

Thank you  
for **20 Years**  
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HAPPY  
*Mother's*  
DAY



Stokes

By Janice Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.  
Contributing Writer

Hearts are saddened over the death of Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes who transitioned Monday morning, May 8, 2023.

As a person for the people, she became the first female African-American judge in Hinds County, Mississippi in 2014. Prior to her judgeship, Cooper-Stokes served on the Jackson City Council for Ward 3, resulting from a special election in 2012 after her spouse, Kenneth Stokes, was elected District 5 Hinds County Supervisor. When Cooper-Stokes ascended to the bench, Kenneth Stokes reclaimed his council seat in a special election.

In March of this year, Cooper-Stokes was transferred to a hospital in Houston, Texas after she was diagnosed with pneumonia at St. Dominic Hospital in Jackson.

Stokes

Continued on page 3

## Remembering Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes

First African-American Female  
Judge in Hinds County



Councilman Stokes and Judge Stokes at JSU game in October 2022

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON

## Woodlea Homeowner's Association honors Frances Morris for 20 yrs of service



The Morris family- (standing, l-r) John Morris II, Mia and Mitzi Morris; (seated) John and Frances Morris

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

A retirement celebration luncheon was held Friday, May 5, 2023 at 11 a.m. in the Crowne Room at the Jackson Hilton Hotel on County Line Road, honoring Frances Morris, who served as president of the Woodlea Homeowner's Association for over twenty

years. Also honored was her husband, John Morris, who served by her side, throughout her presidency.

The luncheon was attended by family, friends, members of the community, church members, as well as city and county officials, several of

Morris

Continued on page 3

# What kind of monuments do we deserve?

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

A deeply thoughtful panel discussion entitled, 'What kind of monuments do we deserve?', was held at The Two Museums May 4, 2023. The forum was brought to Jackson by the Zócalo Public Square, an Arizona State University Media Enterprise in partnership with The Mellon Foundation.

Zócalo Public Square was founded in 2003 in Los Angeles, and its mission is to connect people to ideas and to each other by examining essential questions in an accessible, broad-minded and democratic spirit. This program is the second in a two-year event and editorial series, 'How should societies remember their sins?'

"At a time when our country's public sphere and our global digital conversation have become ever more polarized and segregated, Zócalo seeks to create a welcoming intellectual space to engage a new and diverse generation in the public square." ([zocalopublicsquare.org](http://zocalopublicsquare.org)).

The panelists consisted of civil rights historian Daphne Cham-



William Sturkey, Daphne Chamberlain, Richard Lou and Patrick Weems

berlain, who currently serves as associate professor of History and the Brown University-Tougaloo College Partnership Program director; visual and performance artist Richard Lou, who is the chair of the Department of Art at University of Memphis; and Patrick Weems, executive director of the Emmett Till Interpretive Center and a Monument Lab Fellow. Moderator for the discussion was William Sturkey,

associate professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel-Hill, and the author of Hattiesburg – An American City in Black and White, published by the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019.

Panelists were asked to respond to questions from the moderator as well as audience members both in person and online, as the event was live streamed on YouTube and was recorded by

several high-profile media outlets.

Thought-provoking questions included: What exactly are monuments and what do they mean in our society today? Is there a difference between monuments and memorials or cemeteries? And if so, what are the functional differences? Why is the discussion about monuments so emotional and politically charged given the silence on this subject? What is



Panelists posing after the event.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS YOUNG

to be made of this and what message does it send to our children? What would our country, region, or state look like if we had monuments that were not protected by removal laws? And, what if we had monuments that every student wanted to visit?

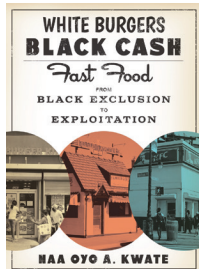
There was, of course, ample discussion about Mississippi, but there was also a broader, more national focus. According to data gathered by the Southern Pov-

erty Law Center (SPLC) as provided to Newsweek magazine, 202 Confederate monuments and symbols have been brought down since the May 25, 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

On September 8, 2021, when the 12-ton statue of General Robert E. Lee was brought down in Richmond, Virginia, then-Gov-

Monuments

Continued on page 3





# Jackson Film Festival producing life-changing possibilities for creatives, artists and entrepreneurs

By Janice K. Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.  
Contributing Writer

The Jackson Film Festival (aka JXN FILM FESTIVAL™) is an initiative of Soarpreneur, a 501(c)(3) organization and movement, designed to empower and equip the next generation of content creatives, artists and entrepreneurs to fulfill their artistic and entrepreneurial aspirations.

Held annually during the last week of July, it is quickly becoming a destination event for the region.

In celebration of independent filmmaking, partners within the film and television industry train, prepare and develop professional filmmakers throughout various stages of their careers. The in-person event with virtual options includes industry professionals, masterclasses and community outreach for the purpose of educating, entertaining and helping emerging artists elevate their art.

“We are really excited about the life-changing possibilities for attendants this year. There will be opportunities for creatives to pitch their scripts and television ideas to industry professionals during the pitch camp. In addition to transformative training, purposeful networking and free screenings, our festival goers may leave with job offers,” said Founder and Executive Director



(L-r) Maximus Wright (founder & executive director); Esther Young (director of finance); and Candice Love Jackson, Ph.D (director of education).  
PHOTO COURTESY JXN FILM FESTIVAL

Maximus Wright, who has been an independent filmmaker for eight years.

Wright pitched the festival as “a labor of love.” This is the first year that the festival is a pilot study during this seven-year period. The leader acknowledged partners who believe in what is unfolding among team members. One such partner, the Entertainment Industry College Outreach Program (EICOP), is a non-profit educational arts workforce development program in Burbank, CA.

EICOP offers paid summer internships to undergraduate and graduate students at HBCUs in LA, NY and ATL. These are innovative pipeline development programs designed to provide access and opportunity to underrepresented students of color and to help meet the industry’s diversity goal of employing a workforce that is reflective of the diverse communities it serves.

Soarpreneur supports and nurtures those who express interest and invest time into their development in the art of filmmaking. “Our outreach has included directing youth film camps, the production of film shorts either by youth and/or featuring youth and award scholarships,” Wright noted.

Under Wright’s leadership, Jackson is becoming a site for burgeoning new voices who strive to fulfill their artistic endeavors. Wright and his team at Soarpreneur are projecting a seven-year filmmaker program which began this year and will facilitate the growth and development of the individual as filmmaker to target her/his primary interests and strengths.

“The primary areas of focus are writing, directing, acting, producing, editing, camera operation, hair and makeup and wardrobe. Other areas include, but are not limited to, scoring, sound engineering, marketing, entre-

preneurship, funding, etc,” Wright said.

Wright pitched the festival as “a labor of love.” This is the first year that the festival is a pilot study during this seven-year period. The leader acknowledged partners who believe in what is unfolding among team members. One such partner, the Entertainment Industry College Outreach Program (EICOP), is a non-profit educational arts workforce development program in Burbank, California. Through this program, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Louisiana, New York and Atlanta offer paid summer internships to undergraduate and graduate students. According to Wright, “These are innovative pipeline development programs designed to provide access and opportunity to underrepresented students of color and to help meet the industry’s diversity goal of employing a workforce that is reflective of the diverse communities it serves.”

Soarpreneur/JXN FILM FESTIVAL, an official liaison for EICOP, makes inroads at HBCUs in Mississippi and within the southern region. Further, it serves as an additional training opportunity for HBCU students interested in preparing for and applying to the internship program.

A masterclass in screenwriting with Maximus Wright will be held at Homewood Suites by Hilton Jackson Fondren Medical District Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. Dr. Toneya Stewart will conduct a masterclass in acting at the Jackson Convention Complex Thursday, July 27, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. Bird’s Eye Entertainment will conduct a 3-day pitch camp at Homewood Suites, Tuesday, July 25, 2023, through Thursday, July 27, 2023, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wright’s team members are Dr. Candice Love Jackson, director of Education, and Esther Young, director of Finance & Administration and Festival Gala director.

Corporate sponsors for this year’s edition of the JXN FILM FESTIVAL™ include WDBD, FOX40, AARP Mississippi and the Community Foundation for Mississippi. Gala table sponsors from individuals and local businesses also help support the festival’s work. Wright specified, “There is always room for more supportive partners.”

To learn more about JXN FILM FESTIVAL, email [jxnfilmfestival@gmail.com](mailto:jxnfilmfestival@gmail.com) or [info@soarpreneur.org](mailto:info@soarpreneur.org). Also visit <https://jxnfilmfestival.com/>. If you are interested in attending the JXN FILM FESTIVAL, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/2023-jxn-film-festivalm-1271479>.



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## Stokes

Continued from page 1

Upon notification of the judge’s passing, a special call meeting was held Monday afternoon by the Hinds County Board of Supervisors, and a motion was passed to have the flags located at county buildings to be flown at half-staff in deference to Cooper-Stokes.

Television, print and social media shared expressions of kindness from those among Cooper-Stokes’ constituency.

Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba stated Monday that Cooper-Stokes would long be remembered. “I would like to send my condolences to Councilman Kenneth Stokes and the family of Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes after her passing this morning. LaRita was a longtime public servant for the City of Jackson and Hinds County. Her service to the community and efforts to make the world a better place from where she stood will be remembered. I am prayerful for the family and friends of LaRita, and the City of Jackson mourns her loss.”

Hinds County Court Judges Johnnie McDaniels and Carlyn Hicks made the following joint statement:

“We mourn the passing of our distinguished colleague and friend, Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes.” “Judge Stokes served the citizens of Hinds County with integrity, compassion and fairness while serving as Senior County Court Judge. Our prayers are with her family, friends and the entire community of Hinds County as well, as we all remember and honor her life and her distinguished service to oth-

ers. We are grateful for the opportunity to have served alongside her, and we offer our sincere condolences to the Cooper and Stokes families.”

Sheriff Tyree Jones of Jackson remarked, “My heartfelt condolences and prayers go out to the family, friends and husband, Councilman Stokes, on the recent passing of Hinds County Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes. She will always be remembered for her love of people, and she will be sorely missed.”

The Jackson Public School District extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to Councilman Kenneth Stokes and family regarding the passing of his beloved wife, Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes. “She was a proud supporter and advocate for Jackson Public Schools. Her legacy of public service will live on through all the lives of those she touched.”

*Jackson Advocate’s* Alice Tisdale fondly recalls Cooper-Stokes: “I remember her legacy of Christian living. She was the one you could look to for counseling. While she was kind of flamboyant with her hats and all that, she did a good job. She voted for all the people.”

Judge LaRita Cooper-Stokes was 64. Visitation is set for 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., Friday, May 19, 2023, at Jackson Memorial Funeral Service (1000 West Woodrow Wilson Avenue, Jackson, Miss.). Funeral Service is set for 10 a.m. at New Hope Baptist Church (1555 Beasley Rd in Jackson, Miss., Saturday, May 20, 2023).

## Morris

Continued from page 1

whom offered words of appreciation and congratulations.

Mark Wise, the incoming president, in his opening remarks, said that John and Frances Morris worked each and every day to make sure Woodlea, which is located in North West Jackson, was a top neighborhood in the capital city.

Dorris Bradley who gave the occasion stated, “John and Frances Morris have been the epitome of true leadership.” Bradley serves as social committee chair of Woodlea Homeowner’s Association.

Louis P. Wright Sr., Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Jackson, spoke on behalf of Mayor Choke Lumumba, who regretted not being able to attend the luncheon. Wright said being president of a homeowner’s association is like being a mayor. He said, “All concerns people have are placed on your doorsteps.”

Hinds County Sheriff Tyree Jones brought greetings and gave words of thanks. He said good communications with law enforcement can bridge the gaps in helping to keep neighborhoods safer.

Sgt. Frederick Suttles with the Jackson Police Department said, “Mrs. Morris truly serves and protects.” Suttles presented her with a plaque signed by Chief of Police James Davis.

