

# Iconic activist Ineva May-Pittman’s death in a house fire rips the hearts of many

The shocking news flood the airways and social media

By Gail H.M. Brown, Ph.D.  
Contributing Writer

News early Tuesday morning, Jan. 3, that Jackson resident and lifelong civil rights activist and educator Ineva May-Pittman died in a house fire at her home sent shock waves around the community and state.

According to WLBT, Pittman, 88, “was found in her home by firefighters, who discovered her in a part of the house that was not burned.”

Tweets, Facebook posts, text messages, etc. went viral with reactions and condolences at the news of her death. Public officials, private citizens, and most certainly, her students, shared heart-felt comments and fond memories of her life, legacy and love for championing human and civil rights.

*The Mississippi Link* Publisher Jackie Hampton said she was heart-broken at the news. “She was a teacher when I was at Isable Elementary School,” said Hampton. “She was Ms. May then. I always enjoyed how she never referred to me as Ms. Hampton. She would always call me by my maiden name, ‘Miss Hayes,’ which she never forgot. She was a great educator and activist. Oh, to hear of her death in such an awful manner is so devastating.”

Retired Lanier High School music teacher and alumnae Rose Ella Magee shared with *The Mississippi Link* her post which was on their Lanier Alumni Facebook



May-Pittman

Page:

“My 2nd grade teacher! She instilled the joy of reading in me and took me on my 1st train ride. She always knew who I was as an adult and would always give me words of encouragement. God rest her soul and give her family peace, strength and comfort in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Jackson State University President Thomas Hudson, J.D. tweeted: “If you’re from Jackson or live in Jackson, you knew Ms. Pitt-

man. A longtime educator, activist and all-around bright light to the City. She will be sorely missed.”

Noted Sports Personality Rob Jay replied with: “I’m so sorry this happened to Ms. Pittman. She did not deserve this ending. Bless her soul.”

Sheriff Tyree Jones tweeted: “Saddened to hear the news regarding the passing of Mrs. Ineva May-Pittman due to a house fire last night. She was the epitome of a leader in civil and human rights

throughout our community, state and country. May God be with her family and the many lives she touched.”

Speaking of lives she touched, one of them is Hinds County Tax Collector Eddie Fair. “Mrs. Pittman meant the world to so many people,” Fair told *The Mississippi Link*.

Fair stated she was always willing to help fight for good causes like renaming the airport for Med-

*May-Pittman*  
Continued on page 3

# Welfare scandal sharpens contrasts in long-poor Mississippi

By Emily Wagster Pettus  
The Associated Press

In Mississippi, where elected officials have a long history of praising self-sufficiency and condemning federal antipoverty programs, a welfare scandal has exposed how millions of dollars were diverted to the rich and powerful – including pro athletes – instead of helping some of the neediest people in the nation.

The misuse of welfare money rankles Nsombi Lambright-Haynes, executive director of One Voice, a nonprofit that works to help economically vulnerable communities in Mississippi.

“It’s shameful and disgusting, especially when we’ve been a state where we hear discussion every year about poor people not needing resources and poor people being lazy and just needing to get up to work,” she said.

The state has ranked among the poorest in the U.S. for decades, but only a fraction of its federal welfare money has been going toward direct aid to families. Instead, the Mississippi Department of Human Services allowed well-connected people to fritter away tens of millions of welfare dollars from 2016 to 2019, according to the state auditor and state and federal prosecutors.

Former Human Services Director John Davis has pleaded guilty to charges tied to welfare misspending in one of the state’s largest public corruption cases.

The scandal has ensnared high-profile figures, including retired NFL quarterback Brett Favre, who is one of more than three dozen defendants in a civil lawsuit that the current Human Services director filed to try to recover some of the welfare money wasted while Davis was in charge.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families money helped fund pet projects of the wealthy, including \$5 million for a volleyball arena that Favre supported at his alma mater, the University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi Auditor Shad White said. Favre’s daughter played volleyball at the school starting in 2017.

Another \$2.1 million of TANF money went toward an attempt to develop a concussion drug by a company in which Favre was an investor, White said. Favre has asked a judge to dismiss him from the lawsuit, with his attorney arguing that the Department of Human Services – not Favre – is responsible for “grossly improper and unlawful handling of welfare funds.” Favre is not facing criminal charges.

Some of the money that was intended to help low-income families was spent on luxury travel for Davis and on people close to him, drug rehab for a former pro wrestler and boot camp-style gym classes for public officials.

In contrast, some welfare recipients say they found little relief but plenty of bureaucratic headaches from collecting modest monthly TANF payments.

“What may seem like an easy handout program is not,” said Brandy Nichols, a single mother of four children age 8 and younger.

Mississippi requires TANF recipients to prove they are actively looking for employment and Nichols, of Jackson, said the job search is time-consuming.

“It’s work, and sometimes work takes away my ability to find a true, stable job,” she said.

TANF is for families that have at least one child younger than 18. To qualify in Mississippi, the household income must be at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. The current upper income limit for a family of three is \$680 a month.

The Associated Press researched poverty statistics for 1982 through 2021, which show Mississippi was the poorest state for 19 of those 40 years and among the five poorest for 38 years. In 2021, the U.S. poverty rate was 11.6% and Mississippi’s was the highest in the nation, 17.4%.

Federal statistics show a dramatic decrease in the number of Mississippi residents receiving individual TANF aid starting in 2012, the first year Republican Phil Bryant was governor, and continuing into the term of current Republican Gov. Tate Reeves. Bryant chose Davis to lead the Department of Human Services.

During the 2012 budget year, 24,180 Mississippians received TANF. By the 2021 budget year, that was down to 2,880 in a state with nearly 3 million residents.

Robert G. “Bob” Anderson, the current Mississippi Department of Human Services executive director, told Democratic state lawmakers in October that about 90% of people who apply for TANF in Mississippi don’t receive it, either because their applications are denied or because they abandon their applications.

Those who do qualify get the lowest payments in the country, according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities.

April Jackson, a single

*Welfare*  
Continued on page 3

# Amid GOP division in Congress, Biden and McConnell bask in rare bipartisanship victory in Kentucky

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

As House Republicans continued their dysfunction and remained divided over who would be the next speaker, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell joined President Joe Biden in Kentucky to promote the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

While McConnell joining Biden in the senator’s home state on Jan. 4 proved rare, it’s been nearly 100 years since the House needed more than one round of voting to select a speaker. Republicans, who have a slim majority in the House, have failed to unite behind presumptive speaker Kevin McCarthy of California.

McCarthy needs 218 votes, but 20 of his GOP colleagues have either voted against him or have cast ballots for Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan.

Hakeem Jeffries, the leader



Biden

of the Democratic Party in New York, got all 213 of his party’s votes, setting up a historic, if unlikely, scenario that would put him in the speaker’s seat.

If six disgruntled Republicans vote for Jeffries, he will become speaker in a House where his party is in the minority. Meanwhile, McConnell and 18 other Senate GOP members voted in favor of Biden’s massive \$1.2 trillion infrastructure

bill, which the president signed into law in 2021.

The Kentucky event and the fights within the GOP have shown how much Biden wants to work with both sides.

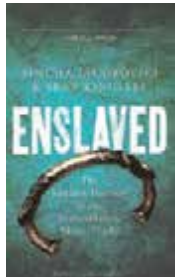
The Jan. 4 visit began in Covington, where Biden, McConnell, and others, visited the Brent Spence Bridge. The president called the moment the latest example of how his economic plan delivers for Ameri-

can families and communities.

The White House said more than \$2 billion in investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is earmarked for upgrading some of the nation’s most economically significant bridges. “The President’s economic plan is proving that when America invests in ourselves – especially in our infrastructure, clean energy, and high-growth industries that are critical to our economic and national security – we can build a bottom-up and middle-out economy,” Administration officials said in a Fact Sheet.

“That means an economy with better jobs and better pay, including jobs that don’t require a four-year degree. And it means a more dynamic and more resilient economy, including in communities that are too

*Bipartisanship*  
Continued on page 3





# Marquis Who's Who selects Major (R) Frank J. Branch for Excellence in Military

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

Major Frank J. Branch has been included in Marquis Who's Who. As in all Marquis Who's Who biographical volumes, individuals profiled are selected on the basis of current reference value. Factors such as position, noteworthy accomplishments, visibility and prominence in a field are all taken into account during the selection process.

Upon retiring from the U.S. Army in 1995 after 19 years of service as a Supply Materiel Management and Acquisition Corps Officer, Branch was hired as the Senior Army Instructor (SAI) for Jim Hill Senior High School Army JROTC Battalion in Jackson, Mississippi. In 2016, he became the academic advisor/tutor for the school.

Branch has been serving an instrumental role in helping students achieve success in the classroom through college preparation classes, ACT prep workshops and scholarship opportunities.

One of the most noteworthy accomplishments that Branch has been involved in since join-



**Major Frank J. Branch, a faculty member and advisor at Jim Hill Senior High School**

ing Jim Hill has included producing what are called "million-dollar babies" each academic school year throughout the state of Mississippi. As graduates from the state's poorest schools,

these students receive millions of dollars in scholarships to continue their education after high school. He is known to produce at least one "million-dollar baby" per year. Branch's

school has accumulated more than \$139,962,630 million in scholarships for students to attend some of the foremost institutions in the country. Among them included one recipient who was recognized as the school's 2021 valedictorian and had received \$1.5 million in academic scholarships and another student in 2022 who garnered \$4.2 million in college scholarship offers.

Attributing to his success is his passion for helping others, especially the youths. Branch is constantly inspired to find new and innovative ways to instruct his students in a way that makes them excited to learn. Frequently developing new projects and programs to motivate them inside and outside of the classroom, Branch's goal is to make a real difference in the lives of his students, especially those that need scholarships the most to afford the expense of attending college.

Locally involved, Branch is active with various community-wide initiatives. His Army JROTC Battalion teamed with

Covenant Presbyterian Church, New Hope Baptist Church and Habitat for Humanity building 29 homes in the Jackson Metro area. He is also a mentor for two 3rd through 6th grades mentoring groups.

He is also president of his local homeowners' association.

Highly educated, Branch earned both a bachelor's degree in political science/modern mathematics and subsequently a master's degree in social science education from Alcorn State University in Lorman, MS. He also completed the Secondary Methods, Classroom Management and Learning and the Brain Courses at Fort Monroe, VA. He completed the Army Acquisition Transition Course, Washington, DC. Major (R) Branch is also a graduate of the Army Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS. He completed the path to true reform literacy at Mississippi College in Jackson, MS.

He is a deacon at New Hope Baptist Church and a life member of both Alcorn State University Alumni Association – Hall

of Honor inductee and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.

During his distinguished tenure in the military, Major (R) Branch notably served in many state-side assignments plus Korea and Saudi Arabia during Desert Shield/Storm. Saudi Arabia was his last major assignment before retiring from the military.

**About Marquis Who's Who®:**

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## May-Pittman

Continued from page 1



Pittman (left) and the late Gil Sturgis (right) at the Victory Party of the late Mayor Chokwe Lumumba in 2013. PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON

gar Wiley Evers, the downtown U.S. Post Office for Medgar Wiley Evers, the passing of school bond issues for Jackson Public Schools, etc. “She always stood by me. I’m going to miss her more than words can ever say,” he said.

Pittman was a native of Jayess, Miss. She began her early education in Jayess and later in Jackson. She attended both CM&I and Lanier High Schools of Jackson. She graduated from Lanier and went on to earn her Elementary Education degree in 1956 from the-then Jackson State College and a Master’s in Education and Supervision from JSU in 1973. She is reported as having done further study at the University of Alabama, Southern University and the Mississippi Baptist Seminary. She also studied a myriad of Christian Education courses.

Pittman is also known for advocating for voting rights with Medgar Evers. A past Jackson Branch NAACP President, she has earned numerous awards and accolades for her education and community activism. Some of them are Jackson Public School Distinguished Service (1986), The Black Women’s Political Action - Exceptional Achievement Award (1987), Jackson Branch NAACP - John W. Dixon Outstanding Community Service Award (1977), and the list goes on.

Pittman was known for holding political leaders accountable for the office which

they served. If it was a school district issue, she voiced her concerns at the school board meetings. If it was a city of Jackson issue, one could expect to see her at the microphone unapologetically voicing her concerns or protests if an action or actions were not in the best interest of the people.

In 2019, Pittman was honored during Black History Month by the City of Jackson.

Upon hearing of her death Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba released this statement: “Mrs. May-Pittman was a lifelong advocate for human rights and an active member of numerous civic, religious, civil rights and professional organizations. I consider her a mentor and a true friend. Over the years, she also kept a close eye on city business and politics to ensure leaders remain grounded, fair and committed to the needs of our residents. In honor of her lifelong service, Mrs. May-Pittman is part of a mural that sits outside my office. I pass it every day.”

