

# Where do the children play?

## Society continues to evolve – so does gun ownership and deaths by firearms

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

In the last 250 years American society has surely evolved. We have transformed in many areas. When we take a step back for a moment, it's easy to see. We learned to harness the power of water, then steam, electricity, combustion, communication and then computing.

We never think twice when we flip a light switch, place a cellular call halfway around the world, or push a button to start an automobile without even inserting a key. Some even open an app on their cell phone and have groceries delivered to their door.

Advancement, transformation and evolution in our society have been phenomenal, but where do the children play?

In 1970, British singer-songwriter Cat Stevens' breakthrough album was called, "Tea for the Tillerman," and its' lead song was "Where do the children play? Genius.com says, "Taking the lyrics literally, the narrator is concerned that modern advances are ruining the planet and leaving behind the innocence and happiness that life is really about."

The opening verse: "Well I think it's fine Building jumbo planes

Or taking a ride on a cosmic train

Switch on summer from a slot machine

Yes, get what you want to if you want

'Cause you can get anything (and the chorus)

I know we've come a long way We're changing day to day



PHOTO: WWW.CHILDRENSDEFENSE.ORG

### COMMENTARY

But tell me, where do the children play?" Where do they play? Where are children safe in America today?

They better not go to parks or live in areas prone to drive-by shootings, or go to movie theatres, concerts, grocery stores, or bowling alleys. If that is not bad enough, the unthinkable – they better not go to school. Despite all our advances, and partly because of them, children are not safe at school in America.

Stevens, who later converted to Islam and is known now as Yusuf Islam, is an artist, a visionary – 53 years ago, when he was

only 22 years old, he was telling us something, asking us something, trying to make us think. But our own greed, a first cousin to advancement, overpowered our own ears. What is more fundamental to parenting than the safety and welfare of our own children?

2022 – "There were 51 school shootings in 2022 that resulted in injuries or deaths, the most in a single year since Education Week began tracking such incidents in 2018. In these 51 school shootings there were 140 people killed or injured: 100 people injured, 40 people killed; 32 students or other children, 8 school employees or other adults.

Prior to 2022, the highest number of school shootings with injuries or deaths was 2021 when there were 35. There were 10 in 2020, and 24 each in 2019 and 2018. per [www.EducationWeek.org](http://www.EducationWeek.org) on January 27, 2023.

"American gun violence deaths outside schools are also the highest in the world: in 2021 there were 12,520 incidents of firearm homicide and 48,830 resulting deaths compared to 37,155 deaths in 1990 and 34,556 in 1980 and 17,899 in 1970.

Despite rising rates of gun violence, however, many Americans remain fiercely protective of their constitutional right to bear arms," all per [www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com). As if being a kid in America isn't hard enough, now they get to worry about being shot or killed in places that were once sacred.

2023 – Advancement versus safety. Can the two ever coexist? Today the answer is no – it's a rare day in our country now when a child isn't killed by a gun. So far this year, 335 children and 1,326 teenagers have been homicide victims. Is that acceptable in the land of the free and the home of the brave? Obviously, the answer is yes. Imagine the caskets – 1,661 of them so far this year.

Per NBC News on March 25, 2022, "Domestic gun manufacturing boomed in the years before the recent rise in gun deaths and shooting incidents. From 1988 to 1992, the production of guns hovered between 3 million and 4 million annually, according to data from the Bureau of

Children  
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# District 5 Veterans of Foreign Wars celebrating the nation's veterans



Chris Gray, (L), Junior Vice Commander at VFW Post 9832, expresses gratitude to guest speaker, Commissioner Willie Simmons, for his words of encouragement to the veterans and their families. PHOTOS BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

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

"I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." Answering the call to serve our country is the message veterans are expected to demonstrate with this Oath of Enlistment. Irrespective of different experiences with war, veterans are reminded of their covenant of responsibility and accountability.

On the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW) website, Lori Thompson, executive director (2021-present) notes, "It is those rare individuals who are selfless enough to sacrifice so much so we can all enjoy the freedom we have," who answer the call to serve the US.

Regardless of knowing how each veteran is

"touched by war," Thompson maintains that we should make our veterans feel welcomed, support them and their loved ones, and, whenever possible, thank them for their service.

Brookes - Williams - Stewart (Post 9832) of District 5 presented a Joint Veterans Day Program at 4610 Willie Lindsey Dr. in Jackson, MS 39213 – in recognition of Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 11:11 a.m.