Others speaking fondly of Frances Morris in her capacity as president of Woodlea included Circuit Court Judge Debra Gibbs, District 2, Retired Chancery Court Judge Patricia Wise and Attorney Charlene Priester, all Woodlea homeowners.

Rev. Chauncy Jordan Sr. of College Hill Baptist Church and church members Robert Green and Malena Dow spoke of her dedication in whatever capacity she served. They described her, as ‘a fearless leader’ who knew how to get

things done. Dow remarked that “Frances is truly a leader on whatever she is assigned, and what she is not assigned.

Dr. Larry Cooper, who serves on the Executive Board of the association, described John and Frances Morris as a ‘christian power couple’ and Eleanor Stewart, a good friend of Morris, recalled a friendship that goes back to their freshmen days at Alcorn State University.

Each speaker seemed to have a very close and special relationship with the outgoing president and each wished the new president, Mark Wise, much success.

Alice Tisdale of *The Jackson Advocate* not only congratulated the power couple on a job well done, but told the incoming president that *The Jackson Advocate* would like to sponsor a barbeque cook-off for the Woodlea Homeowners Association. She invited *The Mississippi Link* to join *The Advocate* in sponsoring this event.

Frances Morris thanked everyone for attending her retirement luncheon. She said, “This has been a great day. I’m looking at each of you rather than you looking down at me.” She thanked her husband for always working by her side and her children who for years were her typists, runners and evaluators. In fact, after speaking off the cuff, she decided to read the remarks typed and written by her youngest daughter, Mia, who had hoped her mom would not get long-winded. The look Mia had on her face while her mother was speaking off the cuff seemed to say, “I should have known better.”

Closing remarks were given by the new president, Wise. He looked at John and Frances Morris and said, “Mr. and Mrs. Morris Morris, you are officially retired.”

Closing prayer was given by Pastor Jordan. *See photos page 4.*

## 2023 Miss & Little Miss Jackson Hospitality crowned during National Travel & Tourism Week



Little Miss Jackson Hospitality Kennedi Gray seated; 2023 Miss Jackson Hospitality Jaidyn Thomas, standing

### The Mississippi Link Newswire

The 2023 Miss & Little Miss Jackson Hospitality were crowned during Visit Jackson’s celebration of National Travel & Tourism Week at the William F. Winter Mississippi Department of Archives & History Building May 9.

Jaidyn Elase-Diane Thomas was named the 2023 Miss Jackson Hospitality. Thomas is a junior at Thee Jackson State University, where she is majoring in computer science.

Thomas also plans to pursue a master’s degree in environmental science, as well as a Ph.D. in data analytics upon completion of her undergraduate studies. She has participated in research internationally in Belize and Costa Rica.

Thomas will serve as the City of Jackson’s goodwill ambassador for tourism and will compete in the Mississippi Hospitality State competition, July 9 – 15, 2023 in Hattiesburg. She will also receive a \$1,500 col-

lege scholarship.

Kennedi Gray was crowned the 2023 Little Miss Jackson Hospitality. The ten-year-old will serve alongside Thomas for ribbon cuttings, festivals and special events when her schedule allows.

Jada January, a resident of Jackson, was the first runner-up for Miss Jackson Hospitality. January is a nursing student at Alcorn State University and will receive a \$250 college scholarship.

## Monuments

Continued from page 1

ernor Ralph Northam was quoted by Newsweek as saying, “This was a long time coming, part of the healing process so Virginia can move forward and be a welcoming state with inclusiveness and diversity. Any remnant like this that glorifies the lost cause of the Civil War, it needs to come down.”

*Newsweek* went on to report that in 2021 alone, a total of 51 Confederate symbols had been relocated, renamed or removed from public spaces. This figure includes 11 monuments and 40 memorials. The SPLC also recorded 31 symbols that faced pending removals. However, as experienced during the fight to remove Lee’s monument, dismantling these symbols of the confederacy comes with challenges. A Mississippi law dating back to 1972 preserves Confederate monuments.

Lecia Brooks, SPLC’s Chief of Staff in Montgomery, Alabama, said, “these monuments were erected after the [civil] war to “repair and romanticize” the Confederacy’s participation in the war and to push back against the fact that the government fought to continue the enslavement of African Americans. As these monuments became engrained within the local landscape and culture, more white southerners tied their heritage to them.”

In its publication, Whose Heritage? (Third Edi-

tion, February 2022), the SPLC identified 377 Confederate memorials that have been removed since 2015. On June 17, 2015, a white supremacist murdered nine black people at the historic Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

In summing up the panel discussion, a member of the in-person audience asked, “If you could look ten years into the future, could you propose a new monument in Mississippi that does not currently exist? And what message would you want that monument to tell a visitor?” Moderator Sturkey responded, “In 1860 the number of enslaved people outnumbered the number of white people in this state (Mississippi) by over 80,000. Everywhere you look there are confederate monuments, but nothing that acknowledges their existence. So, it would be something that is big and important, and it said that these people lived here and that they mattered.” This comment was greeted with the loudest applause of the night.

The question remains, “What will public memory look like in the 21st century, and how might future generations experience the act of looking back?”

*This event can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghBMX3tloaI>.*



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# Governor launches reelection campaign waving foul red meat

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

Our often-times red-faced Governor kicked off his campaign for reelection in Gulfport Tuesday, May 2, and followed up with a stop in Richland Wednesday, May 3. It's difficult to take in the many things he had to say; music to the ears of many Mississippians but horrifying for many of the rest of us who are painfully aware that despite being the antithesis of an effective state leader, he could well end up winning reelection.

*U.S. News & World Report* has increased Mississippi's ranking to #48. In 2021, the state ranked #49; any progress is progress. Sub rankings are: Crime – #34, Economy – #49, Employment – #49, Business Environment – #48, Education – #41, Fiscal Stability – #40, Healthcare – #49, Healthcare Quality – #50, Healthcare Access – #45, Public Health – #46, Infrastructure – #47, Natural Environment – #16, Economic Opportunity – #49, Equality – #36, Internet Access – #48 and Transportation – #46.

So, what do you do when you want to maintain power and control over just about the worst performing state in the nation? You start by firing up the base, and in Mississippi, to our stifling detriment, that means waving the foul red meat high and long. Here is his rant right out of the starting gate as he launches his reelection campaign in Richland, as quoted by *Mississippi Today*.

"My friends, this is a different governor's campaign than we have ever seen before in our state because we are not up against a local-yokel Mississippi Democrat, we are up against a national liberal machine," Reeves told a crowd in Richland, Wednesday, at the second campaign kickoff event. "They are extreme. They are radical and vicious. They believe welfare is success. They believe that taxes are good, and businesses are bad. They think boys can be girls, that babies have no life, and that our state and our nation are racist."

Reeves continued in his speech, "They think they can teach all of us Mississippians a lesson. They do not like who we are, and they do not like what we believe. They look at all we have accomplished as conservatives, and they hate it. They see our progress on education and the economy and they want to stop it. You see, a successful, thriving, growing Mississippi does not work for them, not if it is also a God-fearing, family loving and truth-believing, hard-working conservative Mississippi. They want Mississippi to be the butt of their jokes. They want to kick



Governor and Elle Reeves at Richland, MS reelection campaign launch, May 3, 2023. CREDIT: VICKIE D. KING/MISSISSIPPI TODAY

## COMMENTARY

Mississippi around, and you and me are simply in their way."

You just can't make this stuff up. Well, then again, if you are trying to turn truth into fiction, it looks like you can make it up. It's a version of backward-looking power brokers that keep our state at the bottom attempting to hoodwink the base into believing they are victims. Mississippi has always ranked at the top of the list of creating victims.

The whole "they're out to get us" theme is the most laughable, quickly followed by "liberals who think our state and our nation are racist." With all due respect to the office of the governor, Newsflash Mister Governor, no one thinks Mississippi is racist; most know it because they see it and feel it every single day.

They see the highest incarceration rates in the world with two-thirds of inmates being non-white, in a state with a 58% white population. They see 94% of state heads of agencies being white, with nearly 40% of the population is black.

They see oppressive subjugation of voting rights targeting the county/city with the highest percent of African Americans. They saw your fists clinched like a petulant child when you had to stand behind Jackson's African-American mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba and EPA Administrator Michael Regan last September during the water crisis.

They see you continue to celebrate the heritage of confederates annually, while turning your back on Black History Month. They see you call a special legislative session to award a multi-million-dollar company \$247 million in tax incentives when you refused to do the same in the water crisis for Jackson, the city that contributes 29% of the state's Gross Domestic Product (Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Mr. Governor, we know exactly who you are and what you believe in regardless of what you say on the campaign trail. We don't forget things like your effort to get taxpayers to pay for a private access road to your residence. We don't forget that you denied the city of Jackson bonds for water system repairs all the way back when you were on the Bond Commission, telling Paul Gallo on SuperTalk radio, "I've never voted against that because it's never gotten to the Bond Commission. If we are not comfortable, we never bring it up for a vote."

We know who you are every time you stroll out those pick-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps attitudes, and as you refuse to push for the expansion of Medicaid even when the federal government pays the bulk of the costs. Mr. Governor, you preside over a state that would be bankrupt were it not for 47% of its revenue coming to the coffers directly from the federal government. Yes, we know who you are for so many reasons, Mr. Governor, and we surely know that you are not for us.

Just over six months ago, Morning Consult tagged you as the fifth most unpopular governor in the nation. The poll relayed, "Of the many Republican governors running for reelection within the next four years, Reeves ranks last in America."

We are a prayerful state, Mr. Governor, and we are going to continue to pray for you. We are also going to exercise our constitutional right to vote. We need a true chief executive. We need someone with the vision of a forward-thinking, prosperous and equitable Mississippi; someone with the ability to create a strategy to implement that vision and to bring people together; someone who believes in opportunity for all; someone who believes in lifting all boats, not just megayachts.

# Mississippi impeding funds for Jackson's water, group says



By Emily Wagster Pettus  
Associated Press

Mississippi has intentionally created hurdles that prevent the majority-black capital city of Jackson from receiving enough money to repair a long-troubled water system that nearly collapsed last year, the Southern Poverty Law Center said Friday in announcing a new civil rights complaint it filed.

The center asked the U.S. Treasury Department to investigate Mississippi's rules for distributing \$450 million to water systems operated by cities, counties and rural water associations. The funds came from pandemic relief money distributed by the federal government.

State officials said in November that Jackson would receive \$35.6 million, and that the city would have to match that amount – a matching requirement in place for larger communities in the first round of funding.

Southern Poverty Law Center said in the complaint, which it filed Tuesday, that the state's application for the grant program failed to consider the dire need for costly improvements to the largest water system in the state, and that created a "disparate impact on the black residents who live in the drastically underfunded city of Jackson."

The state has been slow in sending money to Jackson, the center said.

"The people of Jackson are suffering daily. Residents and business owners are paying a costly price for the gross negligence of state leadership," Waikinya Clanton, the center's Mississippi director, said in a statement Friday.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is in charge of distributing the water system improvement money. In response to questions from The Associated Press Friday, department spokesperson Jan Schaefer said the funding approved for Jackson is for two wastewater projects and five projects to improve the drinking water system. She said the grant program

is based on the state reimbursing cities, counties and water associations, and Jackson has not yet submitted requests for reimbursement.

The Southern Poverty Law Center's complaint to the Treasury Department is the latest of several efforts to bring federal pressure to force improvements for the Jackson water system. The city has nearly 150,000 residents, with about 25% living in poverty.

In August and September, most of Jackson lost water pressure after heavy rainfall exacerbated problems at the main water treatment plant. Thousands of people lined up to get water for drinking, cooking, flushing and bathing.

In October, the Environmental Protection Agency announced it was investigating whether Mississippi state agencies have discriminated against Jackson by refusing to fund water system improvements. Republican Gov. Tate Reeves responded by saying Jackson has received a disproportionate amount of water funding based on the city's size. He also said local officials only have themselves to blame for the water woes.

In November, a federal judge approved a Justice Department request for a rare intervention to try to fix the Jackson system. Federal authorities appointed Ted Henifin, a water administrator with decades of experience in other states, to lead the effort.