In 2017, Poindexter Park was renamed in honor of Pittman for her many contributions to improving the quality of life for the people of Jackson and Mississippi.

Pittman is preceded in death by her husband Joe Pittman and is survived by her son Albert and one grandson.

Arrangements for her service were not known as of press time.

## Welfare

Continued from page 1

mother with children ranging in age from a few months to 13 years old, said she received about \$190 a month in TANF when she was pregnant with her third child.

Eleven years ago, the monthly payment “bought diapers and stuff like that.” But she said that after she started receiving child support from the father of her oldest son, Human Services ended her TANF benefits because she was suddenly over the income limit for the aid.

“It messed me up real bad,” said Jackson, who lives on a tight budget. “I wasn’t able to pay my part of the bills. I couldn’t buy my kids clothes for school or the shoes they needed.”

The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service said that in 2020, New Hampshire had the highest TANF payment in the country, \$862 a month for a single parent and one child. Mississippi’s monthly payment for a family of two was \$146.

In 2021, Mississippi increased its TANF payments by \$90 per month, per family – the state’s first increase since 1999 – at Anderson’s recommendation. The increase cost \$2.8 million, and Republican Sen. Joey Fillingane said during a Senate debate that it was all paid by federal money, not state money.

“We’re not talking about a lot of money,” Fillingane said. “These are the poorest of the poor in our state.”

“Of course, those are all our dollars,” replied Sen. Melanie Sojourner, one of 18 legislators – all Republicans – who voted against the increase. The federal government sends Mississippi about \$86.5 million a year for TANF and allows states wide leeway in

spending. Records show Mississippi does not always spend its entire allotment, sometimes carrying millions of dollars from year to year.

During Mississippi’s 2016 budget year, the Department of Human Services sent \$17.3 million in direct aid to recipients, about half of the state’s TANF spending. During the next three years under Davis, the department decreased the amount of TANF money going to individuals.

By the 2019 budget year, Human Services was spending \$9.6 million on direct aid, 16% of the TANF money. About \$27.6 million, 46% of the money, was going to the Mississippi Community Education Center. The organization – run by Nancy New and one of her sons, Zachary New, who have pleaded guilty to state charges in the welfare misspending case – said it was fighting poverty by working on parenting skills, school dropout prevention, job readiness and other programs.

For Nichols – who spoke to Democratic state lawmakers about her experience on TANF – maintaining steady employment has been difficult at times because some of her children have health problems and she has to care for them.

She has worked as a cashier, waitress, housekeeper and certified nurse assistant. But when she has been unable to find a job quickly, she has had to work volunteer hours in a state Department of Human Services office as a condition for keeping TANF payments.

“That’s not career development,” she said. “That’s called being stuck in limbo.”

Follow Emily Wagster Pettus on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/EWagsterPettus>.

## Bipartisanship

Continued from page 1

often forgotten.”

The infrastructure law invests \$40 billion to repair and rebuild the nation’s bridges – the single most significant dedicated investment in bridges since the construction of the Eisenhower-era Interstate Highway System. Administration officials said it would help repair or rebuild ten of the country’s most economically significant bridges and over 15,000 additional bridges nationwide.

Most of the projects funded by the new law are covered by Davis-Bacon requirements, meaning the construction workers who build the projects will re-

ceive good pay and benefits.

While Biden also plans to visit Cincinnati, Vice President Kamala Harris travels to visit bridges that cross the Calumet River in Chicago, Secretary Pete Buttigieg will travel to the Gold Star Memorial Bridge in New London, Connecticut, and White House Infrastructure Coordinator Mitch Landrieu will join Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-California) at the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. “These major bridge investments are a symbol that we can still do big things when we do them together,” administration officials noted.

JANUARY IS NATIONAL SLAVERY + HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ANNUAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS EVENT

JANUARY 18, 2023

6:30 PM  
FREE EVENT  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

HAMPTON INN & SUITES  
600 STEED ROAD  
RIDGELAND, MS

Butterflies By Grace Defined By Faith (BBGDF) is hosting a FREE event on January 18th at 6:30 pm. Adults and teens will learn from experts how to identify trafficking, how traffickers target their victims, and more! The goal is to prevent and stop human trafficking within our communities.

Register online:  
[www.BBGDF.org](http://www.BBGDF.org)  
[www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com)

For additional information, contact Eva Jones at [evajustice5@hotmail.com](mailto:evajustice5@hotmail.com)

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# Local and county candidates amongst first to file for re-election

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

Tuesday was the first day candidates for local county offices could submit qualifying papers for the 2023 election and there were several at the Hinds County Clerk's Office as early as 7:30 waiting to sign in.

Hinds County Tax Collector Eddie Fair said he arrived around 7:40 a.m. and signed in at 8:00 a.m., which was the earliest one could sign in.

Candidates have until February 1 to qualify for the 2023 election so when asked by *The Mississippi Link* why he was amongst the first Fair responded, "I knew that I was going to run, so if there was anyone who had any doubts as to if I was running, I wanted to put

their minds at rest."

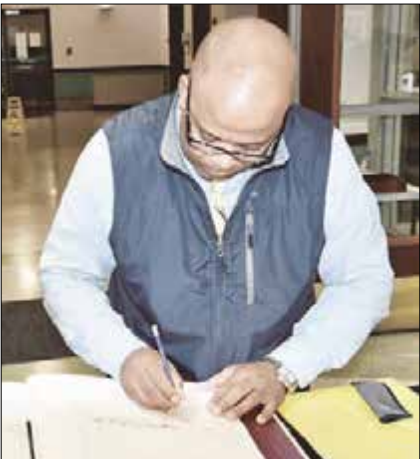
Sheriff Tyree Jones also completed his qualifying papers early Tuesday morning. He stated on twitter, "I am pleased to announce my qualification this morning for my re-election bid. I look forward to engaging Hinds County soon on the campaign trail and sharing my official announcement to include our progress thus far and our vision for Hinds County."

The qualifying deadline for the election which includes statewide offices, state district offices, legislative seats and county offices is February 1, 2023.

Party primaries are scheduled for August 8 and the general election is November 7, 2023.



Candidates signing in for county re-elections PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY



Robert Amos, Dist. 4 candidate



David Archie, Supervisor Dist. 2



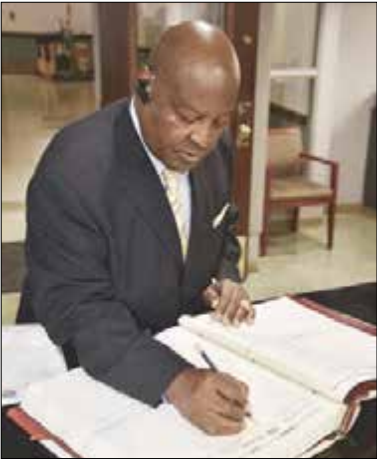
Tabitha Britton, Justice Court Judge Dist. 2



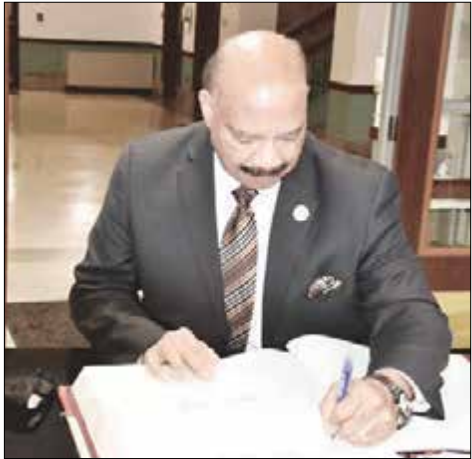
John Brown – Hinds Co. Constable, Dist. 2



Eddie Jean Carr, Hinds County Chancery Clerk



Eddie Fair, Hinds County Tax Collector



Robert Graham, Supervisor Dist. 1



Beverly Wade Green, Hinds County Constable Dist. 5



Hinds County Sheriff – Tyree Jones



Pearlie Brown Owens, Hinds County Judge, District 5



Don Palmer, Hinds County Justice Court Judge, Dist. 1



John Seales, Hinds County Constable Dist. 4



Charles Stokes, Tax Assesor



Zach Wallace – Hinds County Circuit Clerk

# Investiture of Circuit Judge Debra Gibbs

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

The investiture of the Honorable Debra Hendricks as Circuit Judge, Seventh Court District, was held Dec. 28, at the Hinds County Courthouse at 10 a.m. Friends, family, elected officials and community leaders were in the courtroom to witness the esteemed honor.

Judge Gibbs' husband, son and daughter played important roles in this historical moment for the family.

The administration of the oath of office was given by the Honorable Robert L. Gibbs, former Circuit Court Judge of the seventh district and the husband of Judge Gibbs.

Justis R. Gibbs, Esq. held the bible for his mother while Ariana N. L. Gibbs, Esq. placed the new robe on her mother.

The invocation was given by Dr. Jerry Young, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church and president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

Maggie Wade Dixon, news anchor WLBT-TV, served as program guide.



(L-R) Maggie Wade, Hon. Judge Debra Gibbs, Hon. Robert Gibbs, Judge Winston Kidd, Dr. Jerry Young, Dr. R.K. Moore PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Hon. Judge Debra Gibbs being sworn in by Hon. Robert Gibbs as daughter holds her new robe and as her son holds the bible.



Maggie Wade with supervisors in background



DeAnna Tisdell singing The National Anthem



# Even Mississippi lawmaker feels strain of Jackson water woes

By Michael Goldberg  
Associated Press

In Mississippi’s capital city, where intermittent periods without running water have become a fact of life for residents, a new disruption to the long-troubled water system persists just days before lawmakers are set to arrive for the state’s 2023 legislative session.

Amid frigid weather that upended infrastructure across the Deep South, pipes in Jackson broke and the city’s water distribution system failed to produce adequate pressure. Crews have spent days working to identify leaks, but pressure still hasn’t been fully restored and a boil water notice remained in place Friday.

City leaders said the water system remains vulnerable to weather-related disruptions, and Jackson-area legislators face the prospect of returning home from the Capitol building each evening without access to water in their homes.

Democratic state Rep. Ronnie Crudup Jr., who has represented south Jackson since 2019, was preparing for the Legislature’s upcoming return to session on January 3. Then, on Dec. 24 — just three months after a breakdown in Jackson’s water system left many in the city of about 150,000 without water to drink, cook, bathe and flush toilets — it happened again.

On Christmas Eve, after the last of Crudup’s running water went down the drain, his spirits sunk along with it.

“I’m normally very optimistic in pretty much all situations, but this latest water situation is getting the best of me,” Crudup wrote in a Dec. 26 social media post. “Y’all pray for me and my Jackson neighbors. I know if I’m struggling, others are also.”

Local officials are contending with an “old, crumbling system that continues to offer challenge after challenge,” said Jackson



Crudup

Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba. The city’s latest water woes follow a 2021 winter storm that left people without running water for days after pipes froze. The water system partially collapsed again in late August after flooding overwhelmed one of the city’s water treatment plants.

In early September, Crudup could have often been seen handing out cases of bottled water as the late summer sun baked the parking lot of the New Horizon Church, which his father, Rev. Ronnie Crudup Sr., founded in 1987. His t-shirt of choice during those long afternoons was emblazoned with the motto he applied to the task at hand: “Embrace the grind.”

On September 15, water pressure was restored to most of the city and the citywide boil water notice was temporarily lifted, only for issues to resume three months later. Crudup began to feel the burden of successive periods in which a basic necessity became a scarce resource for his family and his constituents.

“As a man, how am I to take care of my family in the midst of this? As a political leader, how do I serve my constituents? All of my feelings were internalized and I didn’t have any method of getting all that out,” Crudup told The Associated Press.

After Crudup’s brother saw his Dec. 26 social media post, he picked up the phone with a set of questions.

“Why are you frustrated? Why

are you feeling this way?” Crudup recounts his brother asking. “By him asking the right questions, I was able to talk myself through it.”

Crudup said he wants Jackson’s residents, some of whom spent the Christmas holiday looking for a place to shower, to avoid what he called “internalizing the burden.” At New Horizon Church, Crudup works closely with his father, and together they’ve talked through the strain of seeing their neighbors at the mercy of an unreliable water system.

“You’ve got a lot of children who aren’t brushing their teeth and all these other things. Particularly dealing with a lot of the least of these who don’t have the kind of resources he or I, or other people have, it weighs on him,” Crudup Sr. said. “And we do talk about that.”

The \$600 million in federal money that Jackson is set to receive for its water system has the potential to “revitalize a whole lot of the economic circumstances,” that have hindered necessary structural repairs, Crudup Sr. said.