Guest speaker, Willie Simmons, Central Commissioner – Mississippi Department of Transportation – mentioned that the "Thank You Veterans" theme was appropriate because veterans were commended for "working as protectors of this country." Hence, those

Veterans  
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# 'We Will Go' receives 2019 Chevy Silverado donation

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

On Wednesday, November 15, the National Auto Body Council (NABC) Recycled Rides® program, along with car donor GEICO Insurance and collision repair partner Barnett's Body Shop presented a 2019 Chevy Silverado truck to local charity, We Will Go Ministries, located at 806 Farish Street in Jackson. The event was sponsored by Pinnacle Financial Partners.

We will Go Ministries is an organization which offers after-school and summer learning programs for students, and provides groceries for families in need. The truck was donated so that the non-profit group could secure and deliver groceries to low-income families and seniors in the Jackson community.

NABC Recycled Rides® is a unique program in which busi-



Deborah Robinson

nesses representing all facets of the collision repair industry team up to repair and donate vehicles to individuals and families in need of reliable transportation. Since the inception of the NABC Recycled Rides® program in 2007, members of the National Auto Body Council® have donated more than 3,200 vehicles valued at some \$46 million.



David Lancaster

Deborah Robinson, executive director of NABC said, "We Will Go Ministries will be able to use this vehicle to deliver meals, pick up donated items and generally help to continue their work around the Jackson area. We are very honored to be able to donate this vehicle today."

David Lancaster, president of We Will Go said, "We specialize



Andrew Nordquist

in helping people with food insecurities and helping children with literacy. Lancaster stated they help about 800 families a month and about 50 kids who come every day after school. He said they also help businesses as well as individuals that are looking for ways to plug in and help give back to the community.

Geico Insurance State claims

manager, Andrew Nordquist, said they partner with NABC and random shops all over the country that want to participate with them in donating vehicles whether it be for charities or needy persons.

Technicians at Barnett's Body Shop donated their time and skills to refurbish the donated truck.

Joel Lofton, of Barnett Body Shop, says most of the vehicles re-



Samantha and Joel Lofton

ceived don't require a lot of work and they are happy to help out.

Samantha Barnett Lofton, daughter of Barnett Body Shop owners Mary and Fred Barnett, says they have recycled about twenty vehicles amongst their five shop locations. They have been in

business since 1968 and have loca-

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LAW OF ANNIHILATION

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## In Memoriam

### La'Michael D'Non Walker

January 26, 1971 - November 12, 2023



Walker

La'Michael D'Non Walker was born on January 26, 1971 in Jackson, MS to Theodore Preston Walker and Brenetta Quick Walker. La'Michael was the first of four sons. As a child, La'Michael gave his life to Christ at Cade Chapel MB Church in Jackson, MS where he served on the youth usher board.

La'Michael attended Callaway High School but graduated from Murrah High School in 1989. He enjoyed the blessings of fathering five uniquely amazing beautiful children (three daughters and two sons). La'Michael also enjoyed being a grandfather (PawPaw) to his grandson, Cayden Currie.

In 2003, La'Michael became a real estate investor/entrepreneur. He formed two companies, Plan B Acquisitions and Walker Agency. He was an avid investor in stocks, bonds, BitCoins and real estate. He was instrumental in mentoring and inspiring

other investors' careers not just in Mississippi but in other states as well.

La'Michael was very close to his three brothers. They loved gathering at their parent's home to reminisce about their childhood, to joke, to talk about the most expensive cars, to talk all things real estate. Laughter over a good meal or cookout was the glue to holding his family together. La'Michael had a heart of gold. Jokingly, his brother Felix most recently referred to him as "The Jolly Giant!"

La'Michael leaves to cherish his memories, his father, Theodore Preston Walker and mother, Brenetta Quick Walker of Madison, MS; three brothers-Felix (Rashida) Walker of Madison, MS; Preston T. Walker of Jackson, MS; and Jermaine C. Walker also of Madison, MS. He also leaves to cherish his memories five children, Jameelah Currie of Madison, MS; Ishmael Walker of Atlanta, GA; Nicholas, Trinity and Shiloh Palmer of Saint Louis, MO; one grandson, Cayden Currie; and a host of aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces and friends.

Funeral service for La'Michael: Nov. 16, 11 a.m. at New Horizon Church, 1770 Ellis Ave., Jackson, MS. Cade Chapel Pastor Reginald Buckley, eulogist.

Scan the QR Code to watch the service "live," or visit <https://youtube.com/@newhorizonchurchinternatio6875?si=11uNq-OKOM0Uu86Q>.



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## Veterans

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who have served and are currently serving are worthy to be honored.

Simmons proceeded to share his Viet Nam experiences as a soldier at the age of 22. He said, “Serving in Viet Nam gave me an opportunity to be our brothers’ keeper. It didn’t matter if you were black or white, etc. We learned to work together as a team.”