The Republican-controlled Legislature wrote the program's rules to distribute the \$450 million and Reeves signed them into law April 2022. Revisions were signed last month.

Jackson was awarded its portion of the money during the first round of applications. The revision this year said cities or counties that received money are ineligible to receive more money in the second round.

Jackson officials have said the water system repairs could cost up to \$2 billion. In December, Congress allocated \$600 million for the Jackson water system as part of a \$1.7 trillion federal spending bill.

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# Proud Boys 1/6 verdict boosts Justice Dept. in Trump probe

By Alanna Durkin Richer,  
Michael Kunzelman And Eric Tucker  
*The Associated Press*

Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrío wasn't even in Washington when members of his extremist group, angry over Donald Trump's election loss, stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Yet federal prosecutors, using his words, won a conviction on the most serious charge levied in the insurrection.

The seditious conspiracy guilty verdicts of Tarrío and three lieutenants handed down Thursday — after a contentious and erratic trial that lasted more than twice as long as expected — bolster the Justice Department's record in its historic prosecution of the Capitol attack. The investigation has now led to convictions against two top extremist group leaders on a legally complex charge that's rarely ever brought and can be difficult to prove.

The verdicts could further embolden the Justice Department and special counsel Jack Smith as they dig into efforts by Trump and his allies to undo President Joe Biden's victory.

Mostly in private, Smith's work is proceeding apace. Just last week, a federal grand jury — meeting in the same courthouse where the Proud Boys trial was held — heard hours of testimony from former Vice President Mike Pence, who has publicly described a pressure campaign by Trump aimed at getting him to halt Congress' certification of the election results.

In the Proud Boys case, prosecutors secured a conviction by relying on Jan. 6 rhetoric and a legal theory alleging that Tarrío and his lieutenants mobilized a loyal group of foot soldiers — or “tools” — to supply the force necessary to carry out their plot to stop the transfer of power from Trump to Biden on Jan. 20.

Could the Justice Department follow a similar path with Trump? After all, just before the riot erupted the urged his supporters to go to the Capitol and “fight like hell.” The House committee that investigated the insurrection recommended Trump be prosecuted for “assisting and providing aid and comfort to an

insurrection.”

“Who inspired them to do that? Who directed them to do that? Who was the person telling his followers to ‘fight like hell’? Of course, that’s former President Trump,” said Jimmy Gurulé, a University of Notre Dame law professor. “He’s not silent. He’s not oblivious to what’s going on. He’s leading the charge. He’s encouraging them to act.”

But some experts say the successful prosecution of the Proud Boys may not make it any easier to bring a case against Trump.

“Tarrío wasn’t there, but he was responsible because he was the one who was an organizer and leader,” said Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor now a professor at Loyola Marymount Law School. “People might say ‘Well, wouldn’t that apply to Trump?’ It might,” she said.

“But you have to again have the very direct evidence that Trump calling people to storm the Capitol, he was calling them to violence. And I’m not sure we have the answer to that yet, although I think the special counsel is getting closer, putting people like Mike Pence in the grand jury,” she added.

Attorney General Merrick Garland alluded to the wider investigation after Tarrío's conviction, declaring, “Our work will continue.”

“Today’s verdict makes clear the Justice Department will do everything in its power to defend the American people and American democracy,” Garland said.

Trump loomed large over the monthslong Proud Boys trial at the U.S. Courthouse in Washington, where the Capitol can be seen in the distance from the windows. Lawyers for one of Tarrío's co-defendants at one point said they wanted to call the former president to the witness stand, although the idea went nowhere.

Prosecutors argued that the Proud Boys saw themselves as “Trump’s army” and were prepared to do whatever it took to keep their preferred leader in power. Messages displayed throughout the trial showed Tarrío warning that the Proud Boys would become “political prisoners” if Biden were to become president. As

the riot proceeded, he gloated about his group’s role, writing in one message, “We did this.”

Tarrío's lawyers, however, sought to use Trump as part of his defense, claiming the former president was to blame and that prosecutors were trying to use Tarrío as a scapegoat for the president — an argument jurors appear to have roundly rejected.

Trump has denied inciting any violence on Jan. 6 and has argued that he was fully permitted by the First Amendment to challenge his loss to Biden.

This was the third seditious conspiracy trial stemming from the riot, which left dozens of police officers injured and sent lawmakers dashing for safety and into hiding.

Stewart Rhodes — the founder of the Oath Keepers, another far-right extremist group — was convicted in November, and the Justice Department in a court filing Friday recommended he be sentenced to 25 years in prison. Four other Oath Keepers were convicted in a second trial.

Tarrío was at a hotel in Baltimore when the chaos unfolded Jan. 6, having been kicked out of the capital city after being arrested two days earlier on allegations that he defaced a Black Lives Matter banner. Law enforcement later said that Tarrío was picked up in part to quell potential violence.

Three Proud Boys members were convicted of the sedition charge alongside him: Ethan Nordean, Joseph Biggs and Zachary Rehl. A fifth defendant, Dominic Pezzola, was acquitted of seditious conspiracy, but convicted of other serious crimes.

It’s not clear how closely special counsel Jack Smith and his team of prosecutors were tracking the trial or taking stock of the verdicts. Smith has his own team of prosecutors — separate from Justice Department lawyers working on more than 1,000 Jan. 6 cases who are probing efforts by Trump and his allies to subvert the election results.

Since his appointment in November, Smith has cast a broad net in demanding interviews and testimony related to fundraising, Trump's rally that preceded the riot on Jan. 6, and communications between Trump as-

sociates and election officials in battleground states. Separately, Smith is investigating the presence of classified documents at Trump's Florida Mar-a-Lago estate and Trump's potential efforts to obstruct the government's work to get them back.

In Georgia on Friday, the attorney for eight Republican fake electors who signed a certificate falsely saying Trump had won the state said they had agreed to immunity deals in Georgia's investigation into Trump's actions.

As for the Proud Boys, George Washington University law professor Stephen Saltzburg, who used to work in the Justice Department, said he believes Thursday's verdict will have “zero impact” on Smith and his team. There hasn't been any evidence of communications between high-ranking Trump White House officials and the Proud Boys, he noted.

“If that sort of thing does exist, then it wouldn't matter what the jury did in this (Proud Boys) case because there would be independent evidence that other people were conspiring,” Saltzburg said. “If there's not similar evidence involving the president and people around him, then it's a harder case.”

One of the hallmarks of a conspiracy charge is that prosecutors don't have to allege a defendant took every action themselves, said Randall Eliason, another former federal prosecutor now a GW law professor.

“So someone like Tarrío doesn't have to actually participate in the riot itself and can still be held accountable,” Eliason said. “The same is true of people in the White House” and anyone else who could reasonably be considered to have been part of the conspiracy without having set foot in the Capitol, he said.

Still, Eliason downplayed the impact the verdict could have on Smith's charging decisions, noting that it's hardly a revelation that conspiracies can wrap up a broad range of defendants and not just direct participants.

“I wouldn't say personally that this verdict is going to embolden him to do something he might otherwise have worried about doing,” he said.

# Tyre Nichols died of blows to the head, autopsy shows



Nichols

By Adrian Sainz  
*Associated Press*

Tyre Nichols died of blows to the head suffered when he was beaten by Memphis police during a January arrest, an autopsy report released Thursday showed.

The autopsy said the manner of death was homicide. The report released by the medical examiner in Memphis described brain injuries, cuts and bruises to the head and other parts of the body.

Nichols was black, as were the five police officers fired and charged with second-degree murder and other counts after his death. They pleaded not guilty Feb. 17.

Ben Crump, an attorney for the Nichols family, said they were briefed Wednesday on the autopsy report by the district attorney in Shelby County, which includes Memphis.

“The official autopsy report further propels our commitment to seeking justice for this senseless tragedy,” a statement released by Crump's law firm said.

Officers who were part of a crime-suppression team known as ‘Scorpion’ caught up with Nichols and punched him, kicked him, and slugged him with a baton as he yelled for his mother.

After the beating, as shown by video, officers stood by and talked with one another as Nichols struggled with his injuries while he was on the ground. Video and other records also showed one officer took photos of Nichols as he was propped up against an unmarked police car.

Nichols was taken to a hospital in an ambulance that left the site of the beating 27 minutes after emergency medical technicians arrived, authorities said.

Nichols, 29, died three days later. His funeral was held Feb. 1.

Police said Nichols had been suspected of reckless driving, but no verified evidence of a traffic violation has emerged in public documents or in video footage. Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn “CJ” Davis has said she has seen no evidence justifying the stop or the officers' response. Davis disbanded the Scorpion unit after Nichols' death.

According to the autopsy, ethanol or drinking alcohol and tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, were detected in Nichols' system. THC is found in marijuana.

“The concentrations of alcohol and THC detected were low,” said Dr. Andrew Stolbach, a medical toxicologist with Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, who reviewed the autopsy report at the request of The Associated Press.

The alcohol level is “about equivalent to a drink or two,” Stolbach said. “It’s a level that a lot of people would have after drinking socially, people capable of driving home legally.”

In addition to the five black officers fired and charged with murder, one white officer who was involved in the initial traffic stop has been fired. That officer will not face charges for his role in Nichols' death. Another officer who has not been identified also has been fired. An additional officer retired before he could be fired.

Three Memphis Fire Department employees who were at the site of the arrest have also been fired. Two Shelby County sheriff's deputies who also were there were suspended.

Nichols' family, their lawyers, community leaders and activists have called for changes within the Memphis Police Department concerning issues related to traffic stops, use of force, improving transparency and other policies. The city council has passed an ordinance ending traffic stops based solely on a single secondary violation, such as an improperly placed license tag.

Nichols' mother has filed a \$550 million federal lawsuit against the city, the police department and Davis. The city has declined comment on the lawsuit.

# Black voters backing Biden, but not with 2020 enthusiasm

By Ayanna Alexander  
*Associated Press*

LaJoia Broughton, a 41-year-old small-business owner, considers herself a fan of President Joe Biden.

He's provided opportunities for black-owned business while bringing integrity to the White House, she said. Her decision for 2024 is not in doubt.

“Biden has proven himself in the last few years, and I'll be voting for him in the next election,” said Broughton, who owns a lobbying and public affairs firm in Columbia, South Carolina's capital city.

Destiny Humphreys is less enthusiastic. The 22-year-old senior at South Carolina State University, the state's only public historically black college or university, or HBCU, said she's disappointed in the president, feeling his accomplishments have so far not lived up to his promises.

“Honestly, I feel like right now America is in a state of emergency. We need some real change,” said Humphreys, who remains unsure about her vote in next year's election.

After a dismal start to his 2020 presidential campaign, black voters in South Carolina rallied behind Biden, reviving his White House ambitions by driving his Democratic rivals from the race and ultimately putting him on a path to defeating then-President Donald Trump. But at the outset of Biden's reelection bid, the conflicting views among the same voters provide an early warning sign of the challenges he faces as he aims to revive the diverse coalition that proved so crucial to him before.

Black voters formed the heart of Biden's base of support and any dip in

support could prove consequential in some of the most fiercely competitive states, such as Georgia, Michigan and Wisconsin. Well aware of the challenge, the Biden campaign says it's confident in its message and is planning to highlight how the president has prioritized issues that are important to black Americans.

“The progress made in the first two years — whether it's the historically low black unemployment rate, unprecedented funding to HBCUs, or halving the black poverty rate in half — is all at stake in 2024,” campaign spokesman Kevin Munoz said in an emailed statement. “The campaign will work hard to earn every vote, and expand on its winning 2020 coalition.”

Yet there are some early signs that Biden will have work to do to generate enthusiasm among black voters for another run.

Biden's approval rating among black adults has fluctuated over his two years in office. As with most demographic groups, the latest Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll finds his 58% current approval rating among black adults sitting well below where he began. Roughly 9 in 10 black adults approved of Biden over his first months in office.