Ted Henifin, the manager appointed by the U.S. Department of Justice to help fix the long-troubled water system, said he intends to make substantial progress over a one-year period on a list of projects that will protect the city from future disruptions.

“People are really stepping in to help their neighbors, not only physically but mentally,” he said. “We know there will be better days ahead, it’s just about making it through this last point.”

*Michael Goldberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/mikergoldberg.*

# Butterflies By Grace Defined By Faith offers human trafficking awareness resources

Special to The Mississippi Link

President Joe Biden has proclaimed January 2022 as “National Human Trafficking Prevention Month,” reaffirming his Administration’s commitment to protect and empower survivors of all forms of human trafficking, to prosecute traffickers, and to bring an end to human trafficking in the United States and around the world”

In support of Human Trafficking Prevention Month, Butterflies By Grace Defined By Faith (BBGDF) will host its annual human trafficking awareness event January 18, 2023. The event will shed light on trafficking awareness, bring to light many of the dark issues surrounding human trafficking, and educate our community on the dangers associated with these issues.

BBGDF will host this event, “Human Trafficking Awareness,” at the Hampton Inn & Suites (600 Steed Rd., Ridgeland, MS, 39157) Wednesday, January 18, 2023, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Adults and teens will hear about how traffickers target their victims and will be equipped to keep their communities safe.

The theme for this year is “What You Need To Know About Human Trafficking.” This will be an informative event with subject matter experts. While the event is free, registration is required. To register, click the link on our website, visit Eventbrite.com, and visit our social media pages. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bbgdfs-annual-human-trafficking-awareness-event-tickets-502758503217>



Human Trafficking is a modern form of slavery and one of the world’s largest criminal enterprises. Human trafficking often goes undetected because people do not know what the signs are, or what to do when they notice the signs. Therefore, education and raising awareness are the best ways to prevent and stop trafficking.

Please join Butterflies By Grace Defined By Faith and wear blue January 11, 2023 in support of National Wear Blue Day. Share your photos with us by using the hashtag, #WeWearBlue and/or #WeWearBlue2023.

For additional information or have questions regarding this event, contact Eva Jones via email [evajustice5@hotmail.com](mailto:evajustice5@hotmail.com) or by phone at 601-953-5747.

# Mississippi legislators could debate tax cuts again in 2023

Mississippi Link Newswire

Mississippi legislators return to the Capitol Tuesday, and their three-month session could be dominated by debates over taxes.

This is the final year of a four-year term. Most members of the Republican-controlled House and Senate are expected to seek reelection, but the Republican speaker of the House, Philip Gunn, announced months ago that this will be his final year in office.

During the 2022 session, legislators passed and Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signed a plan to reduce the state income tax over four years — the state’s largest tax cut ever. That reduction starts this year.

Gunn says he wants legislators this year to finish the job of eliminating the income tax. He points to a budget estimate that shows Mississippi with a surplus of about \$1 million.

“It’s time to give some of that back to the citizens,” Gunn told reporters in December. “The money belongs to the people. Every bit of money we have is the people’s money. And with inflation costs ... which demand more money, it’s time to put some of it back.”

Republican Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann said in a separate pre-session interview that he has a different plan for taxes. He wants to give rebates to people who have paid state income tax, at a cost of about \$270 million. This would not permanently erase the income tax.

“If you paid a dollar, you get a dollar back,” Hosemann said. “If you paid \$200, you get \$200 back, until you run out of money. So if you pay \$400, you get \$400 back. And at some point in time, which I think is around \$500 or so, that would be the maximum left after we started from the bottom, giving everybody the dollars back.”

Other issues for the 2023

session:

## Postpartum medicaid coverage

Advocates for low-income families want legislators to extend Medicaid coverage to a full year after a woman has given birth, saying the coverage could help mothers in a state that has a high rate of maternal mortality.

Experts have said expansion from two months to 12 months would cost about \$7 million a year. The current and former state health officer and other physicians have spoken in favor of allowing postpartum Medicaid coverage for a year.

The Mississippi Senate has previously voted to extend postpartum coverage, and Hosemann said he still supports the extension.

Gunn killed a postpartum extension proposal in 2002. He said he will support extended coverage only if Division of Medicaid leaders recommend it — and they have not done it.

“I don’t see the advantage of doing the postpartum thing,” Gunn said. “They have not called me and told me that I’m wrong on that.”

## Rural hospitals

Several hospitals face severe financial problems, including Greenwood Leflore Hospital, which closed its labor and delivery unit months ago because it could not pay competitive wages.

Legislators have not offered a clear plan for how to stabilize the situation. Mississippi is one of 11 states that have not expanded Medicaid to the working poor — people whose jobs do not provide private health insurance coverage. Republican leaders in Mississippi say they remain opposed to expansion, although it could bring an estimated \$1 billion a year to the state.

## Education

Hosemann said legislators could consider easing state restrictions to allow more

school districts to pursue year-round academic schedules, with shorter summer breaks but more frequent breaks during the year.

Legislators also could consider putting more money into preschool programs through early learning collaboratives, he said.

During the 2022 session, legislators passed and the governor signed Mississippi’s largest teacher pay raise in a generation. There’s been little discussion about trying to give teachers another raise this year. The law that took effect July 1 gave teachers an average increase of about \$5,100 — a jump of more than 10% in pay. Teachers assistants are receiving a \$2,000 increase over two years.

“The governor-elect of Arkansas has given me grief about the fact that she’s going to have to start raising her teachers to keep them from coming over here,” Hosemann said.

## Initiatives

Gunn and Hosemann say leaders of the House and Senate have been talking about reviving the initiative process that allows people to petition to put issues on the statewide ballot. They need to resolve a disagreement about how many signatures would be required.

In May 2021, the Mississippi Supreme Court ruling killed the previous initiative process by finding that it was outdated.

When the process was added to the Mississippi Constitution in the 1990s, it required petitioners trying to get any initiative on the ballot to gather one-fifth of signatures from each congressional district. Mississippi had five congressional districts at the time that was written. But the state dropped to four districts after the 2000 census, and language dealing with the initiative process was never updated.

The Mississippi Link™

Volume 29 • Number 12

January 5 - 11, 2023

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Publisher.....Jackie Hampton  
Copy Editor.....Minnie Garrett  
Sports Editor .....Tim Ward  
Graphics.....Marcus Johnson  
Photographers.....Kevin Bradley & Jay Johnson

Member:



The Mississippi Link [USPS 017224] is published weekly by The Mississippi Link, Inc. Offices located at 2659 Livingston Road, Jackson, MS 39213. Mailing address is P.O. Box 11307, Jackson, MS 39283-1307 or e-mail us at: [publisher@mississippilink.com](mailto:publisher@mississippilink.com); Please visit our website at: [www.mississippilink.com](http://www.mississippilink.com). Phone: (601) 896-0084, Fax 896-0091, out of state 1-800-748-9747. Periodical Postage Rate Paid at Jackson, MS. Deadline: The deadline for submitting items to be considered for publication is Tuesday at 10 a.m.

Subscriptions are \$32 per year; \$64 for two years or \$96 for three years.

Postmaster:

Send all address changes to The Mississippi Link, P.O. Box 11307, Jackson, MS 39283-1307.

Advertising: For all advertising information, please call (601) 896-0084.

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# Pele buried in cemetery in Brazilian city he made famous

**By Mauricio Savarese**  
*AP Sports Writer*

Brazil said a final farewell to Pele Tuesday, burying the legend who unified the bitterly divided country.

Newly inaugurated President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva paid his respects at Vila Belmiro, the stadium where Pele played for most of his career.

Pele was laid to rest in the city where he grew up and became famous, and which became a global capital of his sport. Mass was held at the Vila Belmiro stadium before the black casket was driven through the streets of the city of Santos in a firetruck.

It was taken into the cemetery as bands played the Santos team's official song, and a Catholic hymn. Before the golden-wrapped casket arrived, attendees sang samba songs that Pele had liked.

Some legends of Pele's sport weren't there.

"Where's Ronaldo Nazario? Where's Kaka, where's Ney-

mar?" asked Claudionor Alves, 67, who works at a bakery next to the stadium. "Do they think they will be remembered like Pele will? These guys didn't want to stop their vacations, that's the problem."

Another notable absentee was Jair Bolsonaro, whose term as president ended Dec. 31. A day before, he departed capital Brasilia on a flight to Florida, shirking the ceremonial duty of passing the presidential sash to Lula. Bolsonaro is staying in a condominium complex outside Orlando and has been filmed speaking to neighbors.

Geovana Sarmento, 17, waited in the three-hour line to view his body as it lay in repose. She came with her father, who was wearing a Brazil shirt with Pele's name.

"I am not a Santos fan, neither is my father. But this guy invented Brazil's national team. He made Santos stronger, he made it big, how could you not respect him? He is one of the greatest people ever, we needed to honor him," she said.

Caio Zalke, 35, an engineer, wore a Brazil shirt as he waited in line. "Pele is the most important Brazilian of all time. He made the sport important for Brazil and he made Brazil important for the world," he said.

In the 1960s and 70s, Pele was perhaps the world's most famous athlete. He met presidents and queens, and in Nigeria a civil war was put on hold to watch him play. Many Brazilians credit him with putting the country on the world stage for the first time.

Rows of shirts with Pele's number 10 were placed behind one of the goals, waving in the city's summer winds. A section of the stands was filling up with bouquets of flowers placed by mourners and sent by clubs and star players – Neymar and Ronaldo among them – from around the world as loudspeakers played a song named "Eu sou Pele" ("I am Pele") that was recorded by the Brazilian himself.

The crowd was mostly local, although some came from far away. Many mourners were too young ever to have seen Pele play.

The mood was light, as people filtered out of the stadium to local bars, wearing Santos FC and Brazil shirts.

Claudio Carranca, 32, a salesman, said: "I never saw him play, but loving Pele is a tradition that goes from father to son in Santos. I learned his history, saw his goals, and I see how Santos FC is important because he is important. I know some Santos fans have children supporting other teams. But that's just because they never saw Pele in action. If they had, they would feel this gratitude I feel now."

Among those at the stadium was Pele's best friend Manoel Maria, also a former Santos player.

"If I had all the wealth in the world I would never be able to repay what this man did for me and my family," Maria said. "He was as great a man as he was as a player; the best of all time. His legacy will outlive us all. And that can be seen in this long line with people of all ages here."

FIFA President Gianni Infantino told journalists that every country should name a stadium after Pele.

"I am here with a lot of emotion, sadness, but also with a smile because he gave us so many smiles," Infantino said. "As FIFA, we will pay a tribute to the 'King' and we ask the whole world to observe a minute of silence."

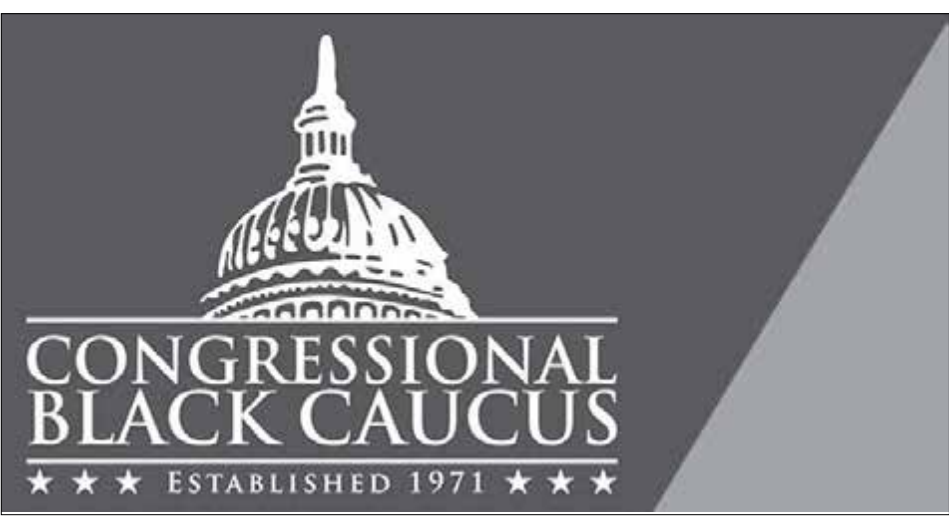
Another fan and friend in line was Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Gilmar Mendes.

"It is a very sad moment, but we are now seeing the real meaning of this legendary player to our country," Mendes told journalists. "My office has shirts signed by Pele, a picture of him as a goalkeeper, also signed by him. DVDs, photos, a big collection of him."

Pele had undergone treatment for colon cancer since 2021. The medical center where he had been hospitalized said he died of multiple organ failure as a result of the cancer.

Pele led Brazil to World Cup titles in 1958, 1962 and 1970 and remains one of the team's all-time leading scorers with 77 goals. Neymar tied Pele's record during this year's World Cup in Qatar.

