in this,” he declared.





BOOK REVIEW:

FINDING A WAY HOME:  
MILDRED AND RICHARD LOVING AND  
THE FIGHT FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

BY LARRY DANE BRIMNER  
C.2020, CALKINS CREEK  
\$18.99 / \$24.99 CANADA • 109 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
Columnist

You can never go home. Imagine it: the people you love, your room, your pets, you couldn’t see them again. No more hanging with your friends, no more grabbing a soda at your favorite store. How would you feel if you were told that you have to stay away now, all because – as in the new book “Finding a Way Home” by Larry Dane Brimner – you fell in love with someone whose skin didn’t match yours? Richard Loving never set out

to find a wife but, growing up in Central Point, Virginia, he knew a lot of girls, including Mildred Jeter, the sister of his race-car buddies. After awhile of seeing one another, Richard and Mildred realized they were in love so they got married; though it was 1958 and it mattered elsewhere in America, it didn’t matter in Central Point that Richard was white and Mildred was black.

It was a big deal, however, to the local sheriff, who busted into the Loving’s home in the middle of the night about a month later

and arrested the pair, saying that what they were doing (sleeping in the same bed) was illegal. They were told that their marriage license was “no good,” because, at the time, Virginia and twenty-three other states upheld laws that made interracial marriage against the law.

Eventually, the Lovings were released and told to leave the area or be arrested again.

They packed up and moved to Washington, D.C., but they missed their families. Once in awhile, they sneaked back and visited but it just wasn’t the

same and Mildred didn’t want to raise their kids in the city. Urged by family, she wrote to then-Attorney General Bobby Kennedy and asked for help; he pointed her toward the ACLU where, six years after the wedding, a young, fresh attorney “found the circumstances of their case irresistible.”

Tree years later, they got their final ruling...

Their win at the Supreme Court isn’t the end of the story, however. Author Larry Dane Brimner says that the ruling for Richard and Mildred Loving set

into slow-motion the upholding of rights of same-sex couples to marry, the details of which are inside “Finding a Way Home.”

Brush up on your courtroom skills first, though, before tackling it.

Starting out with a literal bang as a door is slammed open, Brimner tells a story that’s like gentle steel – the former, because he says the Lovings were that kind of people; the latter, because of their resolve. While that’s an almost-incomprehensible, absolute must-read supported by rarely-seen photos,

recreations of documents, and direct quotes, sadly, the story is tightly chained to dizzying accounts of the various trials involved in their ultimate Supreme Court win, details that almost demand a law degree to follow completely.

In the end, partly because of the trials, there’s good-news-bad-news-good-news in this book meant for readers ages 12-and-up, although they might need your help to understand bits of it. Even so, “Finding a Way Home” is a story they shouldn’t go without.



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# General Lloyd Austin is first black U.S. Secretary of Defense

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

Retired African-American General Lloyd Austin is now in charge of the U.S. Department of Defense.

On Friday, Jan. 22, the Senate confirmed President Joe Biden's Secretary of Defense pick, making Gen. Austin the first African American to serve in that key strategic federal government leadership role.

"I pledge to fight hard to rid our ranks of racists and extremists," Austin pronounced during his confirmation hearings.

He also pledged to overturn several discriminatory bans on military service put in place by the previous administration.

The confirmation vote cleared by a 93-2 margin – Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) were the lone no-votes.

One day prior, the U.S. House approved a waiver to allow for Austin's confirmation.

The decorated veteran required a congressional waiver to confirm the civilian post because he retired from active-duty service only four years ago.

Federal law requires seven years of retirement from active duty before taking on the role.

President Biden and others had previously pointed to the Congressional waiver received in 2017 by Retired Marine Gen. James Mattis, who served as defense secretary in the previous administration.

"The law that we keep waiving actually exists for a good reason," remarked Sen. Minority Leader McConnell (R-Kentucky).

"Civilian control of the military is a fundamental principle of our republic. We emphatically do not want high-ranking military service to become a tacit prerequisite for civilian leadership posts over the Department of Defense."

Austin's confirmation cements him as one of the most prominent members of President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' Cabinet.

The Secretary of Defense controls the country's largest government agency, commanding troops worldwide and the Pentagon's internal workings.