While only about half of Democrats overall say they want Biden to run again in 2024, 81% say they would definitely or probably support him if he were the nominee. The groundswell isn't as stark among black adults: 41% say they want him to run and only 55% say they are likely to support him in the general election.

APVoteCast, an extensive national

survey of the electorate, also found that support for Republican candidates ticked up slightly among black voters during last year's elections, even though those voters overwhelmingly supported Democrats.

South Carolina provides an early barometer on how black voters are viewing Biden shortly after his quiet campaign launch, via a video message late last month.

After his 2020 campaign was rescued, Biden rewarded the black voters who are decisive in South Carolina Democratic politics by moving the state to the head of the party's nominating schedule next year. He also followed through with his campaign pledge to appoint the first black woman to the Supreme Court.

But interviews two years into his presidency with more than a dozen black voters representing a variety of ages and backgrounds reveal mixed views, especially between older and younger voters.

Many younger voters said they aren't convinced that Biden has delivered on their most important priorities.

“He wouldn't have been president without us,” said Courtney McClain, a 22-year-old recent graduate of the University of South Carolina, who voted for Biden in 2020, her first presidential election.

Getting her loans forgiven, both for her bachelor's degree and a planned master's program, is a top priority for her. She applauds Biden's attempt at a college loan forgiveness program, but is frustrated that the plan is now in doubt after it was challenged in the courts by Republicans.

“So, I definitely think moving forward, if he wants to promise something as large as that, I think he should put the steps in place to make sure that he's able to go through with that before he just says it out loud,” McClain said.

Biden's plan, announced last August, would have erased \$10,000 in federal student loan debt for those with incomes below \$125,000 a year, or households earning less than \$250,000, and canceled an additional \$10,000 for those who received federal Pell Grants. Its fate is uncertain after the Supreme Court last December said it would deliberate over the program's future.

Many younger voters also cited the economy, especially lowering inflation, as a top priority. Several noted a lack of enthusiasm among their peers for a second Biden run, even while acknowledging they didn't see a realistic alternative. But they wondered how lackluster support might affect turnout next year.

“For people to vote, and to be eager to vote, you have to actually want to vote for the person,” said Ace Conyers, a 22-year-old at South Carolina State.

Bailey Scott, a junior at the school, said she's not excited about voting in the 2024 presidential election because people she would like to see in office won't be running.

“So I'm just going to have to pick the lesser evil,” she said. “And as of right now, that does seem like Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.”

*Associated Press writer Hannah Fingerhut in Washington contributed to this report.*



# Prediabetes

By Vince Faust  
*Tips to be Fit*

You are prediabetic when your blood sugar level is higher than normal but not yet high enough to be type 2 diabetes. With lifestyle changes, people diagnosed with prediabetes don't have to progress to type 2 diabetes. If you are diagnosed with prediabetes, the long-term damage of diabetes, especially to your heart, blood vessels and kidneys may already be starting.

If you are age 65 or older, you are at an increased risk for pre-diabetes. Other characteristics can also increase your risk even more. You should ask your doctor about receiving a fasting glucose test if you score higher than 5 on this test.

Age	Points
20-27	0
28-35	1
36-44	2
45-64	4
65-99	5

Family History of Diabetes	
No	0
Yes	1

Heart Rate (beats per minute)

Less than 60	0
60-69	0
70-79	1
80-89	2
90-99	2
Greater than 100	4

High Blood Pressure	
No	0
Yes	1

Body Mass Index (BMI)	
Less than 25	0
25-29.9	2
30 or greater	3

To determine your heart rate, place the tips of your first two fingers lightly over one of the blood vessels in your neck or the pulse spot inside your wrist just below the base of your thumb. Count your pulse for 10 seconds and multiplied by 6.

To determine your BMI, consult the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute website [www.nhlbi.gov/health/heart/learn/bmi](http://www.nhlbi.gov/health/heart/learn/bmi).

This test is from the "Annals of Family Medicine"

Prediabetes can be a warning sign that you may be at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a

serious health condition that can lead to complications such as heart disease, nerve damage and kidney damage. In prediabetes, the body does not process glucose properly.

Glucose is your main source of energy for your body's cells and it comes from the food we eat. Insulin is a hormone produced by your pancreas that helps the body's cells use glucose for energy. In prediabetes, your body does not use insulin properly, which is known as insulin resistance. This causes glucose to build up in the bloodstream, which can damage your organs and tissues over time.

Prediabetes does not usually have any symptoms. This means many people with prediabetes don't know they have it. It is estimated that over 88 million adults in the United States have prediabetes, but only about 1 in 10 people with prediabetes know they have it. Prediabetes can be detected through routine blood tests, so it is important to have regular check-ups with your doctor.

Diabetes is listed as the fifth deadliest disease in the United States. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) estimated that the total annual economic impact of diabetes in 2018 was \$327 bil-

lion. That is one out of every 10 health care dollars spent in the United States.

If you have prediabetes, there are several steps you can take to reduce your risk for developing type 2 diabetes. These include:

**Lifestyle changes:** Making lifestyle changes such as losing weight, increasing physical activity and eating a healthy diet can help reduce your risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

**Medications:** Medications can help reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes in people with prediabetes.

**Diabetes prevention programs:** Diabetes prevention programs can help people with prediabetes make lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes. These programs include coaching, education and support from healthcare professionals.

When your two-hour blood glucose level is between 140 and 199 mg/dl, you are pre-diabetic. When your two-hour blood glucose level is 200 mg/dl or higher, you have diabetes.

If you don't treat your prediabetes it can lead to type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a serious health condition that can lead to bad health complications. It is important that you work with your

healthcare provider to manage your blood glucose levels and reduce your risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

While there is no cure for prediabetes or diabetes, it can be controlled. Most prediabetes and type 2 diabetes cannot only be controlled, it can be prevented and reversed. There are a number of areas that are under your control. These control factors include nutrition, fitness, sleep, stress reduction, medical care, not smoking and keeping smoke out of your environment. Educating yourself about prediabetes and diabetes and your control factors are necessary to better control your diabetes.

Your doctor's appointment is your opportunity to discuss medical problems and concerns such as prediabetes and diabetes. Write down any concerns you may have about your health. By preparing for the appointment you will be less likely to waste the opportunity and more likely to gain a higher degree of satisfaction from the visit.

Remember, prediabetes and diabetes has no cure but it can be controlled and in some cases prevented.

Before starting your fitness program, consult your physician.

# Blood pressure: What do the numbers mean and why do they matter?

By Laura Williamson  
*American Heart Association News*

It's a standard part of any medical visit. Someone, typically a nurse, wraps a cuff around your arm and asks you to sit quietly while the cuff squeezes to the point of discomfort, then slowly eases its grip. Some numbers get jotted down in your chart.

"136 over 79."

What does that even mean?

"The top number – the systolic – tells us how much pressure there is from blood pushing against the walls of your arteries when the heart beats," said Dr. Niteesh Choudhry, a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and a hospitalist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. "The bottom number – known as diastolic – is the amount of pressure from blood pushing against the artery walls when the heart is at rest" between heartbeats.

"When either number is too high for too long, it causes all kinds of bad things," Choudhry said. That can include strokes, heart attacks, kidney failure and other chronic illnesses. "High blood pressure is a major cardiovascular risk factor, leading to bad outcomes in the heart and brain, and that's why it's gotten so much attention for so long."

Nearly half of U.S. adults have high blood pressure, or hypertension. Because there are often no symptoms, if people aren't checking for it, many don't know they have it.

What's high?

According to the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology, a normal blood pressure for adults is a systolic measurement of less than 120 mmHg and a diastolic reading under 80 mmHg. Blood pressure



is elevated when the systolic consistently reaches 120-129 mmHg and the diastolic is less than 80 mmHg. It is considered stage 1 hypertension when systolic blood pressure consistently hits 130-139 mmHg or the diastolic reaches 80-89 mmHg, and stage 2 hypertension when the readings consistently reach 140 mmHg or 90 mmHg or higher, respectively. Blood pressure readings that suddenly exceed 180 systolic and/or 120 diastolic are considered a hypertensive crisis that requires immediate medical attention.

Choudhry said much of the focus has centered on the top number (systolic) because there's a larger body of research tying it to poor cardiovascular outcomes. "But both numbers matter. If one is high but the other isn't, we use the one that's abnormal."

What happens when numbers stay high?

When blood pressure gets too high, arteries begin to stiffen, said Dr. Elizabeth Jackson, director of the Cardiovascular Outcomes and Effectiveness Research Program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. "They are supposed to be flexible. Think

about arteries being like a garden hose. If you push a lot of fluid through and the pressure is high, the hose gets stiff and doesn't work as well."

What causes high blood pressure?

High blood pressure develops over time and can be caused by many things. Some risk factors can be controlled, while others cannot. Factors that may influence blood pressure levels include being overweight, not getting enough physical activity, eating a poor diet or too much sodium, smoking, or not getting good sleep.

Some people are at greater risk than others, Jackson said.

"African-American women in the U.S. have some of the highest rates in the world," she said. Historical and systemic factors play a major role in this statistic.

Increasing age, family history, health conditions such as kidney disease and diabetes, and gender also can affect hypertension risk. Until they reach 64, men are at higher risk than women. That reverses at 65 and beyond.

It's treatable.

The good news, Choudhry said, is hypertension is treat-

able, regardless of which number is too high. The treatment is the same for each.

Making lifestyle changes is the first step, Jackson said. This can include losing weight if needed, becoming more physically active, limiting alcohol consumption, managing stress, quitting smoking if the person smokes and eating a healthier diet.

"Keep processed foods to a minimum," she said. "We know they can be high in sugar and salt. Make your plate colorful by eating a variety of fruits and vegetables."

It's also important to get enough and good quality sleep, Jackson said. The AHA recommends adults get seven to nine hours of sleep each night to optimize cardiovascular health, more for children depending on age.

If lifestyle changes alone don't do the trick, medications also may be needed, Choudhry said.

What about low blood pressure?

Low blood pressure is less common but still dangerous, Choudhry said. It can happen when people are overtreated with medication for hypertension or when people are dehydrated or have another illness.

Unlike with high blood pressure, people whose blood pressure drops too low will usually feel ill, he said. "They'll get dizzy or lightheaded. The treatment is dependent upon the underlying cause."

But what's too low for one person may be perfectly fine for another, Jackson said. "It really is tailored to what the person's other conditions are."

None of these conditions can be treated if blood pressure isn't being checked regularly, she said. "That's why it's important to know those numbers."

# Task Force recommends breast cancer screening should begin at age 40



By Stacy M. Brown  
*NINPA Newswire Contributor*

According to a new draft recommendation statement, the US Preventive Services Task Force proposes that women with an average risk for breast cancer begin screening at age 40 to reduce their risk of death.

It is a change from the 2016 recommendation, in which the task force recommended that biennial mammograms (breast x-rays) begin at age 50 and that the decision for women to screen in their 40s "should be an individual one."

Some organizations, including the American Cancer Society, have recommended that women begin mammograms in their forties.

USPSTF Vice Chair Dr. Wanda Nicholson, senior associate dean, and professor at George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health, told CNN, "Our new task force recommendation recommends that women begin breast cancer screening with mammography at age 40 and continue screening every other year until age 74."

The USPSTF, a group of independent medical experts whose recommendations help steer doctors' decisions and influence insurance plans, proposed an update to its breast cancer screening recommendations on Tuesday, May 9.

The task force announced it would share a draft evidence review and draft modeling report along with the non-final recommendation on their website for public comments until June 5.

The proposed recommenda-

tion is for all individuals assigned female at birth, including cisgender women, trans men, and nonbinary individuals, to be at ordinary risk for breast cancer.

According to Nicholson, women with dense breasts and a family history of cancer typically fall into this category, but not women whose family history contains breast cancer or genetic mutations, such as mutations on the BRCA gene, as they are regarded as being at high risk.

The revisions would not apply to those with an increased risk of breast cancer who may have already been advised to undergo screening at age 40 or earlier. However, they should adhere to the monitoring procedures recommended by their physicians.