In closing, the speaker proffered ways that veterans could be honored every day: (1) “Walk up to them and say, ‘Thank you;’ (2) Buy them a cup of tea; (3) Sometimes pick up the phone and just call a veteran; (4) Tell the President, Lieutenant Governor, etc. to support our veterans; (5) Provide transportation for them; and (6) Give thanks to the veterans’ families who have been put under a lot of stress, not knowing conditions or where they are assigned.”

The honor ceremony recognized two veterans who each received the Quilt of Valor.

EM3/E4 Comrade Larry Simpson served actively in the US Navy (1970-1972) as an electrician mate, bearing responsibility for keeping the power flowing aboard Navy ships. The honoree also served in the US Navy Reserve from 1972 until retiring with over 20 years in 1993. He has toured the entire world. He is recipient of numerous awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Meritorious Unit Citation Ribbon Simpson currently serves as Post 9832 Judge Advocate.

For more than 32 years, SFC Tara Rivers served in the US Army and Mississippi Army National Guard as Human Resource NCO, Automated Logistic Specialist, OCS Instructor, Aerial Sensor Operator, Equal Opportunity Advisor and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate. Among numerous awards, she received the Air Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two stars, during her tenure in the military. In 2018 – 2019, SFC Rivers’ last deployment was to Kuwait to serve as the first Theater Sustainment Command (TSC) Operational Support Post, Senior Equal Opportunity Advisor – where she was responsible for over 10,000 soldiers and civilians in operation of over 20 countries. The honoree medically retired in March 2022.

EM3/E4 Simpson and SFC Rivers reacted to their honors by expressing appreciation to the



L-R: SFC Tara Rivers and Eleanor Mills of the Jackson Quilters Guild, (Quilt of Valor Foundation) displaying Quilt Of Valor



At podium, Melinda Redd, VFW Post 9832 member - highlights history of The Quilt of Valor Foundation. PHOTOS BY JANICE K. NEAL-VINCENT

Jackson Quilters Guild of the Quilt of Valor Foundation and VFW Post 9832.

Rivers acknowledged District 5 Commander Ira Turner, Eleanor Mills and Dr. Margrit Wallace (Central Mississippi Coordinator for the Quilt of Valor Foundation) for their continued devotion to honoring veterans. With an appeal to the audience, she said, “Financial materials are greatly appreciated, and I encourage everyone to donate to this wonderful [cause].”

We had an assault weapon ban in this country from 1994 to 2004, but they let it lapse. We have governors, too, and mayors – people in positions of power – yet the deaths continue to escalate.

Numerous sources report that mass shooting deaths were 70 percent less likely to occur when the federal prohibition on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines was in effect. Today more than 60 Mayors across the country are encouraging the new Speak-



L-R: Ira Turner, VFW District 5 Commander and Post Commander of VFW Post 9832, SFC (Retired) Commander Tara Rivers, Quilt of Valor recipient, VFW Post 12172, Wilson - Bain - Martin, Brandon; and Eleanor Mills, representative, Jackson Quilters Guild, Quilt of Valor Foundation



VFW Members of Brooks, Williams, Stewart Post 9832 acknowledged

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor. It is a reminder that we ought to honor our veterans. It says unequivocally, “Thank you for your service and sacrifice in serving our nation.”

District 5, Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts are as follows: 9832 Brooks – Williams – Stewart (Jackson)...Cmdr. Ira Turner; 2572 William

T. Gifford (Vicksburg)...Cmdr. Phares Griffin; 3685 James A. Barnett (Clinton)...Cmdr. Donald Malin; 5048 Rankin County Harrison – White (Richland)...Cmdr. Robert Wedgeworth; 5318 Denson – Evertt – Joyner (Canton)...Cmdr. Denny Foil; 6809 Trace Reservoir (Madison)...Cmdr. Eugene “Tray” McClure; 9122 Ross – Williams – Grubbs (Mendenhall)...Cmdr. Larry Berry, and 12172 Wilson – Bain - Martin (Brandon)...Cmdr. Tara Rivers.

## Children

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Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Fast-forward to 2009, when more than 5 million guns were made. Since then, gun manufacturing numbers have increased more years than they have decreased, peaking at 11 million in 2016.”

Collectively, we elect 535 people as national lawmakers. The bare minimum salary of each is \$174,000. Many of them draw a higher salary.

## Chevy

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Participants in 2019 Silverado donation to We Will Go.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY

tions Flowood, Ridgeland, Byram, Gluckstadt and Florence, MS

Additional partners in the NABC Recycled Rides® presentation include Advanced Remarketing Services and Cars for Charity.