## As Republicans battled over speakership, CBC members stand united at swearing-in



**By Stacy M. Brown**  
*NNPA Newswire Correspondent*

On Tuesday, Jan. 3, members of the Congressional Black Caucus held an inspiring swearing-in ceremony, even as Republicans were fighting over who would become the next Speaker of the House.

"In the work we do, we honor our history, like the many black members that served before there was even a Congressional Black Caucus," said Nevada Democratic Rep. Steven Horsford, the CBC's new chairman.

Horsford, 49, counted among the 58 CBC members taking the oath of office, most praised the Biden-Harris administration, spoke glowingly of the CBC's history, and kept an eye on their Republican counterparts as they tried to find the votes to select a new speaker.

Rep. Kevin McCarthy, who is 57 and from California, continued to face strong opposition from his own party as he tried to replace outgoing speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-California). Democrats have seized upon the GOP's inability to unite.

"The 118th Congress has yet to begin, and Americans are already seeing how dysfunctional and disastrous GOP control of the House is going to be," said Rep. Suzan DelBene (D-Washington). DelBene is the new chairwoman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

"While House Republicans fight one another in unprecedented ways, and Kevin McCarthy gives in to the most extreme flanks of the Republican Party in desperate plays for their support, Democrats are clear-minded, unified, and eager to get to work for the American people," she said.

"No matter who becomes Speaker of the House or how many votes it takes, the contrast is clear, and in two short years voters will reject this chaos and confusion."

Further complicating McCarthy's bid,

Republicans with a small majority only occupy 222 seats in the 118th Congress, which means there's enough opposition to block his candidacy. He needs a majority of the present members to vote for him.

Incoming House Minority Leader, New York Democratic Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, said no Democratic party member would be absent for a vote and did not expect any to simply vote "present."

Headed into Tuesday, there was even the belief that Jeffries, 52, could get more votes than McCarthy in a first round of voting. But, because the GOP controls the House, he wouldn't become speaker.

"We're focused right now on making sure that every single Democrat is present and voting, and I hope to be able to earn everyone's vote," said Jeffries, the first African American to lead a party in Congress.

"It's unfortunate that all we're seeing is chaos, crisis, confusion, and craziness take hold of the other side of the aisle, as opposed to trying to find common ground to deliver real results for the American people," Jeffries continued.

"Hopefully, we'll get to a place sooner rather than later when the Congress can actually function in a way that brings Democrats and Republicans together to get things done for the American people."

Jeffries and Horsford focused on the historic battles of African Americans.

"Our community's journey in this country has been a turbulent one. From slavery to Jim Crow, Jim Crow to mass incarceration, and mass incarceration to a malignant narcissist in the White House," Jeffries states.

Horsford added that "this is our opportunity to advance the mission, the vision, and the goals of those 13 founders and the 166 black members of Congress who have served in our nation's 246 years in both the House and the Senate."

## Mass shootings compound loss felt by marginalized groups

**By Sharon Johnson**  
*Associated Press*

Pulse was more than a safe space for Brandon Wolf and his friends. The nightclub was a haven for members of Orlando, Florida's LGBTQ community – a place to be themselves without fear.

"It's probably the first place I ever held hands with somebody I had a crush on," Wolf said. "Without looking over my shoulder first, it's one of the first places I ever wore my skinniest pair of jeans without being afraid of what someone might call me."

On June 12, 2016, a gunman targeting the club's patrons killed 49 people there, including two of Wolf's best friends, and wounded 53. "It's left such a hole in our hearts," Wolf said.

After mass shootings, the loss felt by marginalized groups already facing discrimination is compounded. Some public health experts say the risk for mental health issues is greater for these groups – communities of color and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community among them.

The trauma is especially acute when the shootings happen at schools, churches, clubs or other places that previously served as pillars of those communities – welcoming and accepting spaces that are difficult to replace due to a lack of resources or the sociological and historical impact they have had.

"Folks from marginalized communities are already dealing with the burden of ... discrimination and racism ... and the emotional toll that they take," said Dr. Sarah Lowe, a professor with the Yale School of Public Health and a clinical psychologist who has researched the long-term mental health consequences of mass shootings and other traumatic events. "All these other stressors can not only increase risk for mental health problems following a mass shooting, but they also increase risk for further loss of resources."

As a result, there is the potential for members of such marginalized communities to leave or for the community itself to shut down, said Alan Wolfelt, a grief counselor and educator at the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado.

"That is why it is vital to support these communities, acknowledge their grief openly and honestly, and then help them rebuild their community in terms of meaning and purpose while realizing they have been totally transformed," said Wolfelt, who provides mental health services and education for individuals and communities that have experienced loss.

Club Q, a gay nightclub in Colorado, says it will eventually reopen at the same location, but with a new design and a permanent memorial, to honor five people killed last month in a targeted shooting. Club Q was a sanctuary for the LGBTQ community in the mostly conservative city of Colorado Springs, patrons said.

Pulse will not reopen. The site where it operated is now a memorial, and supporters plan to convert it into a permanent museum. The club's closure has deeply scarred the LGBTQ community, which has tried to "recreate the sense of belonging" that Pulse had, Wolf said.

"I live next to a few other LGBTQ establishments and those are really important, but there was something truly special about Pulse and the community that we were able to create here," he said. "For communities like ours, safe spaces are lifelines. They're the refuges we carve out in a world that threatens violence against us every time we walk out the door."

In some cases, traumatic events threaten basic necessities for marginalized groups, increasing the risk for mental health issues, said Lowe, the clinical psychologist.

Tops Friendly Market in Buffalo, New York, was closed for two months after 10 black shoppers and workers were fatally shot during a racist rampage. During that time, there was no grocery store on the East Side.

Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, was founded in 1816 and became a pillar of the African American community in the state's Lowcountry region.

On June 17, 2015, a self-avowed white supremacist who targeted a Bible study at the church killed nine black congregants. One of the victims was minister Myra Thompson, sister of South Carolina State Rep. JA Moore.

"My sister was a servant to the other parishioners at the church, and she dedicated a lot of her life and her love to serving others through the church," Moore said.

The church reopened for Sunday services four days after the massacre. It was important to send a message, he said.

"Even seven years later, the church is still resilient and still rebuilding and still serving," Moore said. "I think the message that reopening up after such a horrific event is the story of African Americans in this country, the history of this country, where no matter our trauma and our pain and the horrors that we have to endure, we recognize that it's an obligation as Americans to continue to push forward."

Wolf, now 34, has also pushed forward. Following the shooting at Pulse, he became an advocate and activist for the LGBTQ community and now works as press secretary for Equality Florida.

He said Orlando nonprofit organizations that support the LGBTQ community have expanded their services, and other LGBTQ-owned bars and restaurants have grown their customer base. Wolf believes the city has become more inclusive since the shooting.

"While I think there's a hole and there will always be something missing where Pulse used to be, I also think it's beautiful that we've chosen to take the important components of what made Pulse, Pulse, and infuse them into every which way we live our lives in this city," he said.

*Associated Press journalists Cody Jackson in Miami and Lekan Oyeekanmi in Houston contributed to this report.*



# Sunshine and your blood pressure

By Vince Faust  
*Tips to Be Fit*

Did you know that sunlight could lower your blood pressure? A team of British researchers has figured out why. They found is that nitric oxide stored in the top layers of the skin reacts to sunlight and causes your blood vessels to widen as oxide moves into your bloodstream. This will lower your blood pressure.

A study exposed 24 people to ultraviolet radiation equal to 30 minutes in the sun. They found that the exposure significantly lowered their blood pressure 2 to 5 millimeters of mercury (mmHG) and changed the levels of nitric oxide.

Some people reading this study might think that if you expose your body to more ultraviolet light it could raise their risk of skin cancer. A 30-minute walk outside is not over exposure.

Excessive exposure can raise your risk of developing skin cancer, but too little could increase your risk of heart disease. You have to remember more people die from heart disease then skin cancer. These studies don't mean that if you want to lower your blood pressure you should rely on sun exposure as their only form of treating your hypertension. More studies are needed to determine how much sunshine you need to improve your heart health.

Your blood pressure medica-



tion can make you more sensitive to the sun. There are a lot of medications for treating high blood pressure. These medications have different mechanism that causes sun sensitivity. You should take special care to avoid over exposure to the sun. You should ask your doctor or pharmacist if your blood pressure medication causes sun sensitivity.

Another reason to get some sunshine is the sun activates the production of vitamin D. Additional studies show that people with higher levels of Vitamin D had lower blood pressure levels and had a lower risk of developing hypertension. One recent study found that for every 10 percent increase in vitamin D levels, there was an 8 percent decrease in the risk of developing hypertension.

Your blood pressure levels will fluctuate seasonally. Your levels typically are at their highest during the winter months and lower during summer months.

Blood is carried from the heart to all parts of your body though your arteries. Your blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. Each time your heart beats, which is about 60-70 times a minute at rest, it pumps out blood into your arteries. Your blood pressure is at its highest when your heart beats, pumping the blood. This is called systolic pressure. When your heart is at rest, between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is the diastolic pressure.

Your blood pressure changes during the day. Your blood



pressure is lowest as you sleep and rises when you get up. It also can rise when you are excited, nervous or active.

Your blood pressure is normal at 120/80 or lower. Your blood pressure is considered high (stage 1) if it reads 130/80. Stage 2 high blood pressure is 140/90 or higher. If you get a blood pressure reading of 180/110 or higher more than once or if you have repeated high readings you should seek medical treatment right away.

You should call 911 or emergency medical services if your blood pressure is 180/120 mmHg or greater and you have chest pain, shortness of breath, or symptoms of stroke. Stroke symptoms include numbness or tingling, trouble speaking or changes in vision.

High blood pressure kills a

disproportionate number of African Americans unnecessarily each year. The prevalence of hypertension in the African American population is between 25-30%.

Risk factors for high blood pressure include:

- People older than 50
- Those who are overweight
- A high-sodium diet
- Alcohol Abuse
- Health conditions affecting the heart, lungs, or kidneys
- Poor blood circulation
- Diuretics, sedatives, tranquilizers

Here are a few changes that can lower blood pressure and keep it down.

1. Lower your body fat.
2. Exercise with cardio conditioning and strength training.
3. Eat a healthy diet by planning your meals.

4. Reduce salt (sodium) in your diet.

5. Limit alcohol consumption.

6. Don't smoke.

7. Practice good sleep hygiene

8. Reduce your stress.

9. Take your blood pressure medication as prescribed

If you have not had your blood pressure check within the last year please have it checked. Regular blood pressure check-ups are important because many hypertensive people do not experience symptoms. Others may experience symptoms such as headache, nervousness, insomnia, nosebleeds, blurred vision, edema and shortness of breath.

Tracking your blood pressure at home will also help you control high blood pressure according to a recent study. Your self-monitoring keeps a record of the reading. Your physician can determine if your blood pressure medication is working effectively or needs tweaking.

High blood pressure is a serious problem, which can lead to even more serious diseases. High blood pressure indicates that the heart is working harder than normal which puts a strain on both the heart and the arteries. Controlling your blood pressure will alleviate these and other health issues.

For more information on "Heart Disease" contact The American Heart Association at 800 242 8721 or www.Heart.org

## How to choose the best weight loss plan for your 2023 goals

StatePoint

It's that time of year again when many Americans make the resolution to lose weight and start a healthier routine. This year in particular, with the pandemic largely behind us, many Americans will once again focus on their health.

In fact, 64% of Americans are motivated to lose weight because they know it has an impact on their immunity, according to a recent poll of 2,000 U.S. adults aged 30 and above. And 61% also now realize that a healthy diet and lifestyle can better protect their long-term health.

So what should you look for when it comes to a weight loss plan? Courtney McCormick, MPH, RDN, LDN, corporate dietitian at Nutrisystem, offers these tips to help you choose a program that's right for you.

**Keep it simple:** Let's face it, in our crazy busy world, we have to make hundreds of decisions a day, often at lightning speed. You shouldn't have to worry about counting points or measuring foods. Look for a plan that's easy and convenient, and does the work for you.

**Focus on protein:** Protein is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle and a key to weight loss. Protein helps with satiety, so it's important to include some in each meal and snack. Look for plans with high-protein options, like Nutrisystem's new premium meals, which include up to 30 grams in each meal and keep you full for up to five hours.

**Look for value:** As prices

continue to rise at grocery stores nationwide, many people are struggling to find affordable options that can help them eat healthier and lose weight. However, those options do exist. Look for plans that are cost-effective and deliver the majority of meals right to your door.

**Don't give up your favorite meals:** Look for a plan that lets you eat your favorite foods. Losing weight doesn't have to mean giving up the things you love. Weight loss plans like Nutrisystem offer comfort foods made healthier that are perfectly portioned so you can enjoy them without any guilt. Plus, the plan also offers dessert for those who have a sweet tooth.