Black women reportedly have the highest incidence of breast cancer-related deaths in America.

Nicholson stated that the revised recommendation "will save more lives among all women." This is especially significant for black women, who have a 40% higher risk of breast cancer-related death.

According to the JAMA Network Open, the breast cancer death rate among women in their 40s was 27 per 100,000 person-years for black women, compared to 15 per 100,000 for white women and 11 per 100,000 for American Indian, Alaska Native, Hispanic, and Asian or Pacific Islander women.

As a result, researchers recommended that black women begin screening at an earlier age, 42, as opposed to 50.



P R E S E R V E D

# Remembering Mom

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



In honor of Mother's Day, I'd like to share two of my favorite writings about mothers. The first is written by my friend and local author Lisa-Lin Burke. The other is timeless "mother" wisdom sent to me a number of years ago. My hope is that by sharing both, we are reminded to honor those mothers, mother figures and even men acting as mothers who have made a positive difference in our lives. It also reminds us to be gracious towards those whose mothers have died or have difficult relationships with them.

In this very poignant piece, Lisa-Lin shares how Mother's Day may not be a day of celebration for her and others whose mothers are deceased. Whether your mother is deceased or alive, she shows

why it is important to be thankful for the blessings mothers are.

"Mother's Day: my day of dread. The card aisle was to be avoided, like poison ivy. Envy, not blood, flowed through my veins when I watched daughters and mothers. They talked, laughed and loved together. Did they know how lucky they were? I did. My mother died when I was thirteen. Mother's Day became just another Sunday without football.

Twenty years after her death, I began to ask myself questions. Did I honestly blame her passing for my every stumble? Why not try to embrace her death? Could I learn from her life to live my own? The Word helped me find solace with Psalms 121 (NIV): I lift up my eyes to the hills-where does my help come from? I knew Who I had to trust.

The road had its bumps and curves. I almost gave up, but He stayed with me. I bloomed

into a woman I prayed my mother would be proud of. Mother's Day was no longer my day of dread. She taught me the changes a young girl goes through are a celebration. Each night ended with her words, "Mama love." The card aisle isn't poison ivy anymore. Now I pick the perfect one. It's signed with love and then tucked away with the others.

Life on Earth with my mother was too short. Our time together was more valuable than rubies. Remember to treat your mother like the queen she is. You are the jewel in her crown. Not only on Mother's Day, but always. My mother's spirit dances within me every second, every minute, every day. I am truly blessed."— Lisa-Lin Burke

A Mother's Wisdom:

1. Have faith in God regarding your relationship, but don't let faith make you stupid. God does things decent and in order.

2. Don't settle... If you settle for less than what you deserve, you get less than what you settled for.
3. Be honest and upfront.
4. Demand respect and if he can't give it, he can't have you.
5. Learn to give up your lifelong task of trying to make someone unavailable-available, someone ungiving-giving, and someone unloving-loving.
6. Good men should be treated like good men.
7. Slower is better.

Happy Mother's Day!

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 [preserved-bypurpose@gmail.com](mailto:preserved-bypurpose@gmail.com) or follow her on Twitter @shewanda. You can also listen to her podcast at [www.chocolateauntiepodcast.com](http://www.chocolateauntiepodcast.com).

# By God's grace I can

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



Too many of us stand on the dock waiting. We want the ship in place, the gangplank perfectly positioned the weather right, and an engraved invitation before we're willing to launch out. It will never happen. Dreams don't move toward us; we have to move toward them.

One author writes: "It's time to quit waiting for perfection, inspiration permission, reassurance, someone to change, the right person to come along, the kids to leave home, the new administration to take over, an absence of risk, someone to discover you, a clear set of instructions, more self-confidence, or the pain to go away."

Instead of saying "We've never done it before, say, 'We have the opportunity to be first.'" Instead of saying, "We don't have the resources, say Necessity fuels invention." Instead

of saying, "There's not enough time, say We'll change how we work." Instead of saying, "We've already tried that, say "We learned from experience." Instead of saying "We don't have the expertise, say "Let's network with those who do." Instead of saying "Our vendors and customers won't go for it, say, Let's show them the opportunities." Instead of saying, "We don't have enough money, say Maybe there's something we can cut." Instead of saying "We're understaffed, say, We're a lean, hungry team." Instead of saying, "It'll never get any better, say, "We'll try one more time." Instead of saying, "Let somebody else deal with it, say, I'm ready to learn something new." Instead of saying, "It's not my job, say I'll be glad to take the responsibility." Instead of saying, "I can't, say By God's grace I can."

Simeon R. Greem, III, First Church of God, 6517 Walmsley Blvd., Richmond, Virginia 23224.



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# Addressing the real need in real time

By Ben Jealous  
*People For the American Way*



As someone who's been organizing since I was a teenager, I can tell you that it's hard to get people to focus on two things at once. Pick a real need and work on it in real time – that's the way to win people over.

We saw this play out when President Biden announced he would seek re-election. Considering the record, Biden's presidency has been a consequential one. Employment is as high as before COVID. While inflation is higher than in recent memory, it's basically a third of what it was last June.

He's made mistakes around supporting fossil fuels drilling, but President Biden has attacked the three things driving the climate crisis – vehicles, methane and power plants. And he has time to finish the job as he said in the last State of the Union Address by curbing further fossil fuel expansion.

So why was a common response to his announcement handwringing about an “enthusiasm gap” among key voting groups – Blacks, Hispanics, and young people? The White House can't seem to cut through the clutter to convince people it has solved a real need in real time, even when it has.

The real need for many continues to be economic stability. I've talked to people in every region of the country in the last five months. Many continue to feel the only economic mobility slopes downward. It's something that President Biden and Congress actually have done something about.

They've made unprecedented commitments to spend hundreds of billions to take a giant step toward keeping the Earth cool enough to stay livable. It's our generation's equivalent of the Apollo moon missions. The changes will happen over a decade, their benefits may take even longer to see.

But there will be immediate impacts, and that's what is giving people the solution they

need. Incentives for school systems to buy electric school buses and families to buy electric SUVs? Jobs. Home energy efficiency programs? Jobs. Tax credits for private sector investment in clean energy? Jobs.

The one thing we need to bring attention to and to protect are the jobs that come from reshaping the economy from destruction to renewal. They are good-paying jobs that in many cases don't require a college education, the kind of jobs that have made the American middle class flourish. They employ mechanics, construction workers, electricians, technicians, and people to support their work. And whether it's the most dollars invested, or most jobs created, the states benefitting are among the reddest politically.

It makes sense that flipping the economy in this way would be a growth engine. The biggest subsidy our country ever gave private industry was allowing it to designate certain places and certain people disposable. Poverty is what has always driven people to trade the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the land they love for a paycheck that feeds and house them and their families. Turning that past on its head will create a lasting prosperity, one that doesn't count on fuels extracted from under another country.

Opinion research makes clear that Americans care about the environment and will vote to protect it. They care about jobs more. For those of us fighting to reverse the climate crisis and leave a healthier, safer planet to our children, from the White House to a local rally, we must show people that a cleaner economy tomorrow brings jobs they want today.

*Ben Jealous is executive director of the Sierra Club, the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. He is a professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania and author of "Never Forget Our People Were Always Free," published in January.*

# The remedy to the attacks on our Democracy

By Dr. John Warren  
*San Diego Voice and Viewpoint/NNPA Member*



It is becoming increasingly clear that the only people who appear to believe in our form of democratic government are those who fight to uphold the Constitution of the United States. While we were organized with three separate branches of government: the Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary, it appears that only the Executive Branch is concerned about “We The People.”

Although we have operated with a two party system representing the different points of view of our society, that system has now collapsed so that we are becoming a nation as divided as the Kerner Commission officially called us in “The National Advisory Report on Civil Disorder.”

The Kerner Commission report was called “a powerful window into the roots of racism and inequality in America.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called it “a

physician's warning of approaching death, with a prescription for life.”

Today, the Conservative Right, as seen in the behavior of the Republican Party, is no longer concerned about we the people or the oath that all of them, as elected officials, took to defend the Constitution of the United States. That document contains our Bill of Rights, guaranteeing the right to vote, due process and equality. Instead, we elected officials at all levels seeking to pass laws suppressing the right to vote, removing books from schools and libraries, denying the right to teach our history as it really was, slavery and all, and seeking to remove a woman's right to have control over her body, at the expense of death to her and imprisonment to doctors who seek to help her.

We now live in a nation consumed with removing basic rights while the people of this great nation suffer denials of healthcare and food through our supplemental nutrition programs that are being cut. We live in a nation where those same Conservative Right

lawmakers refuse to pass laws removing deadly firearms from our streets as they are being used to slaughter our children, family and neighbors. And now we have a Supreme Court, created as an independent third Branch of Government, with one third engaged in conduct of ethical questions and no objections from those in charge of that self governing body.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave us the remedy to these problems, in part, in his May 1957 speech in which he said: “Give us the ballot and we will elect men of character to give us the laws we need.”

The problem is, too many of us have lost sight of the importance of our votes in a democratic society. There are more of us with the power to vote than there are those who want to do all the harmful things mentioned above.

The State of Georgia demonstrated to us that we can outvote those who are against us. If they had not voted, we would have lost Senator Raphael Warnock to a Black Puppet of the Conservative Right. It was the fight for the right

to vote and for Civil Rights, with prayer, that got us both the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act when so many Americans were against the two.

Now we have allowed the Supreme Court to cut the Voting Rights Act, cancel Roe vs. Wade and move to roll back as many social gains as they can because the Court has been stacked with a Conservative Majority which believes it can't be touched.

But if we prepare now to elect those persons in 2024 that reflect our views, we can change a non-working and divided Congress into the instrument of the people it was intended to be. We can vote out those in favor of keeping guns on our streets. We can replace people at the state and local level who seek to restrict voting, ban books and change history. We can elect School Board members, City and State lawmakers, and can recall and discipline judges who think they are untouchable.

If we register, get informed of the issues and vote for those who will give us the desired change and not smiles and personalities, then we are the remedy.

# Chokeholds and guns usually cause bad outcomes. They did this time too.

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



Have compassion and sensitivity gone out of the window? Have they been replaced by extreme thinking and extreme action?

Is our immediate reaction to fatally harm someone that will result in death? Some would say we have become a society that is quick to kill.

We rise each day to start afresh and anew. We encourage ourselves and oftentimes get encouragement from others. Yet sometime during our day of hope, we hear about someone or a group of people getting harmed. These acts have adversely affected our sensibilities.

Our America, which we love, is in a moral decline. It is a pandemic of harm and hurt. Our decision making about life and death has changed. We shoot and strangle without thinking about the lifelong consequences.

Now sadly, we have lost another

life due to a chokehold. Our memories of George Floyd who was killed by a chokehold are still fresh in our minds.

Last Monday, Jordan Neely was killed when a chokehold was used against him in a New York city subway. Neely was 24 years of age.

Reports say Neely, an African-American male was not armed and appeared not to harm anyone. He was shouting that he was hungry and had given up hope. Further reporting says that he had mental health problems.

Does Neely, who did Michael Jackson impersonations, have to die because he was hungry and had given up hope? Is death the only alternative for someone who needed help and hope?

The person who administered the chokehold to Neely was Daniel Penny. He was a US Marine veteran. Records show that he was a sergeant and served from 2017-2021.

Penny's attorneys in a statement said, “Daniel never intended to harm Mr. Neely and could not have foreseen his untimely death. We hope that out of this awful tragedy will come a new

commitment by our elected officials to address the mental health crisis on our streets and subways.”

An interesting fact in this case is that Penny has hired Thomas Kenniff who ran against current Manhattan District Attorney, Alvin Bragg in 2021. According to CNN, Kenniff is a veteran and a major in the Army National Guard.

Penny, as of May 7, has not been charged with a crime. District Attorney Bragg is investigating the case and will decide.

There are a few perspectives regarding this case which are worthy of review. These are my opinions. Was Penny engaged enough to see that he was causing Neely pain and discomfort? Why didn't onlookers intervene to help Neely? These and other questions will be answered soon.