The confirmation also keeps with Biden's promise to have a staff and cabinet that reflects America's diversity.

"I know firsthand from our time together on the [United Technologies] board that General Austin will be a wonderful choice for Secretary of Defense," former New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman tweeted.

The decorated 67-year-old has accumulated many awards and decorations, including five Defense Distinguished Service Medals, the country's highest noncombat-related military honor, and three Distinguished Service Medals; the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest award for valor in combat; and two Legions of Merit.

According to his biography, Austin began his career in the U.S. Army in 1975 as second lieutenant in the infantry and rose through the ranks to command troops in combat at the 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-star levels.

Austin served in numerous command and staff positions in the U.S. and around the world.



Gen. Austin's confirmation cements him as one of the most prominent members of President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' Cabinet.

These include Operation Safe Haven in Panama with the 82nd Airborne Division; Operation Iraqi Freedom, spearheading Iraq's 2003 invasion as the assistant division commander for the 3rd Infantry Division; and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan as the commander of the 10th Mountain Division (Light).

In 2008 Austin returned to Iraq as the commanding general of the Multi-National Corps-Iraq during the period when the surge forces were drawing down under Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In 2009 Austin was named director of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon.

Following that assignment, Austin served another tour in Iraq as the commanding general of United States Forces-Iraq, responsible for the transition of all U.S. and Coalition military forces and equipment out of the country by the December 2011 deadline.

In 2012 Austin served as the 33rd vice chief of staff of the Army, culminating his military career as the 12th commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) from 2013 to 2016.

As CENTCOM commander, he was responsible for military strategy and joint operations throughout the Middle East and Central and South Asia. He was also the architect and oversaw the military campaign's execution to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

He retired from the military May 1, 2016 and is now the founder and president of The Austin Strategy Group.

Austin also worked with the President-Elect as vice chief of the Army staff when President Biden served as vice president under President Barack Obama.

Austin would require a congressional waiver for confirmation to the civilian post because he retired from active-duty service only four years ago.

"Very good news for national security," Retired Four-Star Gen. Barry McCaffrey stated. "Ret Gen. Lloyd Austin is a towering figure in Armed Forces. Enormous global experience. Joint Staff and Army staff Pentagon. Very easy to deal with. Loved by the military. Silver Star Valor. West Point. M.A. Auburn. MBA."



This shouldn't  
be how we  
say hello ...  
or goodbye.

It's our reality right now. But it won't be if we do what it takes to beat COVID-19. Vaccines are coming, but until enough of us are vaccinated, we all still need to wear our masks, stay at least six feet from others, and avoid indoor social gatherings. The more we slow the spread, the faster we'll return to normal hellos ... and fewer goodbyes.

Learn more about vaccines and slowing the spread at  
[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



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# Hinds County School District Weekly Update

## ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

### Hinds County School District recognizes parents from across the district

The Hinds County School District Board recently recognized each school's parents of the year during its regular board meeting January 14, 2021. Families, administrators, faculty, staff and friends attended the virtual award ceremony to show their support to these parents.



Jessica Hunt-Richardson / Bolton / Bolton Edwards Elementary/Middle School



Calvin Hudson / Byram Middle School



Ashley Fortenberry / Gary Road Elementary School



Karen Austin / Gary Road Intermediate School



Starla Harris / Raymond Elementary School



Janet Alexander / Raymond High School



Erica Robinson-Jones / Terry High School



Myeshia Burns / Utica Elementary/Middle School

### Hinds County School District parent nominated for 2021 Mississippi Parent of the Year

Aleesha Hudson, Parent of CMS/LSA named HCSD Parent of the Year. Hudson has two children that attend school in the HCSD. She is also a member of the school PTA and serves on the HCSD Parent Engagement Network Team.

Hudson stated that she would like to thank the Hinds County School District and the Carver Middle School family for this esteemed honor.

As a proud graduate of the former Carver Jr. High and Raymond High School, I take extreme pride in my ability to serve the students and the community. During my Raymond experience, I was filled with knowledge, love and confidence. Those lessons have guided me in my journey as a professional and a parent.

I look forward to my continued support of the school and district in the years to come.