**About The National Auto Body Council®**

The National Auto Body Council® is the premier organization of collision industry partners dedicated to strategic networking opportunities that positively change lives in the communities they serve. The collaborative membership of the National Auto Body Council® has gifted more than 3,200

vehicles, provided extrication opportunities for more than 6,000 First Responders and is helping educate students and adult drivers in communities around the country.

**About Pinnacle Financial Partners**

Pinnacle Financial Partners provides a full range of banking, investment, trust, mortgage and insurance products and services designed for businesses and their owners and individuals interested in a comprehensive relationship with their financial institution. The firm is listed by Forbes as No. 27 among America’s Best Banks.

## PHOTO OF THE WEEK

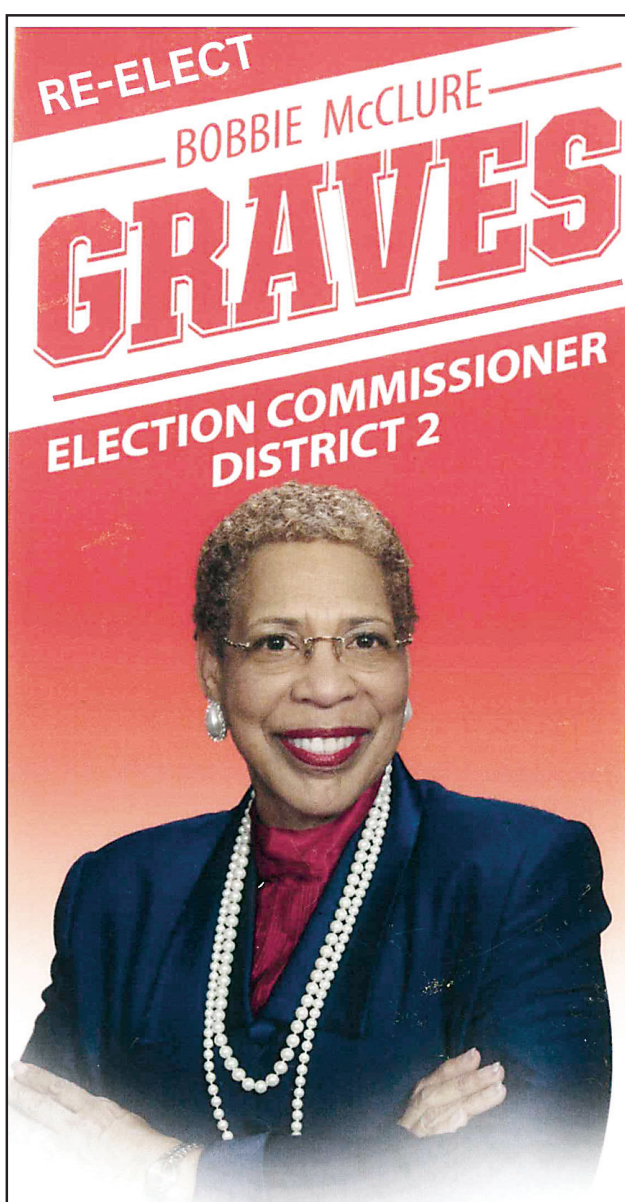
George Swaggard and Brenda Swaggard recently donated Lanier High School blazers to Mr. & Miss Lanier.

Al Thomas, president of the Lanier High School National Alumni, is very appreciative of the Swaggards for their generous gift to the student recipients.

Thomas said, “The next time you see George and Brenda Swaggard, please thank them for donating the blazers year after year to Mr. & Miss Lanier. George is a true Bulldog and an outstanding member of the Lanier High School National Alumni Association.”



(L-R) Lee Bernard, George Swaggard, Lajrion Harris (Mr. Lanier), Kamyah Bradley (Miss Lanier), Brenda Swaggard, and Al Thomas



**Thank you for your support.  
Please return to the polls,  
Tuesday, November 28, 2023.**

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### As Election Commissioner I WILL:

- Bring back **CONFIDENCE** to the voters of District 2 and all of Hinds County
- **MAINTAIN** polls, operate well-run elections, assist voters and provide an adequate amount of ballots and surveys
- **MANAGE** polling registration; provide registration information, recordkeeping, processing and grouping data as required
- Provide **TRANSPARENCY** and clarity with election compliance

- **I WILL** work to support well-run elections in Hinds County, offering support and guidance, and work to ensure voters know everything they need to make an informed vote.
- **I WILL** work to make sure everyone understands and follows all rules involving the election process, and maintain the poll registers for elections.
- **I WILL** provide Public Awareness for election procedures, training opportunities for poll managers and workers, information for Election Day procedures, and precinct locations.
- **I WILL** carry my work policy of accountability, dedication and integrity throughout the Hinds County areas and ensure that the rules in all aspects of elections are clear, simple and in the best interest of the voters!