Mass shootings are happening across America almost on a weekly basis. There have been over 180 mass shootings in this country in 2023.

There was a mass shooting in Atlanta, Georgia last week. One person was killed and four people were injured inside of a

medical building.

Amy St. Pierre, a mother who worked for the CDC, was killed in this shooting. CDC spokesperson Benjamin Haynes said, “Our hearts are with the family, friends and colleagues as they remember her and grieve this tragic loss.”

The shooter was Deion Patterson, an African-American male who until January was a member of the US Coast Guard. He is now in police custody. He reportedly had mental health problems.

Both Neely and Patterson suffered from mental health disorders. Neely is no longer with us, and Patterson will be charged with a crime.

What else needs to happen before we pay real attention to mental health issues and gun acquisition? It seems we are just waiting for the next life to be lost. Our politicians make statements about doing better. However, the laws remain the same.

We the citizens wonder where tragedy will occur next. It's not if tragedy will occur, it's simply when tragedy will occur.

# Should husbands have mancaves?

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



Where does your husband spend most of his time? Does he spend most of his time with you, the children, family, friends or work? Does your husband spend most of his time at the bar or at a friend's house? Does your husband make every excuse he can to not spend time with you at home? Does your husband act like he would rather be any place but at home with his family? When your husband is at home – where is most of his time spent?

Today, special spaces have been designated in homes for husbands called, ‘mancaves,’ ‘man spaces,’ and sometimes referred to as ‘man land’ or ‘manutary.’ Mancaves are spaces reserved

for men to do whatever they desire that promotes the masculine idea of being a man. Moreover, these spaces are understood to be sacred and private areas where wives, children, etc. are often forbidden to enter. Are these spaces competition to wives, marriages and families?

Why do husbands want mancaves? Currently, mancaves are a popular contender for homebuyers. In other words, couples will not purchase a home if the home doesn't provide the extra space for men. Many men expect to have mancaves. Why do they desire them?

Many husbands want “to chill” as the young people say. Some want mancaves to enjoy their masculinity such as watching TV and football games, playing video games, sipping, snacking and relaxing, etc. Others desire their own space to avoid household

obligations and unfortunately, some husbands desire this space in their home to avoid spending time with their wives and children. Yes, this is correct – some men use their mancaves as an escape to avoid being in the company of their wives for whatever reason they may have.

What spaces have couples designated in their homes for their husbands' manutary? Mancaves can exist in any area within a home. Some men utilize the garage space or an extra bedroom as their man spaces, while others utilize the den, family room, and even outside spaces as their designated mancaves. We know what mancaves are and the reasons why husbands desire to spend most of their time in them.

But what about wives who work, cook, take care of the children and manage the home, the children's extracurricular activities

and finances, while even doing yard work and beyond? Do these wives need their own space within the home to also escape? Wife caves have a nice sound to them.

Should we support the idea of having mancaves that can ultimately lead to increased separation, a disconnect, and eventually a divorce? Shouldn't husbands and wives spend quality time together when they are at home? There are multiple ways that a husband and wife can spend time together at home. They can chill with one another and the children, spend time gardening or watching TV together even if it's just the news or cartoons with the children, cooking, doing laundry and cleaning together, or simply eating together (I cherish eating at the table with my husband and children). Yes, there is nothing wrong with husbands and wives getting away for

some alone time in the home, but should there be designated spaces for this to occur? Married couples already have many factors that keep spouses separated such as jobs, careers, children's schedules, extended family obligations, businesses, churches (pastors/deacons), etc.

In conclusion, of course couples have the right to choose what they feel is best for their marriages. Some argue that mancaves can save marriage while others argue that mancaves can be the ruin of marriages. Unfortunately, there are various factors contributing to high divorce rates in America and even right here in Mississippi – but mancaves should not be one of those factors.

I want you think about the following: do mancaves create cave-men? (Interesting right?) Would cave-men be good for marriages? Also, there are couples who have

been happily married for over thirty years that never entertained an idea of a mancave or a designated space in the home for husbands to have alone time; most husbands' alone time was in the bathrooms. In fact, in previous years, many couples shared one vehicle, one bathroom and one garage, and their marriages lasted. A house is not a home without the love, warmth and bonding of the husbands, wives, and children occupying the same space to create special memories. Should husbands have mancaves?

Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (motivational, ministering, marriage workshops, marriage seminars, marriage conferences, etc.) on: Instagram: letsstaytogether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert Email: letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or 601-874-6176.



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Advertisement for Reverse Auction Bids

Bid 3236 Child Nutrition Food Services Equipment Reverse Auction

Reverse Auction bidding for the above bid will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), May 19, 2023, at which time Reverse Auction bidding begins electronically. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning this Reverse Auction project will be held at 101 Dr. Dennis Holloway Drive, Jackson, MS 39203 on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 2:00 P.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conferences is non-mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date Reverse Auction bid opening ends.

Unpriced Specification responses must be submitted for this bid event. Specifications are due no later than (5:00 p.m., May 12, 2023) local time to be the given the opportunity to participate in the auction. Vendors submitting acceptable specification responses will be invited to participate in the electronic reverse auction at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com) on May 19, 2023 beginning at 10:00 a.m. local time. Vendors must be registered with Central Bidding in order to participate in the reverse auction. For any questions concerning the reverse auction process or how to register, please contact Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Special Notice  
Also, until further notice, all opening will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSD web site at <https://www.youtube.com/jpsitv> for public viewing due to covid 19. Vendors will not be allowed to sit in on the bid openings.

5/4/2023, 5/11/2023

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Advertisement for RFP

RFP 2023-11 Re-Bid Jackson Public School District Depositories

Electronic RFP proposals for the above RFP will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time), May 24, 2023 at which time and place. Responses will not be publicly opened and read aloud due to the nature of the information listed. Interested parties may request an open records request once awarded proposal is approved by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all RFPs, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any RFP if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date RFPs/ are opened.

There are two (2) options in which RFP proposals may be obtained. Download from Central Bidding website at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com) for a small fee of \$49.99 or visit JPSD website at [www.jackson.k12.ms.us](http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us) and download. Vendors must be registered with Central Bidding in order to electronically upload RFPs proposals at no cost. For any questions concerning the process, or how to register, please contact Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Until further notice, all hand delivery proposals delivered between 9:00 a.m. until 9:59 a.m. (local prevailing time) the date the bid is scheduled to open, must be delivered to JPSD Central Office, Business Office, Attn: Bettie Jones, C/O Mr. Earl Burke, 662 South President Street, Jackson, MS 39201

5/11/2023, 5/18/2023

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PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The City of Jackson is seeking submission of proposals from qualified professional firms for professional assistance with the following project: Shop Local Incentive System.

Detailed information pertaining to the submission of a response to this request for proposals may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Development, Suite 229, Warren Hood Building: 200 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201, or by contacting Chloe Dotson at 960-1993 or email: [cdotson@city.jackson.ms.us](mailto:cdotson@city.jackson.ms.us).

One (1) original and eight (8) signed copies of the proposal must be received **no later than 3:30 P. M., on Tuesday, May 30, 2023**, at the City Clerk's Office, 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Mailed proposals should be addressed to the Office of the City Clerk, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, MS 39205-0017. Packets should be sealed and clearly marked "Proposal for The Shop Local Incentive System."

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting and professional services. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City.

Chloe Dotson BUPD. MURP., Director  
Department of Planning and Development  
City of Jackson, Mississippi

5/11/2023

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DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

BUREAU OF BUILDING, GROUNDS AND REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received electronically via MAGIC or physically delivered to the office of the Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management, 501 North West Street, Suite 1401 B, Jackson, Mississippi, 39201, until 2:00:00 p.m. (14:00:00 Military Time) on Thursday, 06/08/2023, for:

RE: GS# 320-085 ARPA Mit. - MCCF  
Department of Corrections  
RFx # 3160005846

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

Professional: Engineering Resource Group, Inc.  
Address: Post Office Drawer 16443  
Jackson, Mississippi 39236  
Phone: 601-362-3552  
Email: [mbutler@ergms.com](mailto:mbutler@ergms.com)

A deposit of \$100.00 is required. Bid preparation will be in accordance with Instructions to Bidders bound in the project manual. The Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management reserves the right to waive irregularities and to reject any or all bids. NOTE: Telephones and desks will not be available for bidders use at the bid site.

Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management

5/4/2023, 5/11/2023

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PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

General Information

The City of Jackson ("City") is seeking to develop CDCB, HOME, HOPWA, CDBC-CV, ESG, HOME-ARP projects throughout the City of Jackson. This RFP is to secure a consultant to provide Categorically Excluded 24 CFR Part 58 environmental reviews using the HUD Online Environmental Review System (HEROES). The proposal will also include draft public notices as not required (not including cost of publication) and all required supporting documentation. The estimated hours and resources to complete the reviewed and provide any necessary technical assistance are listed below. If the project requires extensive compliance efforts due to potential adverse environmental impacts such as effects to historic properties, site contamination, or any of the other 58.5 or 58.6 laws and authorities, additional time may be required complete the process.

Proposal Submission Procedures

Prospers shall submit one (1) original signed, six (6) copies of their response. For this RFP, all responses will be received by the Office of the City Clerk until 3:30 p.m., Central time on May 30th 2023. Electronic responses (thumb Drive/pdf) can be submitted at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com). For questions relating to the electronic submission process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814. Prospective prospers should notify [cdotson@jacksonms.gov](mailto:cdotson@jacksonms.gov) to be added to the list to receive written addendum, and inquiry responses.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting and professional services. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all person doing business with the City.

Chloe Dotson, Director  
Department of Planning and Development  
City of Jackson, Mississippi

5/11/2023, 5/18/2023

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**Sudoku**

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

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

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**Sudoku Solution**

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

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3957 Northview Dr (North Jackson)  
**DOLLAR GENERAL**  
2030 N Siwell Rd  
**DOLLAR GENERAL**  
4331 Highway 80W  
**DOLLAR GENERAL**  
5990 Medgar Evers Blvd  
**DOLLAR GENERAL**  
1214 Capitol St (Downtown Jackson)  
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304 Briarwood Dr  
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104 Terry Rd  
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**MCDADÉ'S MARKET**  
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**Week of May 7, 2023**



# Popular Delta Granny Midwife, Bertha Henderson Matthews, fondly remembered by Dr. Walter Rose



**Bertha Henderson Matthews birthed babies in her Indianola home for 40 years or more.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEWS' FAMILY



**Lillian and Linda Matthews – Siamese twins held by nurse Isola Walker who helped Dr. Clinton Battle deliver them.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEWS' FAMILY



**Dr. Walter Rose reminisces about his midwifery relationship with Mississippi Granny Midwife – Bertha Henderson Matthews.**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF CASSEY HARDIN

**By Janice K. Neal-Vincent, Ph.D.**  
*Contributing Writer*

The early 1960s were turbulent times for Mississippi. Racial, social, political and economic upheavals interfered with the rights of African Americans who were suppressed through violence and other forms of intimidation. Two entities were the agents that perpetrated the upheavals.

The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission was created by an act of the Mississippi Legislature in 1956 and operated at the will of the governor. The White Citizens' Councils created an atmosphere of fear and bloodshed.

Despite Mississippi's tempestuous streak, Dr. Walter Rose left California and arrived in Indianola in 1963 as a family medicine physician. In a recent telephone conversation with the doctor, he explained that "during the early 1960s, sharecropping was utilized in the Mississippi Delta. Sharecroppers shared with the owners 40 acres at the end of the year. Owners would sometimes take advantage of the sharecroppers [by paying them less of their earned wages]."

In his role of health officer for Sunflower County, Rose supervised 33 midwives who then were delivering 75% of the babies there. Every couple of months he met with the midwives to discuss any problems they were encountering during the birthing process.