**Seek support:** Achieving the goals you've set for yourself is so much easier when you have a support system. The best people to have on your team when you're trying to lose excess weight are those who sit down at daily meals with you. Even better, your chances of reaching and maintaining your weight loss goal increase dramatically if another person in your household joins you on the journey. Look for plans that offer options for both you and your partner to get healthier together.

Remember, your weight loss goals will be more than achievable this year if you follow the right plan for you. Look for a program designed to help you succeed.

For more great information and other ideas to help fuel your success this year, visit leaf.nutrisystem.com.

StatePoint

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death in U.S. adults aged 65 or older, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The economic impact of falls is immense, with fatal falls estimated to cost \$754 million and nonfatal falls \$50 billion annually. As the aging population enters long-term care facilities, fall prevention will become an increasingly important public health priority. The good news is a novel approach has recently come to light.

A first-of-its-kind, two-year study conducted by investigators at Brigham and Women's Hospital's Division of Sleep and Circadian Disorders – a division of Harvard University – and the Midwest Lighting Institute (MLI) found that dynamic, tunable lighting systems, when implemented at long-term care facilities, reduced falls by 43% compared to facilities that retained traditional lighting.

The study focused on the positive effects of lighting on alertness, cognitive function, and sleep and how this affects fall risk.

For people who seldom get outside to experience daylight, such as older adults living in nursing homes, the body's natural sleep-wake cycle is disrupted. While this disruption can cause dangerous falls leading to injuries and worse, the results of this study show how institutional settings can implement lighting changes to their environment to make it safer for both residents and workers.

"The lighting we used in the study implemented specific spectrum and intensity levels



timed to regularize sleep-wake cycles and boost the daytime alerting effects of light," says Brian Liebel, director of research at MLI, the non-profit organization that designed the study as part of its mission to improve lives by putting existing scientific findings about light into real-world practice. "When residents experience improved alertness and cognitive function during the day and better sleep at night, it not only improves their well-being, but also improves the working conditions for staff."

The system was installed in several long-term care facilities with goals of maximizing the home-like environment and helping residents, especially dementia patients, with "sundowning," which is the increased confusion, exit seeking, anxiety and verbal/physical aggression many experience in the afternoon and

evening.

"There was just a general calmness at 6 p.m. with the lights dimmed, noticeably different as soon as it was installed," says Jennifer Nelson, dietary aide at Maple Ridge Care Center in Wisconsin. She noticed a tremendous difference in terms of behaviors such as exit seeking and anxiety, especially among dementia patients.

Current strategies to reduce falls typically include complex, multicomponent interventions requiring significant resources, staff time and resident education. The study's promising results, published in the "Journal of the American Medical Directors Association," provide a noninvasive and relatively inexpensive method for lowering the risk of falls in nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

"What we know now is that

modern lighting technology can promote the body's health and overall well-being, resulting in a decreased risk of falls among seniors," says Rodney Heller, president of MLI. "We believe these findings could pave the way for improving the health outcomes of those not only in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, but also in schools, hospitals, office buildings and in industrial environments with 24-hour shifts."

In the years ahead, fall prevention will become an increasingly important public health priority. The good news is that we have a solution to reducing falls and it has enormous potential to improve well-being and save lives.

To learn more about this patented lighting system and how to get it installed in your institution, contact bliebel@midwestlightinginstitute.org.



P R E S E R V E D

# Flight 2023

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



The last couple of weeks have been full of news stories discussing the pleasures and perils of holiday travel. For those who chose to travel by airplane, issues like flight cancellations, lost baggage and weather delays made things especially frustrating. As someone who travels by car during Thanksgiving and Christmas, I felt so much compassion for those who had to deal with so much when all they wanted to do was spend time with their family members, loved ones and friends. For some, traveling by air was the only option. And because of the circumstances beyond their control, some spent more time in the airport than they did with their families, friends and loved ones. Watching those stories

also made me realize one important thing, no matter how much you plan for something, there is no way to plan for the unexpected. Most importantly, the best thing you can do when unexpected and unpleasant things happen is be flexible.

Those passengers who yelled at the airline employees while they were waiting did not get on planes quicker than those who were calmer and pivoted to their plan "B." Those who insisted on getting on a flight when there were none available only added stress to their travel situation.

I thought more about past issues I've had with travel (which is why I prefer to travel by car) when a friend sent me an anonymous poem about Flight 2023. "Oh no! Another bad air travel story!" was my first thought. But after reading the poem, I realized that it was actually an important reminder on how to prepare for the shift to

the new year. Proverbs 16:9 shows us that our plans are no match for the purposes of God when it says, "A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps." This poem also reminds us that it's how you make the journey and not necessarily where you are going that is most important:

Good morning and welcome to Flight 2023.

We are prepared to take off into the New Year.

Please make sure that your positive attitude and gratitude

are secured and locked in the upright position.

All self-destruct devices such as pity, anger, selfishness, pride, and resentment should be turned off at this time.

All negativity, hurt and discouragement should be put away.

Should you lose your Positive Attitude under pressure during this flight,

look up, reach up and pull

down a prayer.

Prayers will automatically be activated by faith.

Once your faith is activated, you can assist other passengers who are of little faith.

There will be no baggage allowed on this flight.

God, our captain, has cleared us for takeoff.

Our destination – Greatness.

Wishing you a New Year filled with New Hope, New Joy and New Beginnings.

Stay blessed and Welcome to 2023.

Shewanda Riley (Aunt Wanda), PhD, is a Fort Worth-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 her at [preservedby-purpose@gmail.com](mailto:preservedby-purpose@gmail.com) or follow her on Twitter @shewanda. Find out more about her new podcast "The Chocolate Auntie Podcast" at [www.chocolateauntiepodcast.com](http://www.chocolateauntiepodcast.com).

# Do not love the world

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



We read 1 John 2:12-13, I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father." John was bringing all saints of God into one group of people, though he knew some were older and some were younger, so that he could share what God had to say.

There is a danger of young people getting the mind set that their lives are different, and that the Gospel does not apply to them as it did to mom and dad or grandma and grandpa. Isolating the young people and having one message for them and another message for the older people is dangerous, because the Gospel is universal.

In other words, it is the same for the young as it is for the old. The delivering power is the same and salvation is the same. The Bible says in Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, on faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through

all, and in you all." If you are a child of God, then the Gospel will bless you whether you are nine, nineteen, or ninety-nine years of age, if you have ears to hear. God has given us a wonderful Gospel.

A minister can preach one message from God's Word, and it has something for every age. The way God feeds our souls from His Word is a miracle. When it comes to living for God, the message is the same, and it is what you need to adhere.

In 1 John 2:7-8 John wrote, "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth."

John wanted the reader to realize that no matter how long you have been saved, if the devil can begin to work on you, you had better believe that he will start doing it. No matter how old you are or how long you have been serving God, you have to watch that you do not love the world. Do you know why? You have a flesh that does not like to suffer.

Rev. Simeon R. Green III is pastor of Joyntes Road Church of God, 31 Joyntes Road, Hampton, VA 23669.



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8:00 a.m. - Channel 14 (Comcast)

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Crossroads Church of God

Sharing The Love Of Christ With Others



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Sunday Sch: 10 a.m.

Sunday Worship  
Service: 11:15 a.m.  
(Fellowship following  
worship service 1st  
Sundays)

Wednesday  
Prayer/Bible  
Study: 7 p.m.

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Pastor, Dr. F. R. Lenoir



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# Ready for our Earth Shot

By Ben Jealous  
*People For the American Way*



As we greet 2023, I'm feeling more than the typical seasonal optimism. America is primed once again for a historic achievement, call it our "Earth shot." In the 1960s and early 1970s, the United States spent the current dollar equivalent of just under \$300 billion on "landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth" as President Kennedy proposed in 1961. Ever since, that combination of aspiration and expenditure has made us call any well-financed goal that seems improbable, if not impossible, a "moonshot."

President Biden and Congress committed almost \$700 billion in the next 10 years to reducing pollution, particularly in marginalized communities most likely to suffer, and to making the transportation and energy sectors cleaner to preserve the climate. We need to appreciate the investment to save our fragile planet made in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act as our Earth shot.

This is a moment of unprecedented opportunity to combat the climate crisis, lessen the impact of environmental decay in communities that unfairly bear its brunt, and build a cleaner economy. We need to come together to seize it. It's a moment long awaited by people of color in particular, who always have been strong voices for environmental protection and who have been the most demanding of political leaders on these issues at the ballot box.

What's behind this optimistic outlook? First, the landmark investment since 2021 moves us beyond the point of simply imagining what could be done to handing us the tools to build what it will take to avert climate catastrophe and environmental decay. It's up to us now to take up those tools and get to work. We can accelerate the arrival of a green economy. We can rebuild our manufacturing sector, not just our roads and bridges. We can create good jobs for people who need them and have struggled to find them. And we can do it all at once. In fact, we must do it all at once.

Second, that historic investment

comes at a particularly opportune moment for changing the course of our climate and environment. It's a moment when innovation is matching our resolve to make change. From batteries to LED lights to energy production, we have better, cleaner options across the economy.

This intersection of investment and innovation means we can move past the old either-or thinking that has held us back for too long, the mistaken notion that the only way to have a flourishing economy is to force some people in some places to pay the cost of prosperity. The new reality of this time is that we can have thriving businesses and good jobs without sacrificing the planet.

Getting to the moon led to everything from the silicon chip to more PhDs in science and engineering. Our Earth shot can have the same spillover effect.

While the federal government has set the stage for unprecedented progress, the work of implementation will play out in every state and community.

There were no corporate lobbyists fighting to keep the Apollo rockets grounded, but we can expect fights everywhere to divert investment in a cleaner environment or to minimize its impact. We need to match those opponents in statehouses and city halls with our people power. Environmental, labor and civil rights advocates need to come together as all our interests align in this cause.

As we close out this holiday season, let's give ourselves the gift of belief. Let's believe that we can do this, we can save the planet. Let's believe that we can figure out tough challenges that our inspiration has yet to crack. And let's believe we can move beyond old, harmful patterns of division and discrimination to ensure everyone enjoys a livable planet.

Happy New Year.

*Ben Jealous is incoming executive director of the Sierra Club, America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, and professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania. A New York Times best-selling author, his next book "Never Forget Our People Were Always Free" will be published by Harper Collins in January 2023.*

# Looking forward to a year filled with new opportunities and possibilities

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



Our New Year 2023 has begun which means leaving the old behind and embracing the new.

According to reports the first celebration of the new year happened over 4,000 years ago to the time of ancient Babylon.

Of course, we are thankful for what transpired in 2022.

Was it all good and perfect? No, it wasn't as we had our downfalls and pitfalls.

Being a long-standing member of the 4th quarter, I paid attention to all health-relaters matters.

Throughout last year, COVID-19 was with us, and we were urged by healthcare professionals to get vaccinated. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many people, COVID-19 became a political issue. This led to many folks not getting the vaccine that they needed and as a result many of them passed away.

Some family members later

admitted they received bad advice from the wrong people.

Speaking of the wrong people, we had a mudslide of political leaders who made bad decisions last year.

During 2022, the January 6th Committee Hearings continued as testimonies implicated many of those involved in this event. Some of the culprits are now in jail and others are awaiting their fates.

All of this happened because one man believed that he was a modern-day dictator. We know who that man is however I will not begin 2023 putting his name in print. I will say that the doors of justice are closing in on him and it is just a matter of time before they are closed and locked.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) garnered much attention last year as everyone wanted to be a part of the landscape. Academically and athletically, these schools were on everyone's radar screen.

Kamala Harris, a graduate of Howard University and Vice President of the United States along with Deion Sanders,

football coach at Jackson State University, were in the news on a regular basis.

During the past week, Ed Reed who is in the NFL Hall of Fame was named head football coach at Bethune Cookman University in Daytona Beach Florida.

Last year also gave us the dark side of America as too many citizens lost their lives to gun violence. The penchant for using guns to resolve disagreements and to torment folks, I will never understand. Our country is not viewed favorably when it comes to this part of our culture. Let's hope and pray we do better in 2023.

Back in the day, places of worship would hold watch night services where families would bring in the new year. Now we don't because people don't want to be in the public square at night. That's sad, but it is the reality we live these days.

So now 2023 is here and how can we make it better than last year?

I am a firm believer that we should always be trying to get better. It doesn't matter what

you do or how old you are. Being sedentary and complacent are not options that we should consider.

Being thoughtful and prayerful about others will also benefit us.

Doing good deeds and thinking good thoughts give us a better disposition.

Being our brother's and sister's keeper is an action step so we must do it.