I am married, the mother of two children, a graduate of W. H. Lanier High School and Jackson State University.

**PRECINCTS:** 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 37, 39, 40, 41, 84, 85, 86, BO, BR, C1, ED, PN, R1, ST, TN

**Contact Information:** P.O. BOX 1284 • Clinton, MS 39060  
601-209-4190 • Elect.Bobbie.McClure.Graves@gmail.com



# Celebrating the 109th Year Anniversary of Anderson United Methodist Church

## *Dr. Stephen T. Cook in his first 100 days as senior pastor*

By Jackie Hampton  
Publisher

On Sunday, November 12, 2023, Anderson United Methodist Church (AUMC), located at 6205 Hanging Moss Road, Jackson, MS, celebrated its 109th Year Anniversary.

As a beacon in the community, Anderson is known for providing a friendly worship atmosphere where the church motto is, “Be at Home.”

Over the past 109 years of existence, Anderson UMC has been shepherded by 14 great leaders. Following the retirement of Rev. Joe W. May, who pastored Anderson UMC for over 20 years, Bishop Sharma D. Lewis saw fit to appoint one of her district superintendents to continue the legacy left by Rev. May.

On July 2, 2023, Rev. Dr. Stephen T. Cook was installed as the 17th pastor of Anderson UMC. The members of Anderson seem to agree that Pastor Cook has definitely added his energy and zeal to the high octane worship services that already existed.

Pastor Cook’s message on Sunday was titled, “God Will See to It. He revealed his personal motto, “Moving Forward: All-In.” He stated it was important for him to reassure the congregation that he will be here through the good times and embrace the challenges as well.

During the first 100 days of Pastor Cook’s leadership, members gave reasons why the church has grown, to include powerful preaching, effective teaching, dynamic worship, evangelistic outreach, discipleship making, witnessing, fellowship and service.

According to Dorlisa Hutton, Christian Education chair, “Pastor Stephen Cook’s dynamic leadership and unwavering commitment to a moving forward, ‘all-in’ approach to serving our community has brought a renewed sense of purpose to our church family. We are excited to see what the future holds under his guidance.”

The church continues to grow under the leadership of Pastor Cook. On August 27, 2023, he baptized eight members. By October 29, 2023, twenty new members had completed the new membership class; this includes First Lady Erma Robinson-Cook, transferring her membership from Central United Methodist Church.

Church members Vern O. and Felicia Gavin said, “We believe that God appointed Pastor Stephen Cook and First Lady Erma Cook for such a time as this in the life of Anderson United Methodist Church. There is an air of excitement not only on Sunday mornings, but each time you enter the doors of Anderson. Being called to shepherd is a weighty responsibility that he has embraced with a spirit of humility and genuineness to lead Anderson to the next level. We are excited and eager to be a part of where God will direct us under Pastor Cook’s leadership.”

Rosalind Thomas, AUMC lay leader stated, “We are grateful to the Bishop and her cabinet for sending Rev. Dr. Stephen T. Cook to Anderson United Methodist Church. He comes with a plethora of experience and energizes all of those around him to experiencing the goodness of God. We are looking forward to sharing in his vision to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”



Pastor Stephen T. Cook



Associate Pastors Linda Williams, Domini Henry and Pastor Cook



PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON

ence the goodness of God. We are looking forward to sharing in his vision to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

Bobby Evans and Dr. Delia Evans both co-lay leaders expressed how they felt regarding the pastor’s leadership. “During his first 100 days Pastor Cook has cast his vision of Anderson being ‘All-In and Mov-

ing Forward,” said Delia Evans. “Since he has been here, we have experienced a new level of excitement and energy in our worship services,” said Bobby Evans.

Others showing gratitude toward Pastor Cook included Robert Montgomery, head of security; Janice Jones, operations manager; and Juanita Sims-Doty, 18-year member.

Montgomery stated, “We are blessed to have Rev. Dr. Stephen Cook as our newly appointed pastor. As I am getting to know him, I look forward to seeing where his leadership will take us.”

Jones said, “Pastor Cook has given Anderson a renewed strength and inspired us to keep ‘moving forward, ‘all-in,’ together as one. He emphasizes

to us a divided church will not stand.”

Doty stated, “I can’t wait to get up and go to Anderson for service to hear the dynamic message from Pastor Cook. I know I’m going to be uplifted and inspired with a clear and practical message regarding living our lives today, supported by Biblical scriptures. I can see his compassionate ap-

proaches to building relationships with each individual in our congregation to make sure he sees you; he hears you and he cares about you. He wants us to know that he is here to carry out the mission and the work that God sent him to do. He has done a phenomenal job during his first 100 days as an amazing leader and our beloved senior pastor.”