Recollecting his experiences with the midwives, Rose stated, "We were not having any problems, but later in the 60s the COFO (Council of Federated Organizations) workers came down to Mississippi about voting. Mrs. Bertha Henderson Matthews was certified and was the main midwife, but there weren't any derogatory things said about her. She delivered 55% (most of the babies put together). She had a four-bedroom home, and she normally was able to do that. She was an unusual person, and people had confidence in her delivering their children. She was flooded

with women in her home. I was always amazed by what she accomplished and how she took the midwives to the next level in her home. As far as the doctors, there was no problem with her delivering babies."

Rose mentioned that he had opportunities to see Matthews whenever she encountered a problem such as tears that needed to be sewn. He further noted that there were times when Matthews wanted the mothers to get shots or something to relieve their pain.

In 1965 Medicare and Medicaid were on the rise, but according to Rose, "Mrs. Matthews saw in the future that there was not going to be a future for granny midwives. The girls having babies were all going to the hospital because they wanted something for pain." Despite these concerns, the physician remembered that Matthews was "a leader looked up to and appreciated by both blacks and whites in the community. Medicaid covered more and more, and finally, she and other granny midwives retired as there was no need to continue much after delivering in the home in 1965. Medicaid did cover the deliveries in the hospitals," commented Rose.

Rose chuckled when he called Matthews "a grand ole lady" and "leader" who (to his knowledge) only delivered African-American babies. Then he struck an entirely different tune. He disclosed that while he delivered thousands of babies during his practice, he never delivered Siamese twins. Granny Midwife Matthews, nevertheless, had something to do with the delivery of Siamese twins.

Research shows that conjoined twins are very rare. The overall survival rate has been estimated to be approximately 25% to 50%. It was in 1955, however, that Linda and Lillian Matthews (Matthews' granddaughters) were the first Siamese twins to survive a separation surgery. Matthews called an African-American physician, Dr. Clinton Battle, to her home.

When he examined the twins, he found one twin was not breathing but had a heartbeat.

"[Our mother] was in labor, and they couldn't figure out what was going on because my twin here...I was coming out, and then going back in," Lillian and Linda recently explained on the Today Show, finishing their sentences.

Battle has been slighted in journals and by other physicians for his accomplished separation of the twins. Without the use of anesthesia, his was a successful delivery. He was 29 at the time. Nurse Isola Walker assisted Battle with the delivery, and she was the first African-American nurse to work at South Sunflower County Hospital.

Following the delivery, Battle notified Dr. Harwell Wilson, a surgeon, and took the babies to him. Although Battle died a few years ago, the 61-year-old twins are now 92 years old and retired school teachers.

Bessie Gardner of Indianola was contacted regarding her knowledge of the relationship that Rose and Matthews (her grandmother) had. "Dr. Rose was very accommodating to my grandmama when I would call him. He, Dr. Arnold Hull, Dr. Joe Hull and Dr. Hurt [worked together]. Whatever the babies needed, these doctors would come to do shots or repair the babies' issues. Any time they had an indigent patient who did not have insurance or money to go to the hospital, they would send her to Grandmama Bertha. The doctors didn't know how to deliver breech babies, so they sent their patients who were carrying breech babies to Grandmama Bertha when they went into labor, and she delivered the babies."

Rose and Matthews worked together to achieve their shared goals of midwifery and to build a strong future for babies in Sunflower County. Matthews (deceased) practiced midwifery for 40 years or more.

Rose resides in Indianola and is now 90 years old. He practiced family medicine for 67 years.

# Hinds County School District appoints Dr. Robert Sanders as superintendent

*The Mississippi Link Newswire*

Robert L. Sanders, Ph.D., assistant superintendent of Hinds County School District, has been appointed as the new superintendent of Hinds County School District. The board selected Dr. Sanders after narrowing the list from 11 applicants.

"The Hinds County School District Board of Trustees is excited to announce and welcome Dr. Robert Sanders as our new superintendent," said Dr. Linda Laws, Board President, Hinds County School District. "We believe Dr. Sanders is well-equipped to continue the district's climb to excellence. The HCSD family is proud to say we are ready to take the next step on this journey to educate our students to be college and career ready."

Sanders has 23 years of experience in the field of education. He has served as a teacher, assistant principal and principal. He also served as assistant superintendent in the Simpson County School District.

"I am excited to be selected as the new superintendent of the Hinds County School District," Sanders said of his appointment. "I am grateful to God for ordering my steps and guiding me to this point for this time. In addition, I am



**Robert L. Sanders, Ph.D.**

thankful for the support and vote of confidence from the Hinds County School Board as we embark upon this tremendous task of moving our district from good to great."

Sanders is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi where he received a bachelor's degree in social studies education. He received a master's degree in educational administration from Jackson State University.

He has an educational specialist degree and a doctorate from the University of Southern Mississippi in educational administration.

He is a graduate of the Mississippi School Board Association's Perspective Superintendent Leadership Academy.

Sanders will assume his leadership position as superintendent of the Hinds County School District July 1, 2023.

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# Announcement

Hinds County Human Resource Agency will host its next monthly Board of Directors meeting Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at HCHRA Central Office located at 258 Maddox Road in Jackson, Mississippi. The public is invited to attend. For more information, call 601-923-1838 or email vickeyw@hchra.org.





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## The Jackson Public School District’s graduation schedule for 2023

*The JPS Newswire*

Graduation ceremonies for graduating seniors at Jackson Public Schools will be held Tuesday, May 30, and Wednesday, May 31 at the Mississippi Coliseum.

The Mississippi Coliseum requires each guest to enter through a metal detector. Only clear bags will be allowed when entering the facility. Additionally, no balloons, signs or noisemakers will be allowed during JPS graduation ceremonies.

The ceremonies will be live-streamed on the Jackson Public Schools YouTube channel and Facebook page.

The schedule for each school in the district is as follows:



### TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2023

School	Commencement Time
Murrah High	1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Provine High	4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Jim Hill High	6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2023

School	Commencement Time
Callaway High	12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Forest Hill High	2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Wingfield High	4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Lanier High	6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

## Oprah tells class of 2023 to follow ‘still, small voice’

By Travis Loller  
Associated Press

Oprah Winfrey delighted graduates at her alma mater Tennessee State University Saturday, telling the story of how she fell one credit short of graduating as she launched the media career that would make her a household name.

Giving the commencement address at the historically black university, Winfrey recalled that she was living with her father in East Nashville while attending college, helping out in his store, and presenting the weekend news at a black radio station. That’s where the lead anchor of the local CBS television affiliate heard her voice. He called her at school to ask if she wanted a job.

“I said, ‘No sir. TV? Not really, sir, because my father says I have to finish school, and school is just too important,’” Winfrey recalled.

She then went back to class and related the conversation to her scene design professor who “looked at me as if I didn’t have the brains that God gave lettuce,” Winfrey said.

He spoke to her father, and Win-

frey took the job. Beginning the second semester of her sophomore year, Winfrey arranged to finish her classes by 2 p.m. so she could work at the television station from 2:30 to 10:30 and be home by her father’s 11 p.m. curfew.

By the end of her senior year in 1975, Winfrey’s career was in full swing. So she wasn’t terribly distressed to learn that she was one credit short and would not be able to graduate. But her father would not let go of the topic, asking her for years, “When you going to get that degree?” she said.

Finally in 1988, she was allowed to write a paper and submit some of her shows for the final credit.

“So I got my degree from Tennessee State, right around the time I got my third Emmy,” Winfrey said.

Her success in life has come from God’s grace and from listening to what she called, the “still, small voice” inside while filtering out the noise of the world. That way “you begin to know your own heart and figure out what matters most,” Winfrey said. “Every right move I’ve made has come from listening deeply and following

that still, small voice.”

Winfrey told the class of 2023 they are living in a difficult time in many ways.

“Unfortunately, you are going to encounter people who insist that it’s not actually possible to make any difference,” she said. But she held up the examples of Tennessee State Reps. Justin Jones and Justin Pearson who are “using their lives to prove the cynics wrong.”

The Republican majority expelled the two young black Democratic lawmakers last month after they breached decorum by protesting for stricter gun laws from the House floor. They were reinstated on an interim basis by their local City Councils within days and now face a special election to regain their seats.

The United States is “not a finished product,” she said. “Anything is possible. The wheels are still in spin. Saints walk among us.”

She added, “And as Nelson Mandela so brilliantly demonstrated, it’s better to be hopeful than fearful, if for no other reason than that hope brings us one step closer to joy.”

## Legendary blues artist Bobby Rush conducts a meet and greet at Blackburn Middle School’s pre-registration event

*Special to the Mississippi Link*

Jackson Public Schools’ pre-registration for the fall 2023-2024 school year is well on the way. To increase pre-registration at Blackburn Middle School, Dr. Teresa Barnes, faculty and staff invited parents to a fun filled event, with DJ Sweet Clyde Live 90.1 WMPR cranking out music to encourage school attendance and early registration. It was held Saturday, May 6, 2023.

Legendary Bobby Rush conducted a meet and greet and encouraged parents, grandparents, school personnel and community to col-

laborate effectively to reach the common goal of success for all scholars.

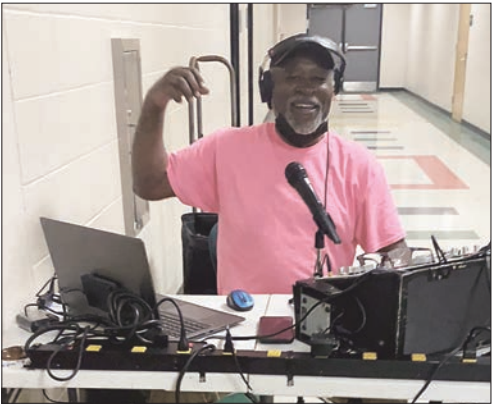
Specialty hot dogs were grilled for a nice snack or lunch meal. Two cash drawings in the amount of \$50 each were awarded to pre-registered families.

Supporters for this community event included MS House District 69 Rep. Alyce G. Clarke, Ward 5 City Councilman Vernon Hartley, Jackson Walmart Vision Center Manager, James Haynes, Deacon Jeff Calendar and Brother Steve Dickens of St. Luther M. B. Church, and several Pecan Tree Park Neighborhood

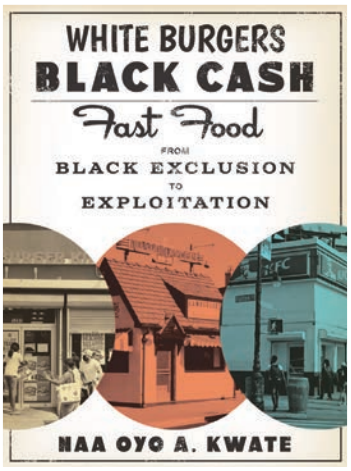
Association representatives.

Blackburn’s principal, Dr. Teresa Barnes, stated, “We are grateful to have continuous community support that impacts students’ academic performance and social and emotional needs. This weekend’s event was a true reflection of the proverb ‘It takes a village.’ A special thank you to the “World’s Oldest Living Blues Artist,” Mr. Bobby Rush. His sacrifice this weekend was appreciated. He put a smile on everyone’s face. Let’s continue to register scholars for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.”

PHOTOS BY FRAN BRIDGES







BOOK REVIEW:

WHITE BURGERS, BLACK CASH:

FAST FOOD FROM BLACK EXCLUSION TO EXPLOITATION

BY NAA OYO A. KWATE

C.2023, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS

\$29.95 • 451 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
*Columnist*

Hold the pickles, no mustard. Double patty, add bacon, fried onions, that’s how you like your burger.

As for chicken, well, it has to have cheese, and there must be something salty-crunchy on the side or it’s not a complete meal.

Yeah, Mom could sure cook but not like this, and in the new book “White Burgers, Black Cash” by Naa Oya A. Kwate, you’ll see why fast food was slow to come to black communities.

Though restaurants certainly

existed before the turn of the last century, fast food joints “took root in the early 1900s, when the earliest...chains began.” White Castle, with their oniony square burgers, is widely considered to be the first; later, KFC, Burger King and McDonald’s became the juggernauts of the industry, and something set them apart.