For example, if there are a few extra dollars that we have, let's buy someone else's groceries. That will surprise them and will be an intentional act of kindness for us.

Our ability to make others feel good could be a way of stopping some of the violence that is taking place too frequently in our country.

Our time here is measured so we must make the most of it.

We hear the expression, "tomorrow is not promised". Well, it's not.

Let's make each day a good day as best as we can.

There are new blessings and new mercies that we receive each day. Let's use them.

# Drive-thru experience vs. dine-in experience in marriage

By LaShunda Calvert, Ph.D.  
*Guest Writer*



What experience do you and your spouse want in your marriage for 2023? Do you want a drive thru or dine in experience in your marriage? This question is not just for newlyweds; this question is for all married couples whether you have been married two years, eleven years, seventeen years, thirty-three years, forty-seven years, or over fifty years.

Believe it or not, unfortunately, there are many seasoned marriages that are struggling to remain happily married because they have learned to just accept things for how they are rather good or bad. In other words, there are many marriages that are on the verge of separation and divorce as you read this because they have failed to be honest about what they desire in marriage.

It is nothing wrong with having specific desires for your marriage. Think about it, if you can have certain desires and aspirations regarding your health, educational status, finances, — then why can't we decide what we want our marriages to be like. Do not let another hour, day, month, or year go by where you are accepting complacency in your marriage — you can be intentional about the experiences you want in your marriage regardless of how many

years you have been married — it is not too late to answer the following questions: What experience do you and your spouse want in your marriage for 2023? Do you want a drive thru or dine in experience in your marriage? Yes, it is easy to decide what you want your marriage to be like, but it requires the efforts of both spouses, hard work, dedication, commitment, communication, transparency, patience and love.

What is a drive thru experience in marriage? A drive thru experience in marriage is based mostly on convenience centered around speedy transactions, little to no effort on your part, selfishness, easy to forget or not acknowledge the experience, recipient versus a giver, little to no intimacy, familiar with the process like the back of your hand, no change, and it allows for more accommodations in interacting with other people besides your spouse. A drive thru marriage experience often leaves a spouse (s) feeling empty, bored, taken advantage of, disconnected, withdrawn, neglected, abandoned, used, lonely and rejected.

What is a dine in experience in marriage? A dine in experience in marriage is based mostly on adventure centered around spending quality time with each other, planning, some to a lot of effort on your part, some inconvenience, embracing chance and change, unforgettable, lively, adaptative, surprises,

promotes communication, exposure to variety, special (if you are not occupied by technology/social media), learn more about each other, personal, requires ones presence, time, attention, focus on the spouse, intimacy, connection, fellowship, it's "an experience," and time for you to grow as one. A dine in marriage experience often makes a spouse (s) feel appreciated, important, acknowledged, special, significant, empowered, happy, accepted, wanted, loved and fulfilled.

After seventeen years of marriage, my husband and I have recently decided that we want a dine in marriage experience. We do not want a drive thru marriage experience as we had learned to naively settle for early on in our marriage. We want adventure, new experiences with one another, intimate conversations and communication with one another, spend quality time with one another, one on one interactions, and exchange at home and outside the home, intimate dates, more dine in restaurant experiences, and we want to simply make time to gaze into each other's eyes — me looking into his hazel eyes and him gazing into my brown eyes and most importantly we desire an intimate relationship with God, so that He can guide and direct our marriage.

What experience do you and your spouse want in your marriage for 2023? Do you want a drive thru or dine in experi-

ence in your marriage? Marriage should not just be based on convenience, but it should be based on love, joy, happiness, communication, trust, some inconvenience, reciprocity, forgiveness, patience, understanding, quality time, empathy, appreciation, acknowledgement, gratitude, mercy and grace.

A dine in Marriage can involve the following: working out together, going to church with one another, taking vacations with one another, praying together, dating each other, sitting on the couch watching a movie together, reading a book together, dancing with one another, taking a ride together, going on a cruise together and whatever you both enjoy doing with one another.

In conclusion, the relationship that Jesus established with His disciples as described in John 21 was fostered by empathy, praying together, learning together, fellowship, breaking bread together, spending quality time with one another, selflessness and adaptation. What better example to use than that of Jesus?

Please be intentional in 2023 by giving your spouse a positive, unforgettable, dine in marriage experience that's based on love, affection and intimacy.

Becoming intentional in implementing a consistent Dine in Marriage experience can be the major difference between separation, divorce and broken families in 2023.

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LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT  
ZONING CASE NO. 4197

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that Surinder P. Kaur & Gurjeet Singh have filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit within a C-2 (Limited) Commercial District to allow for a liquor store in a neighborhood shopping center and not in combination with a convenience type grocery store or service station on property located at 6080 Highway 18 West. (Parcel: #835-58). in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

A PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING 0.697 ACRES SITUATED IN THE SOUTH HALF OF SECTION 15, T4N-R1 W, JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE SOUTH BOUNDARY OF THE L.J. JACKSON PARTITION WITH THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY 18 AND RUN SOUTH 88 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH BOUNDARY FOR A DISTANCE OF 1502.93 FEET; LEAVING SAID SOUTH BOUNDARY, RUN THENCE SOUTH 50 DEGREES 31 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 323.15 FEET TO THE CENTERLINE OF A PROPOSED ROADWAY; THEN SOUTH 00 DEGREES 26 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID CENTERLINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 624.5 FEET; LEAVING SAID CENTERLINE, THENCE NORTH 60 DEGREES 53 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 234.23 FEET; CONTINUE THENCE NORTH 60 DEGREES 53 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 32 DEGREES 09 MINUTES AND 00 SECONDS EAST FOR A CONTINUE THENCE SOUTH 32 DEGREES 09 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 210.70 FEET TO THE NORTHERN RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY 18; 1 THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY, CLOCKWISE ALONG THE ARC OF A CURVE ON SAID WESTERN RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 141.03 FEET, SAID CURVE HAVING A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 04 DEGREES 09 MINUTES 37 SECONDS, A RADIUS OF 1942.23 FEET AND A CHORD BEARING OF SOUTH 57 DEGREES 13 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 14 1.00 FEET; LEAVING SAID WESTERN RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE, RUN THENCE NORTH 33 DEGREES 50 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 208.96 FEET; THENCE NORTH 56 DEGREES 3 1 MINUTES 50 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 147.17 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL IS THE SAME PROPERTY AS DESCRIBED IN DEED BOOK PAGE 5926 AT PAGE 101. TOGETHER WITH AN EASEMENT FOR SEWER FACILITIES, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: A PARCEL OF LAND BEING SITUATED IN THE SOUTH HALF OF SECTION 15, TOWNSHIP 5 NORTH, RANGE 1 WEST, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE POINT OF INTERSECTION OF THE SOUTH PROPERTY LINE OF THE L. J. JACKSON PARTITION WITH THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF MISSISSIPPI STATE HIGHWAY 18; THENCE RUN SOUTH 88 0 51 ' WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH L. J. JACKSON PROPERTY LINE A DISTANCE OF 1,502.93 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 50 0 31 ' EAST A DISTANCE OF 323.15 FEET TO A POINT ON THE CENTERLINE OF A 60 FOOT PROPOSED STREET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 00 0 26' WEST ALONG SAID CENTERLINE OF A PROPOSED STREET A DISTANCE OF 624.5 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 60 0 53' EAST A DISTANCE OF 234.23 FEET TO A POINT; THENCE RUN NORTH 60 0 53' EAST A DISTANCE OF 150 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 32 0 09' EAST A DISTANCE OF 75 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 58 0 01 ' WEST A DISTANCE OF 147.31 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED EASEMENT FOR SWER FACILITIES; RUN THENCE NORTH 33 0 50' WEST A DISTANCE OF 25 FEET; RUN THENCE NORTH 58 0 01 ' EAST 40 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE EDGE OF THE EXISTING DIRECTION ALONG THE EDGE OF THE SAID PAVEMENT TO THE BOUNDARY LINE SEPARATING THE PROPERTY OF WILLIAM B. LAW AND RICKY ROBERTS FROM THE PROPERTY OF VICKSBURG LP-GAS COMPANY; RUN THENCE ALONG THE SAID BOUNDARY LINE, SOUTH 58 0 01 ' WEST TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO January 18, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 28th day of December 2022.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth  
Zoning Administrator  
City of Jackson, Mississippi

1/5/2023, 1/19/2023

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
JTRAN BUS STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT  
CITY PROJECT NO. RFP#2022-04

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 219 South President Street, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. CST, Tuesday, January 10, 2023, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for JTRAN BUS STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT, REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)#2022-04.

- Principal items of work are as follows:
1. Removal of Signs, including post and footing-190 each;
  2. Removal of Sign Panels, including hardware-174 SF;
  3. Maintenance of Traffic;
  4. Mobilization;
  5. Standard Roadside Signs, Sheet Aluminum, 0.080" Thickness-1325 SF (INSTALL ONLY);
  6. Square Tube Post, 1.75"x 1.75", 14 GA-6570 LF (INSTALL ONLY);
  7. Square Tube Post, 2"x 2", 12 GA-1767 LF (INSTALL ONLY)

Signs, fasteners, posts, and mounts will be provided to the contractor and shall not be included in the bid price. The above general outline of features of the work does not in any way limit the responsibility of the Contractor to perform all work and furnish all labor and equipment required by the specifications and the drawings referred to therein.

Contract time for this contract shall be 120 consecutive calendar days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. The amount of liquidated damages per day will be \$500.00 plus any additional actual costs above \$500.00 incurred by the Owner. These actual costs include, but are not limited to, engineering, inspection, and other construction related costs resulting from the Contractor's failure to complete the work on schedule.

The City of Jackson 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 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 Division of Equal Business Opportunity at 601-960-1856. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

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

The City of Jackson ensures that the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), as outlined in 49 C.F.R. Part 26, as amended, have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts. Therefore, it is imperative that you read the DBE Section and complete the necessary paperwork in its entirety. If there is any evidence or indication that two or more bidders are in collusion to restrict competition or are otherwise engaged in anti-competitive practices, the submission of all such bidders shall be rejected, and such evidence may be cause for disqualification of the participants in any future solicitation undertaken by the City of Jackson.

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

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal forms to be provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for JTRAN BUS STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT, REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)#2022-04." Each bidder shall write his Certificate of Responsibility Number on the outside of the sealed envelope containing his proposal.

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

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

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

Awarding public contracts to non-resident Bidders will be on the same basis as the non-resident bidder's state awards contracts to Mississippi Contractors bidding under similar circumstances. Current state law, Mississippi

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

Each Bidder must deposit with his bid a Bid Bond or Certified Check in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the bid, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. Bidders shall also submit a current financial

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Constructions plans were completed through the Office of Transportation, 1785 Highway 80 W, Jackson, MS 39204. For technical questions email [ingnuice@jacksonms.gov](mailto:ingnuice@jacksonms.gov).

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that minority and women business enterprises are solicited to bid on these contracts as prime contractors and are encouraged to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities, equipment, material and/or supply needs.

The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.  
Christine Welch, Deputy Director Office of Transportation

12/8/2022, 12/15/2022, 12/22/2022, 12/29/2022, 1/5/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A REZONING  
ZONING CASE NO. 4198

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115 thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected thereby, that Caroline Reed has filed with the Planning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Rezoning from R-1A (Single-Family) Residential District to R-2 (Single-Family & Two-Family) Residential District to allow for the construction of a duplex for the property located at 1860 Meadowbrook Rd. (Parcel #584-180) in the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

Lot 1, Block J, Part 3, a subdivision according to the map or plat thereof which is on file and record in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds

County at Jackson, Mississippi, in Plat Book 12 at Page 13 reference to which is made in aid of and as a part of this description

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. President Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jackson. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO January 18, 2023.

WITNESS my signature this 28th day of December 2022.

/s/Ester L. Ainsworth  
Zoning Administrator  
City of Jackson, Mississippi

1/5/2023, 1/19/2023



LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
JTRAN BUS STOP SIGNAGE  
CITY PROJECT No. RFP#2022-03

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 219 South President Street, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. CST, Tuesday, January 10, 2023, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for JTRAN BUS STOP SIGNAGE, REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)#2022-03.

Principal items of work are as follows:

1. Standard Roadside Signs, Sheet Aluminum, 0.080" Thickness-1325 SF;
2. Square Tube Post, 1.75"x 1.75", 14 GA-6570 LF;
3. Square Tube Post, 2"x 2", 12 GA-1767 LF

The above general outline of features of the work does not in any way limit the responsibility of the Contractor to perform all work and furnish all labor, equipment and materials required by the specifications and the drawings referred to therein.