# FBI seizes NYC Mayor Eric Adams’s electronic devices amidst investigation

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent

FBI agents confiscated electronic devices belonging to New York City Mayor Eric Adams earlier this week, intensifying a criminal inquiry into potential collaboration with the Turkish government, among others, in an alleged scheme to funnel funds into Adams’ 2021 campaign coffers.

According to a *New York Times* report, the incident unfolded after an event at New York University, where agents approached the mayor and requested his security detail to step aside. Armed with a court-authorized warrant, the agents joined Adams in his SUV and seized at least two cellphones and an iPad.

The *Times* said the electronic devices were returned to the mayor within days of the Nov. 6 encounter. It is common practice for law enforcement investigators armed with a search warrant to make copies of data from seized devices for further analysis.

Boyd Johnson, a lawyer representing Adams and his campaign, issued a statement asserting the mayor’s cooperation with federal authorities. Johnson stated that Adams had already “proactively reported” at least one instance of improper behavior upon learning of the federal investigation. “In the spirit of transparency and cooperation, this behavior was immediately and proactively reported to investigators,” Johnson added.



Mayor Eric Adams

Emphasizing that authorities had not accused Adams of wrongdoing, Johnson reiterated that the mayor swiftly complied with the FBI’s request and willingly provided them with his electronic devices.

However, not all reactions to the news were supportive. Curtis Sliwa, a former New York City mayoral candidate, called for Adams’s resignation. “He’s too distracted by the multiple investigations into his fundraising to lead New York City,” Sliwa insisted.

Chris Sosa, a member of the New York Democratic Committee, echoed similar sentiments, urging Adams to step down immediately. “Our leaders need to demand that he step down for the health of our city,” Sosa wrote on X. “I’m not suggesting anything about the outcome of investigations. But the mayor cannot execute his duties effectively under these escalating circumstances.”

# U.S. Supreme Court unveils new code of ethics for justices

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent

The Supreme Court unveiled an ethics code for its justices Monday, marking a departure from its historical absence of such regulations. The move comes in the wake of heightened scrutiny and revelations surrounding undisclosed property deals and gifts that have raised concerns about the ethical conduct of some justices.

In an official statement, the court highlighted the code’s purpose as providing a comprehensive framework for ethical conduct. “For the most part, these rules and principles are not new,” the court explained. It emphasized that the absence of a code had led to what the court said was the misconception that justices were exempt from ethical constraints.

While lower federal judges adhere to an ethics code governing their conduct, Supreme Court justices have never been subject to the same rules due to their unique constitutional status.

Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., in a letter to lawmakers earlier this year, indicated that the court draws guidance from the ethics code applicable to other federal judges.

The decision to adopt the ethics code follows a series of controversies surrounding undisclosed dealings,



including a revelation involving conservative Justice Clarence Thomas. Thomas acknowledged undisclosed travel expenses funded by billionaire associate Harlan Crow in his most recent annual financial disclosure report.

The report detailed several trips facilitated by Crow, including a conservative conference in Dallas and a vacation to the Adirondacks. Thomas, citing security concerns related to a leaked draft opinion on the *Roe v. Wade* case, defended using a private jet for one trip. The report, compiled with the assistance of attorney Elliot Berke, asserted that there were no intentional ethical violations and that any discrepancies in previous reports were unintentional.

The disclosures stem from a ProPublica exposé outlining Thomas’s acceptance of

luxurious trips from Crow, a prominent Republican donor, which were not disclosed in previous financial reports.

In response to these revelations, Democratic members of the Senate Judiciary Committee are urging the Supreme Court to implement new ethical guidelines. The controversy also prompted a change in disclosure regulations in March, requiring justices to disclose private aircraft travel and stays at privately owned resorts.

Thomas justified the gifts from Crow as “personal hospitality,” exempt from previous regulations requiring disclosure. The recent report further addressed Crow’s acquisition of Thomas’s family-owned real estate in Savannah, clarifying that Thomas’s financial loss in the transaction was due to a prior investment in his mother’s property.

Furthermore, the report revealed omissions in Thomas’s previous submissions, including the disclosure of bank accounts and other financial matters held by his conservative political activist wife, Ginni Thomas.

An August 2023 ProPublica report exposed additional details of Thomas’s extensive travel, financed by billionaire backers, raising concerns from Democrats and ethics experts. The report claimed that the new information revealed that Thomas’s lifestyle far exceeded his reported income, potentially violating ethics laws.

Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) tweeted in response to the revelations, “Justice Thomas has brought shame upon himself and the United States Supreme Court with his acceptance of massive, repeated, and undisclosed gifts. He should resign immediately.”