The first fast food restaurants, says Kwate, “did not include black folks,” whether explicitly or implicitly when restaurants weren’t built in their areas. While high-end establishments and wealthier homes employed black waiters, fast food was “almost exclusively white,” from kitchen to booth.

In the 1920s, though, franchisees started noticing that they were leaving money on the table. Slowly, fast food restaurants were built in areas once ignored – possibly, says Kwate, for profit or perhaps because developers saw it as a way to keep black diners from white neighborhoods. There was controversy about the new additions – citizens of both races thought the restaurants were “a nuisance.”

After a time, some already-established restaurants were acci-

dentally found in black neighborhoods because of “White Flight.”

By the latter half of the 1960s, black investors were finally invited to buy in as franchisees; in addition, some white operators were ordered by their home franchise to sell a percentage of their sites to black citizens. This led closer to the equality black operators wanted, but with a price: by the turn of this century, “studies began to mount... showing that residential proximity to fast food mattered for health.”

“Black youth,” says Kwate, “were especially at risk.”

Looking for something light to read while you enjoy your basket meal with onion rings? This book is interesting, but it isn’t like that.

Like a triple-patty super-sized sandwich, “White Burgers, Black Cash” is much heavier than you might expect, at first glance.

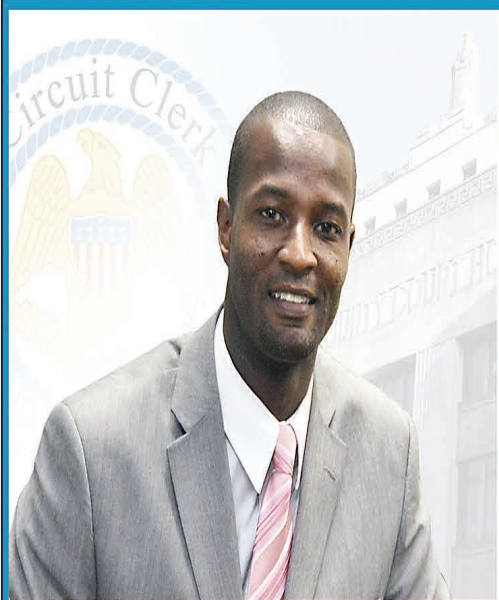
Author Naa Oyo A. Kwate dives deep into her subject, beginning years before the first White Castle opened – and that narrative includes neighborhood names, street names, and competitors’ locations, which likely won’t mean much to many readers. There are pictures in here but those, too, of-

ten have inadequate context.


Still, it’s worth biting into this book because of its wider focus on racism and what white America was doing at this time, and its inclusion of other, more social history that’s relevant to this subject.

Readers who can consume this book slowly, and chew on its information with careful thought will get more out of it than those who want a fast book about fast food.

“White Burgers, Black Cash” deserves more cogitation, and you won’t even need fries with that.



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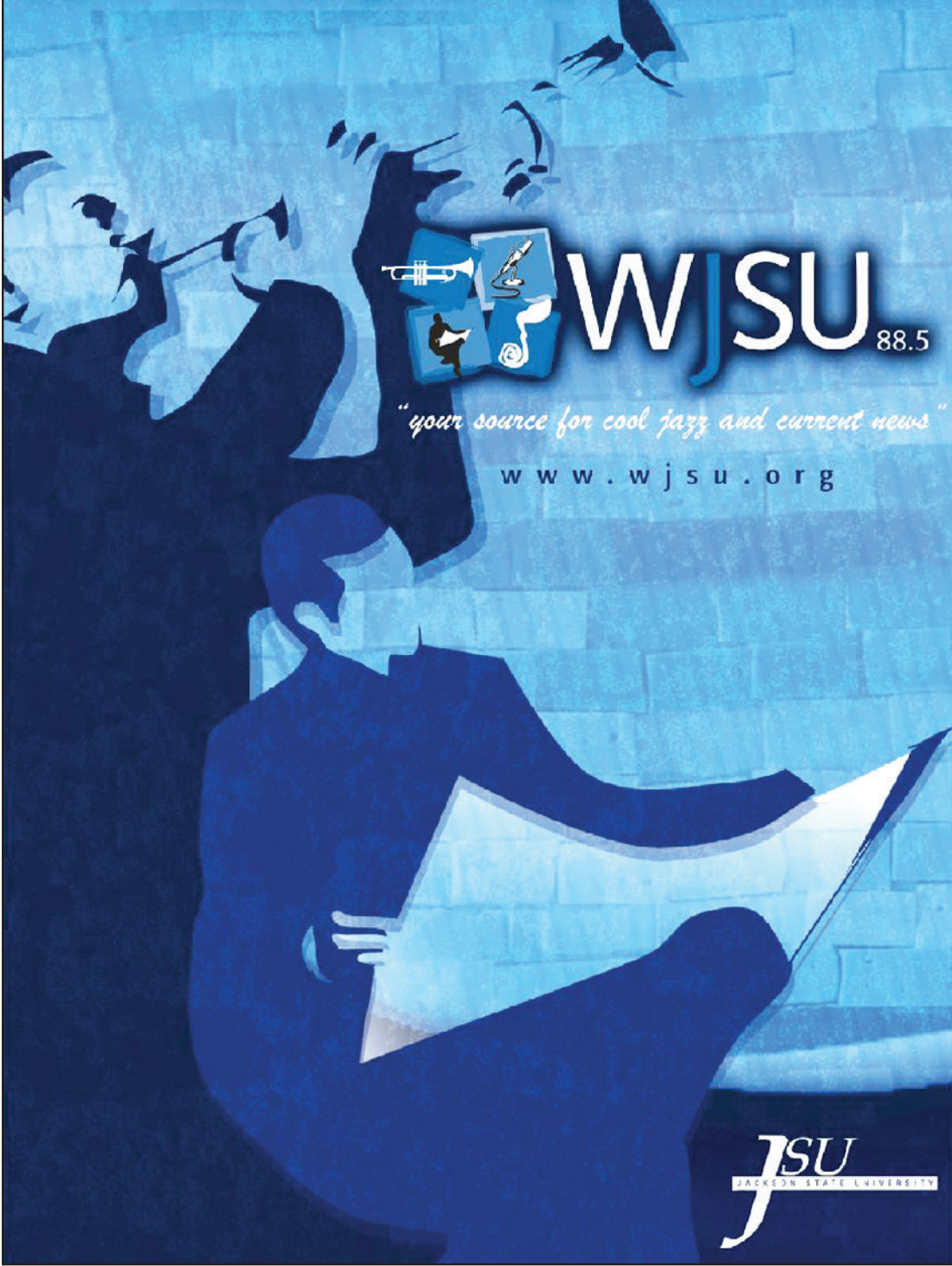
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# Michael D. Johnson Foundation 5K Scholarship Walk

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

The 13th annual Michael D. Johnson (MDJ) Memorial Foundation 5K Scholarship Walk/Run was held at 8 a.m., Saturday, May 6, at the War Memorial Grounds at State & Amite Streets in downtown Jackson. The foundation is posthumously named in memory of the late Michael D. Johnson, who was a star student-athlete at Murrah High School.

Veronica Johnson Crawford (a.k.a. Wanda), vice president of the foundation, served as event coordinator. She is a native of Mississippi and resides in Atlanta, GA. Emmett Johnson Sr. is president of the Michael D. Johnson Memorial Foundation and father of the late Michael D. Johnson.

The Walk/Run is an annual athletic fundraiser event, which was started in 2011 in memory of Michael D. Johnson. Johnson, the son of Emmett and Gloria Johnson of Jackson, was killed June 4, 2005 by a drunk driver. He was 18 years old.

Johnson grew up with a special love for baseball. While in high school, he played shortstop for the Murrah High School baseball team and had signed a scholarship to play shortstop at Copiah-Lincoln Community College. A scout from the Washington Nationals baseball team had plans to follow Michael's two year college career at Copiah-Lincoln with hopes of signing him.

In addition to baseball Michael also excelled in the game of basketball. As the starting point guard for Murrah's 2005 basketball team, Michael helped lead his team to win the Mississippi Class 6A State Championship by hitting the decisive free-throws in the final seconds of the game.

The walk culminated at Jackson Public Schools Hughes Field located on Ellis Avenue where the 2023 scholarship and run winners were announced.

Jessie Williams, a senior at Jim Hill High School, was the winner of the MDJ \$1,500 scholarship. Williams, who is also Mr. Jim Hill, is known for his athleticism in track, football and basketball. He plans to attend Mississippi State University, majoring in kinesiology.

Broderick Gholar, a senior at Murrah High School, was the first place winner of a \$250 MDJ book stipend. He is a member of the football and baseball team and plans to attend Lane College, majoring in kinesiology.

Jaidyn Hill, a senior at Murrah was the second place winner of a \$250 MDJ book stipend. She is a member of the basketball and volleyball team and plans to attend Hinds Community College, also majoring in kinesiology.

De'Jayvion Brown, also a senior at Murrah, was the third place winner of a \$250 MDJ book stipend. He is a member of the baseball team and plans to attend Jackson State University, majoring in civil engineering.

Winners of the MDJ 5K Run were: Dr. Michael Cormack, overall first place winner; Michael Clinton "Mikey" Johnson, 1st place winner in the 10-



L-R: Ahsia Clayton, 2015 MDJ scholarship winner; De'Jayvion Brown, 2023 book stipend recipient; Frances Lewis, 2022 MDJ scholarship winner; Broderick Gholar, 1st place book stipend recipient; Jessie Williams, 2023 scholarship winner; Jaidyn Hill, 2023 book stipend recipient; Gloria Johnson, mother of the late Michael D. Johnson; Emmett Johnson Sr., father of the late Michael D. Johnson; Dr. Michael D. Cormack, Jr. Deputy Superintendent of JPS and overall winner of the 5K Run.

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON.



son, 1st place winner in the 10-18 age category; Devin James Crawford, 1st place in the 19-30 age category; Kevin Wilkerson, 1st place winner in the

31-39 age category; with Jim Jones and Clarence Irby, tying for 1st place in the 60-75 age category.

Michael is still greatly

missed by family and friends but his legacy lives on through the Memorial Foundation, the Athletic Scholarship Memorial 5K Walk/Run and the

Lakeland Drive Baseball field which was named in his honor, The Michael D. Johnson Memorial Field.

The Michael D. Johnson Me-

morial Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit organization.

For more information on the foundation, visit <https://michaeldjohnsonfoundation.org>



# Hinds County School District Weekly Update

## ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

The Hinds County School District recognized their employees for years of tenure in the Hinds County School District. Special pens were given to those who reached the milestone of 5, 10, 15 & 20 years with Hinds County School District. They were treated with a great breakfast from Waffle House. We thank them for their service and continued support of the Hinds County School District.

### 5 YEARS

Britney Dickson, Ebonee Brown, Tennell Burnett, Shenecia Bush Stamps, Deandria Sylvester, Georgia Hillman, Melissa Scott, Shelby Davis, Nikita Norwood, Marcia Robison, Lorrie Strong, Gabrielle Anderson, Ruth Buck, Andrea Denson, Kasey Hammett, Robert Jacobs, Tony Tadlock, Anthony Wilson, Kimberly Chisolm, Pamela Collins, Sally Pickett, Kofi Woodall, Jeremy Hilton, Catherine Gueran

### 10 YEARS

Daffonie Moore, Priscilla Green, Audrey Harris, Willieetta Brown, Latasha Ball Owens, Bobby Ballard, Jr., John Rozell, Jr., Chiquila Pearson, Carson Raquel Shelby

### 15 YEARS

Dr. Linda Laws, Yolanda Green, Ginger Liddell, Nikeith Brown, Markeeta Carson, Jacqueline Woods, Matthew Scott, Tequia Brown, Candace Roberts, Cassandra Blackmon, Deborah Jamison, Latika Levy, Lakisha Mosley, Carl Jones, Albert Frazier

### 20 YEARS

Juanita Jefferson, Lashurn Williams, Jayme Byrd