Contract time for this contract shall be 120 consecutive calendar days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. The amount of liquidated damages per day will be \$500.00 plus any additional actual costs above \$500.00 incurred by the Owner. These actual costs include, but are not limited to, engineering, inspection, and other construction related costs resulting from the Contractor's failure to complete the work on schedule.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promotefill and equal business opportunivfor 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 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 Division of Equal Business Opportunity at 601-960-1856. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all bidders that in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.O 2000d to 2000d-4, that all bidders will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids

in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, in consideration for an award.

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

The City of Jackson ensures that the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), as outlined in 49 C.F.R. Part 26, as amended, have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts. Therefore, it is imperative that you read the DBE Section and complete the necessary paperwork in its entirety. if there is any evidence or indication that two or more bidders are in collusion to restrict competition or are otherwise engaged in anti-competitive practices, the submission of all such bidders shall be rejected, and such evidence may be cause for disqualification of the participants in any future solicitation undertaken by the City of Jackson.

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

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal forms to be provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for JTRAN BUS STOP SIGNAGE, REQUEST FOR Fitorositi. (RFP)#2022-03." Each bidder shall write his Certificate of Responsibility Number on the outside of the sealed envelope containing his proposal.

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

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Christine Welch, Deputy Director Office of Transportation

12/8/2022, 12/15/2022, 12/22/2022, 12/29/2022, 1/5/2023

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# MVSU grad students thrive in Bioinformatics

By **LaTunya Evans**  
*Communications Specialist, MVSU*

Janani Kunrathur Pasupathy, of Chennai, India and Jasmine Wallace, of Greenwood, have been given research opportunities that opened the door for new research interests and networking options through the Mississippi Valley State University Bioinformatic graduate program.

Wallace is scheduled to graduate from MVSU in May of 2023. Pasupathy completed her second Master of Arts degree in Bioinformatics December 10, 2022, from MVSU. On December 15, 2022, Pasupathy began her job at Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University in Atlanta, GA as the bioinformatic analyst.

In November, Pasupathy presented her research at the 9th Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Conference in Baton Rouge, LA. In addition, Wallace was one of ten American students selected to participate in the Invasion and evolution – Evolutionary, phylogenetic, and genomic mechanisms and consequences of plant-fungal invasions in invasion biology international graduate course, which was held in Pretoria, South Africa, from October 30, 2022 through November 19, 2022.

Pasupathy was informed of the conference by her professor, Dr. Victor Bii, assistant professor – Bioinformatics.



**Pasupathy**

Although she was ecstatic to be accepted into the conference, she was concerned about her acceptance status when it arrived after its expected date.

“I applied to the conference by submitting my abstract to their website. Initially, I did not get a response on whether I was accepted, so I decided to contact them. After reaching out to them, they emailed me back to confirm my acceptance and apologized for the delay. Moreover, they said my abstract looked so good that they wanted to view the poster for it,” said Pasupathy.

Pasupathy registered online to present her project while she attended the



**Wallace**

event. She presented findings from her research via a poster entitled, “A comprehensive data mining and bioinformatics approach to identify gene signatures that promote prostate cancer progression in the African-American population.”

After presenting her presentation, Pasupathy was astonished at how interested the audience was in learning more about her research and findings.

“When I presented my poster, everyone was so impressed with the poster that they asked so many questions. I could answer them because my professor (Dr. Bii) had prepared me for ques-

tions people might ask. He was very supportive of me throughout this entire process,” Pasupathy explained.

According to Wallace, Dr. Bii informed her of the opportunity and insisted she apply. In the beginning, Wallace was hesitant because she thought she would not qualify, but Dr. Bii and her uncle, Dr. (Antonio) Brownlow, convince her otherwise.

“I was convinced of how it would be an amazing opportunity. I thought about it and realized the worst response I could get is “no,” so I decided to apply. A week later, I received an email that I was accepted,” said Wallace.

From there, Wallace spent three weeks witnessing new occurrences, studying invasions, exploring South Africa and connecting with new people.

“We were in the Cruger National Park to find and identify different animals. During that time, I witnessed an elephant begin to give birth. We saw when her water broke and how she walked to the waterhole but could not make it. So they had us leave while they assisted her in birth,” explained Wallace.

After completing their time at the Cruger National Park, the group moved to Sabie, where they visited a company named York Timberland that owned power forestry. There, they were taught more about invasions and their impacts.

“We were learning about invasions

and whether they have a neutral, positive or negative impact. Then, we went to three different pine sights to collect root samples and seedlings. After collecting them, they had to wait a couple of days to do the lab work in Pretoria,” she added.

Although Wallace spent a bit of time exploring the forest or in the lab, she was able to put down her lab coat and explore Africa.

“We ate lunch at the Botanical Gardens one day. Then, on another day, we went to a shopping mall, one of my favorite places we visited,” Wallace said.

Wallace explained her happiness for taking a chance on the program because she was able to expand her knowledge on fungi and met amazing people in the process.

“I learned how important fungi was for the tree roots by transporting nutrients from the roots to the tree. Some people were more familiar with fungi because that was their study path,” said Wallace.

She continued, “Because they knew some things I did not, I knew it was important to collaborate and network with the students. So we decided to have monthly meetings via Zoom to keep in contact.”

Through this experience, Wallace said she was allowed to complete her Ph.D. in Africa but may have other plans after graduation.

## ASU alumna Miiah Sutton reflects on Doctors in Italy Fellowship Program experience

*Alcorn State University Newswire*

Miiah Sutton, a La Verne, California native who earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry (emphasis in biochemistry) from Alcorn State University in the spring of 2021, recently participated in the Doctors in Italy Fellowship Program.

The Doctors in Italy Fellowship Program features a two-to five-week short-term study abroad program in Rome and Milan. This fellowship program provides all-inclusive tuition with 40 to 90 hours shadowing multiple medical specialists at top international hospitals. The program was developed in collaboration with Doctors in Italy, a prestigious network of top doctors and hospitals working across the county, promoting medicine's internationalization through technology and education.

Participating in the program gave Sutton a new perspective



**Sutton**

on the medical field and an appreciation for a different culture.

“My overall experience with the program was very eye-opening, not only with the medical side and how foreign doctors approach medicine but also with experiencing the different cultures of everyone in Rome,” said Sutton.

Seeing black doctors in her hometown hospitals was a rarity as a child; so rare that she couldn't fathom becoming one despite having the desire to pursue the profession. The fellowship program and her support system encouraged her that despite a lack of representation, she could accomplish her dreams one day.

“Growing up in California, I didn't see doctors that looked like me. Therefore, I didn't believe I could be a doctor for a long time. This opportunity showed me that if I put my mind to it, I could get anywhere I desired. Also, it proved that I have people behind me supporting me every step of the way. This opportunity holds weight.”

Not only did the fellowship program give her a chance to pursue her dreams, it also presented situations for her to grow and develop as a healthcare professional by teaching her the value of adapting to new surroundings.

“It allowed me to learn to adjust and adapt to different social norms in the operating room and clinical settings. Of course, the patient dictates how comfortable they feel with a student in the room, so that lesson taught me to

be conscious of some doctors being more receptive to questions during the process than others. For example, during a surgical procedure, some doctors wouldn't allow questions during the procedure, but they would rather you write your questions down and ask them later. Other doctors would not only allow questions but also would ask you questions about the procedure to ensure you're gaining an understanding of what is happening. I've always been inquisitive, so this was something I was glad to learn.”

Sustaining her confidence and appreciating her place along the journey are also leaps that Sutton took while in the program.

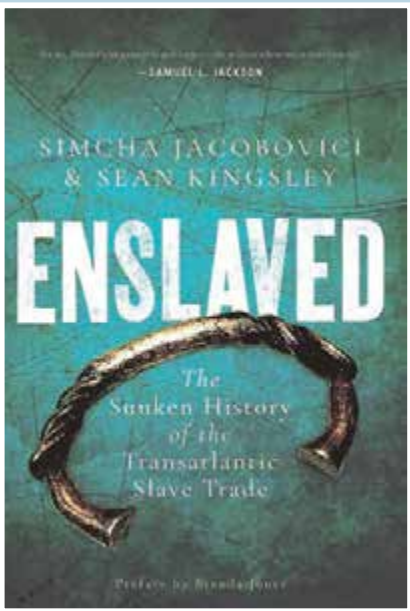
“This experience also helped me to be confident about where I am in my journey to medicine. I was the oldest student and the only student in a graduate program, so it would've been easy

to compare my progress to the progress of other students. Yet, as time progressed, I realized God helped me get into this position for a reason. I experienced the healthcare system in another country, and I made connections and was advised by several doctors. I gained a new perspective through this experience I can take with me as I pursue medicine.”

Sutton recommends the program to other aspiring medical professionals.

“This program is a fantastic way to gain medical experience. It gives students experience in the operating room, clinics and labs while providing group excursions for students to explore Italy. This was a one-of-a-kind experience. The knowledge combined with the different day-to-day encounters will never be replaced.”





BOOK REVIEW:

# ENSLAVED:

## THE SUNKEN HISTORY OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

BY SIMCHA JACOBOVICI & SEAN KINGSLEY  
C.2022, PEGASUS BOOKS  
\$28.95 • 332 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
*Columnist*

A good story requires lots of switchbacks. It’s boring if it moves too smoothly without a hitch. No, you need a detour or two, a couple of switchbacks, a pothole in the road to make the story interesting, and a good meander to smooth it out. Even so, as in the new book “Enslaved” by Simcha Jacobovici & Sean Kingsley, sometimes, the story is a wreck.

Were it not profitable – if it hadn’t been for the money in it – “the transatlantic slave trade

would never have happened,” say the authors in the first sentence of their book. This fact launches a tale of high seas, low tides, and the people of Diving With a Purpose who volunteer their talents to find former slave ships that lie beneath the ocean. This work helps tell the stories of ancestors who died beneath the waters, victims of the slave trade.

Jacobovici and Kingsley start out with a tale of three divers, “a story they did not want to hear. And... a dive to a haunted slave wreck they did not

want to dive” in Paramaribo, a port city in Suriname. There, 664 Africans were purposely locked in the hold of a sinking ship for reasons that the ship’s captain kept to himself.

Just off the coast of Gibraltar, the site known as 35F was an accidental find discovered by treasure hunters. At first DWP workers weren’t sure there was anything left of the shipwreck; it had been destroyed by area trawlers and fishermen. A second look showed cannons, ceramic pots, ivory and copper bracelets called “manilla,” that

were used “to buy gold, elephant tusks and humans.”

And then there was the Clo-tilda, a ship that was illegal from the start, and was sunk on purpose in a small waterway. Today, many descendants of its survivors live in a “sleepy” town near Mobile, Alabama, a “purely African town in America” founded by former slaves, “started from scratch...”

Many thoughts may swirl around your head when you read “Enslaved.”


The first is that there’s something to learn everywhere, but

also a good amount of information that you already know. It’s filled with powerful stories, but they’re written in sometimes-florid language that can make those tales hard to follow. And some of the tales will make you wince and cringe and cringe again.


Authors Jacobovici and Kingsley weave history inside tales of recovery, which is helpful in an overall understanding of slavery around the world, beginning well before 1619 and including how it came to be that Africans were

the people most captured. There are times, however, when that history gets in the way of DWP’s fascinating involvement – what they found, how it was discovered, what was done with the information and how it matters. It’s easy to miss those parts of this book, and that’s too bad.

This book will satisfy readers who want history, but armchair archaeologists may be left wanting. Come at “Enslaved” with that in mind: devour it, perhaps, or switch it out and put it back.