# Honoring our promise to our black veterans

By Rep. James E. Clyburn  
D-S.C., Chairman, Democratic Faith Working Group



The original government-issued posters publicizing the G.I. Bill of 1944 were designed to inspire. Oversized red and white letters urged, “Veterans — prepare for your future through EDUCATIONAL TRAINING. Consult your nearest Office of the VETERANS ADMINISTRATION.” Another read, “VETERANS — if buying a farm, home, or business, learn about GUARANTEED LOANS.” A third showed a young man with his hand on his chin, deep in thought, with the following text above: “Shall I go back to school?”

What’s notable about these posters is that every person pictured is white. These posters sent a message to black veterans that they need not apply — that these life-changing programs were not meant for them. This message was reinforced by the blatant discrimination perpetrated by Veterans Affairs (VA) offices around the country and the abysmal benefits provided to veterans of color. In 1947, only two of more than 3,200 home loans administered by the VA in Mississippi cities went to black borrowers. Similarly, less than 1% of VA mortgages went to black borrowers in New York and New Jersey suburbs.

These disparities in homeownership opportunities have grown with time. The Consumer Federation of America estimates that homeownership rates for white and black Americans stood at 74.50% and 44.10% respectively in 2020, and 65% and 38% in 1960. This homeownership disparity helps explain the difference in net worth for white families (\$171,000) compared to that of black families (\$17,150). After signing the G.I. Bill into law in June 1944, President Truman remarked that it would give “emphatic notice to the men and women in our armed forces that the American people do not intend to let them down.”

Nearly 80 years later, I’ve teamed up with Congressman Seth Moulton (MA-06) and U.S. Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-GA) to ensure President Truman’s words ring true. We have reintroduced Sgt. Isaac Woodward, Jr. and Sgt. Joseph H. Maddox G.I. Bill Restoration Act in the U.S. House of Repre-

## COMMENTARY

sentatives and the U.S. Senate. It would provide critical housing and education benefits to black World War II veterans and their descendants, honoring our long overdue promise to the nation’s heroes. It would also require that the Government Accountability Office establish a panel of independent experts to assess inequities in how benefits are distributed to minority and female service members.

The bill’s name pays homage to two admirable and unsung World War II veterans.

In February 1946, decorated World War II veteran Sgt. Isaac Woodard, Jr. was traveling home on a Greyhound bus to Winnsboro, South Carolina when a local police chief forcibly removed him from the bus. Still in his uniform after being honorably discharged, the officer beat him mercilessly. Woodard was cruelly thrown in jail rather than given the necessary medical treatment, leading to his blindness. The police chief was ultimately acquitted of the crime by an all-white jury. President Truman was so moved by Sgt. Woodard’s horrific abuse that he signed an Executive Order integrating the armed services.

Sgt. Joseph Maddox, another World War II veteran, applied and was accepted to a master’s degree program at Harvard University. His local Veterans Affairs office denied him the tuition assistance he was rightfully due under the G.I. Bill to “avoid setting a precedent.” After seeking assistance from the NAACP, the VA in Washington, D.C., ultimately promised to get Sgt. Maddox the educational benefits he deserved.

These are just two of the countless service members who were treated unfairly after sacrificing on behalf of their country. Black soldiers returning home from World War II found themselves facing the same socioeconomic and racial discrimination they had faced before. Instead of being welcomed with open arms, they struggled to find jobs, get educated and purchase homes.

We cannot undo the injustices of our past. But we can begin to restore the possibility of full economic mobility for those that the original G.I. Bill left behind. The G.I. Bill Restoration Act would bring us one step closer to that goal.

# Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. becomes first Divine Nine Sorority to raise \$1 million for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital

BlackPressUSA

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc — a historically black sorority — has completed a historic pledge made in 2021 to raise \$1 million for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital®. This achievement comes days before the international collegiate and nonprofit community service organization’s 101st anniversary, marking over a century of commitment to helping those in need.

At the time of the original announcement, Sigma Gamma Rho had already raised nearly \$500,000 for St. Jude. As part of the push to reach \$1 million, Sigma Gamma Rho pledged a three-year sponsorship for the annual St. Jude Walk/Run, held during Childhood Cancer Awareness Month each September.

Since then, Sigma Gamma Rho has reached its goal in large part through its participation in the St. Jude Walk/Run. In 2023, the organization entered more than 200 Walk/Run teams in cities across the United States, helping it cross the fundraising finish line this year.

Rasheeda S. Liberty, International Grand Basileus of Sigma Gamma Rho stated, “Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated is grateful for the opportunity to support St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital’s work to find cures and help save the lives of children all over the world. I am proud of the mobilization of our global membership to reach this \$1,000,000 milestone, and to have



Support from organizations like Sigma Gamma Rho helps ensure that families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food — so they can focus on helping their child live.

done so just prior to our 101st Founders’ Day. This accomplishment aligns with our sorority’s motto, “Greater Service, Greater Progress”. We look forward to continuing our partnership with St. Jude in the years to come.”