**ZACK WALLACE**  
Hinds County Circuit Clerk



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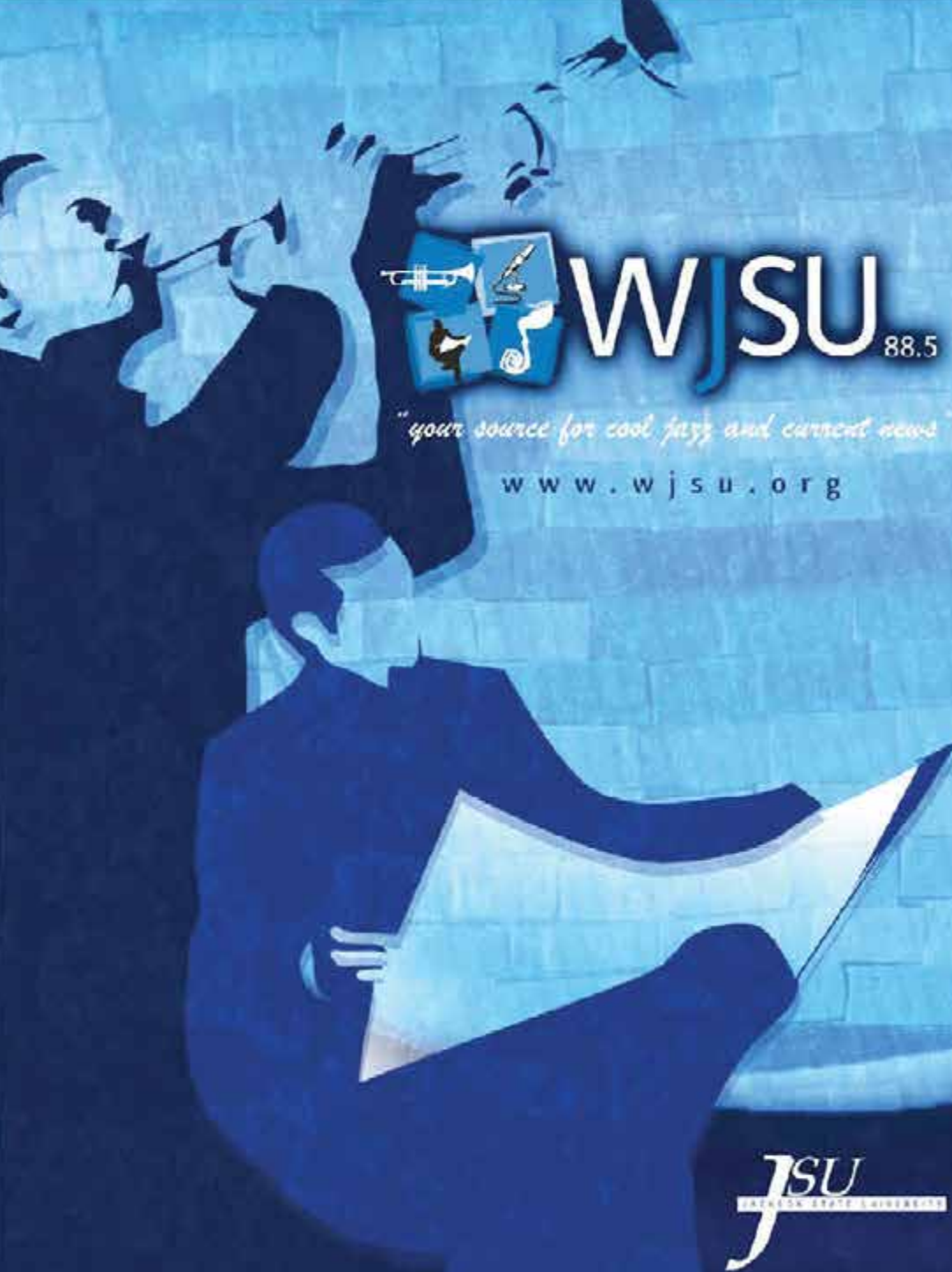
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# Bills’ Hamlin in critical condition after collapse on field

By Mitch Stacy  
Associated Press Writers

Buffalo defensive back Damar Hamlin was in critical condition early Tuesday after the Bills say his heart stopped following a tackle during the Monday Night Football game, which was indefinitely postponed.

Hamlin collapsed on the field during the first quarter of the nationally televised game against the Cincinnati Bengals and was given medical treatment for nearly 20 minutes before being taken to a hospital.

“Damar Hamlin suffered a cardiac arrest following a hit in our game versus the Bengals. His heartbeat was restored on the field and he was transferred to the UC Medical Center for further testing and treatment,” the Bills said in a statement. “He is currently sedated and listed in critical condition.”

Jordan Rooney, a family representative who described himself as a good friend of the player, told ABC’s “Good Morning America” Tuesday that Hamlin’s relatives are in good spirits but going through a lot and need their privacy. He declined to give details on Hamlin’s condition other than to say he is sedated.

In a chilling scene, Hamlin was administered CPR on the field, ESPN reported, while surrounded by teammates, some of them in tears, while they shielded him from public view. He was hurt while tackling Bengals receiver Tee Higgins on a seemingly routine play that didn’t appear unusually violent.

The NFL announced Hamlin’s condition shortly after he was taken to a hospital, but neither the league nor the hospital released any other details about the 24-year-old’s medical condition. The team’s statement was released before its flight arrived back in Buffalo early Tuesday.



Hamlin

day. There was no immediate update about the future status of the game.

On the play the 6-foot, 200-pound Hamlin was injured, Higgins led with his right shoulder, which hit the defensive back in the chest. Hamlin then wrapped his arms around Higgins’ shoulders and helmet to drag him down. Hamlin quickly got to his feet, appeared to adjust his face mask with his right hand and then fell backward about three seconds later and lay motionless.

Hamlin was treated on the field by team and independent medical personnel and local paramedics, and he was taken by ambulance to University of Cincinnati Medical Center. Teammate Stefon Diggs later joined Hamlin at the hospital.

About 100 Bills fans and a few Bengals fans gathered on a corner one block from the emergency room entrance, some of them holding candles.

Jeff Miller, an NFL executive vice president, told reporters on a conference

call early Tuesday that the league had made no plans at this time to play the game, adding that Hamlin’s health was the main focus.

An ambulance was on the field four minutes after Hamlin collapsed while many players embraced, including quarterbacks Buffalo’s Josh Allen and Cincinnati’s Joe Burrow. “Please pray for our brother,” Allen tweeted.

Hamlin collapsed at 8:55 p.m., and when he was taken off the field about 19 minutes later in what seemed like an eternity, the Bills gathered in prayer. A few minutes after the ambulance left the field, the game was suspended, and players walked off the field slowly and into their locker rooms where they awaited word on Hamlin and the game.

“I’ve never seen anything like it since I was playing,” NFL executive Troy Vincent, a six-time Pro Bowl cornerback during his career, said in the conference call early Tuesday. “Immediately, my

player hat went on, like, how do you resume playing after seeing a traumatic event in front of you?”

Hamlin’s uniform was cut off as he was attended to by medical personnel. ESPN reported on its telecast that Hamlin was also given oxygen.

Vincent said the league took no steps toward restarting the game and did not ask players to begin a five-minute warmup period as ESPN’s broadcasters had announced.

“It never crossed our mind to talk about warming up to resume play,” Vincent said. “That’s ridiculous. That’s insensitive. That’s not a place we should ever be in.”

Vincent said the Bills were returning early Tuesday morning to the team facility in Orchard Park, New York, with the exception of a few players who stayed behind with Hamlin.

There was a heavy police presence at Buffalo Niagara International Airport when the team arrived at about 2:45 a.m. A small group of fans gathered across the street from the players’ parking area near the airport.

The Bengals led 7-3 in the first quarter of a game between teams vying for the top playoff seed in the AFC. Cincinnati entered at 11-4 and leading the AFC North by one game over Baltimore, while AFC East champion Buffalo was 12-3.

“The NFLPA and everyone in our community is praying for Damar Hamlin,” the players’ union said in a statement. “We have been in touch with Bills and Bengals players, and with the NFL. The only thing that matters at this moment is Damar’s health and well being.”

The unfinished game has major playoff implications as the NFL enters the final week of the regular season, with the wild-

card playoff round scheduled to begin on Jan. 14.

The aftermath of the injury was reminiscent of when Bills tight end Kevin Everett lay motionless on the field after making a tackle on the second-half opening kickoff in Buffalo’s 2007 season-opening game against the Denver Broncos. Everett sustained a spinal cord injury that initially left him partially paralyzed.

Hamlin spent five years of college at Pittsburgh — his hometown — and appeared in 48 games for the Panthers over that span. He was a second-team All-ACC performer as a senior, was voted a team captain and was picked to play in the Senior Bowl.

He was drafted in the sixth round by the Bills in 2021, played in 14 games as a rookie and then became a starter this year once Micah Hyde was lost for the season to injury.

By Tuesday morning, a community toy drive organized by Hamlin had surged to more than \$3.7 million in donations. His stated goal was \$2,500.

Kathryn Bersani and her mother, Gayle, were among the Bills fans who traveled from Buffalo for the game and went to the hospital from the stadium.

“This is our family Christmas,” Kathryn Bersani said. “We thought it would be a great game. Joe (Burrow) and Josh (Allen) are such great men. I just hope he can live a normal life. It stunned us.”

Chuck and Janet Kohl went to the hospital after watching the game at home. “This is much more important than football,” Chuck Kohl said. “Had to come and pray for Mr. Hamlin.”

AP freelancer Jeff Wallner, AP Pro Football Writer Rob Maaddi and AP Sports Writers John Wawrow and Ben Nuckols contributed to this report.

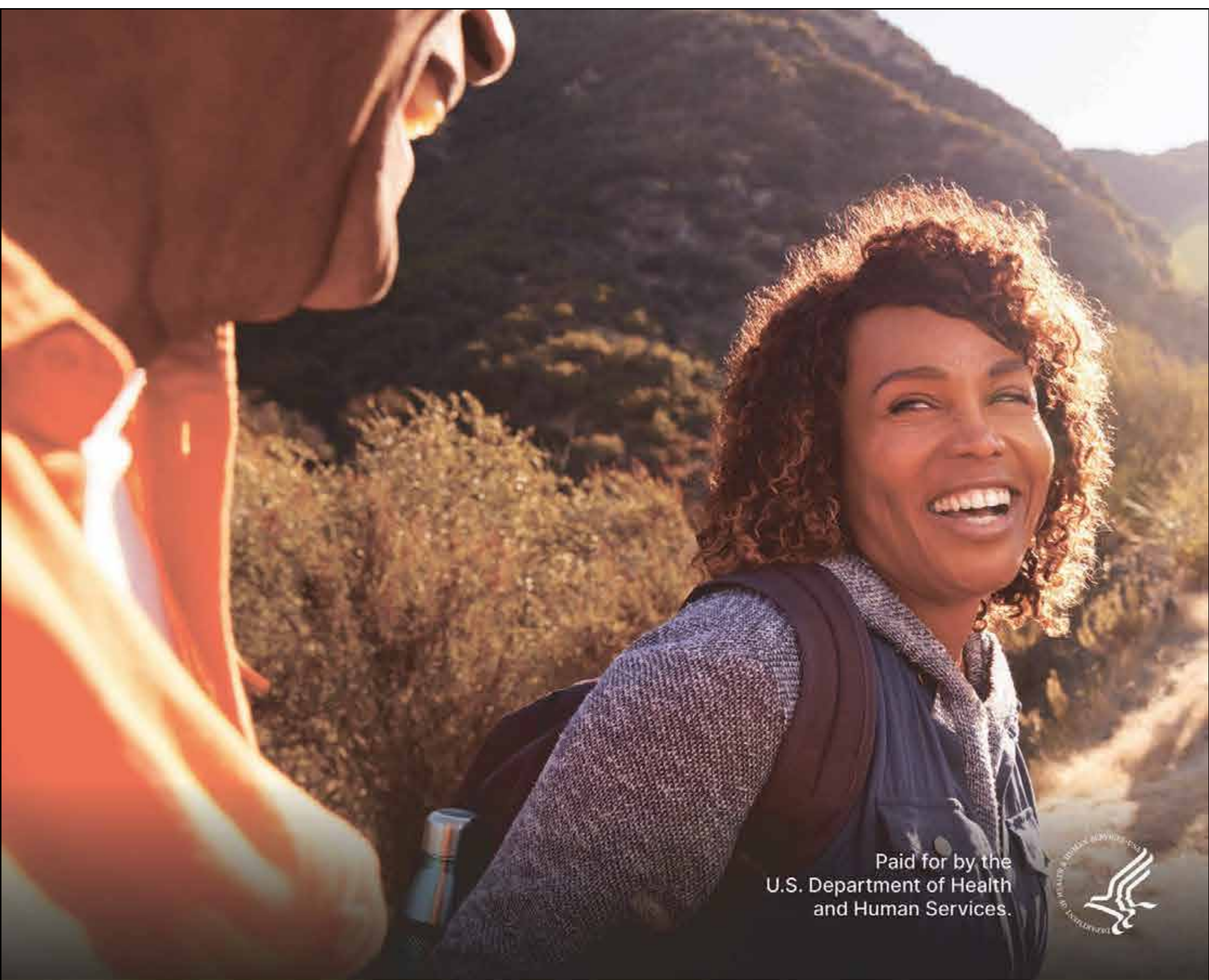
## Hinds County School District Weekly Update

### ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

Hinds County School District hosted a Pastor/Municipalities Luncheon to meet and greet pastors, mayors, senators and representatives who serve in the Hinds County School District area. Dr. Delesicia Martin, superintendent of Hinds County School District, provided information to this body on the great successes of the district and encouraged them to be involved in making the district the best it can be. They were given a tour of the Raymond High School Performance Arts Building and the new basketball gymnasium. Everyone was impressed with the improvement and success of Hinds County School District.







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