Support from organizations like Sigma Gamma Rho helps ensure that families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food — so they can focus on helping their child live.

“We’re so grateful for and honored by the incredible heart and dedicated service shown by Sigma Gamma Rho,” said Richard C. Shadyac Jr., president and CEO of ALSAC, the fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

“This is a milestone accomplishment by Sigma Gamma Rho and its members all over the world that will help St. Jude continue making progress in improving survival rates for children with cancer and other life-threatening diseases.”

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. was founded November 12, 1922 on the campus of Butler University in Indianapolis by seven African-American women educators. The sorority has more than 500 chapters in the United States, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, Ghana, Germany, Japan, South Korea, U.S. Virgin Islands and the United Arab Emirates.

Sigma Gamma Rho’s commitment to service is expressed in its slogan, “Greater Service, Greater Progress.”



# Blood pressure and your memory

By Vince Faust  
*Tips to Be Fit*

Did you know that having high blood pressure affects your memory? We know that blood flow and brain and memory skills are different for older people.

One of every three adults in the US has high blood pressure. 70% of people that had a heart attack had high blood pressure. 80% of people that had their first stroke had high blood pressure. 70% of people that had chronic heart failure had high blood pressure. The prevalence of hypertension in the African-American population is between 25-30%. Hypertension kills a disproportionate number of African Americans unnecessarily each year.

A study at the University of Pittsburgh studied the affect of blood pressure and memory of people over 60 with pressure is below 140/90 and another group 60 year olds with blood pressures in the hypertensive region with readings above 144/84. Current guidelines classify blood pressure readings between 120/80 and 139/89 as pre-hypertension. Optimal blood pressure is now considered to be below 120/80. The participants had to perform a series of every day memory test while scans recorded activity in parts of their brain involved in memory.

The study found that high blood pressure can negatively affect your memory by impeding proper blood

flow to the brain. This means an elevated pressure can damage the blood vessels in the brain, causing them to narrow and become less elastic. This restricts the flow of oxygen and nutrients to brain cells, leading to potential damage and impairing their function.

The longer high blood pressure goes uncontrolled, the greater the risk of memory problems. Chronic hypertension can lead to cumulative damage in your brain over time.

Heredity, obesity, physical or emotional stress, high salt intake, cigarette smoking and excessive use of stimulants such as coffee, tea or drugs can all be contributing factors to high blood pressure.

## Lifestyle Changes

Lifestyle changes include a modified diet, weight control, exercise, smoking cessation, stress management and a decrease in sodium intake.

The body only requires 200 mg of sodium (1/10 teaspoon of salt) daily to function properly. The typical American diet ranges between 6,000 and 20,000 mg daily. Sodium intake should range between 500-1500 mg daily. Excessive amounts of sodium in the diet increase water retention, which in turn increases blood pressure.

Smoking increases blood pressure by limiting the amount of oxygen rich blood circulated throughout the cardiovascular system. The demand for oxygen by the heart causes it to work

harder to get the oxygen it requires. Oxygen rich blood is required to provide vital organs with nutrients needed for the body to function properly.

Stress is an important factor to be considered if you have high blood pressure. People who continually drive themselves and find it hard to relax, who don't take vacations or who don't avoid unnecessary stress must learn to do so. There are many ways to deal with stress including meditation, exercise and deep breathing.

## Role of Diet and Exercise

Limiting sodium, high fat and highly processed foods from the diet is a must. Learn to season foods with fresh vegetables and herbs instead of salt preparations. Your daily diet should consist of between 55-60% complex carbohydrates. This group should include 2-6 servings of fresh fruit and juice; 3-6 servings of fresh vegetables and 6-8 servings of whole grain breads and cereals (oats, pasta, brown rice, etc.). Protein should make up 20% of your diet. This group includes 2-4 servings of foods such as egg whites, beans, fish, skinless chicken and lean beef. Milk should be 1% fat or skimmed. Fat should make up about 20% or less of your diet. Your best source of oil is canola oil or light olive oil. Drink 4-8 glasses of water through out the day.

Exercise can make a difference in blood pressure but some precautions should be taken before you start a pro-

gram. Your physician may recommend an exercise stress test, which should be administered by a professional.

Recent studies show a significant decrease in blood pressure after 6-8 weeks of aerobic exercise conditioning. They also show a return to high blood pressure 3-6 weeks after detraining. This indicates that exercise must be maintained along with other forms of therapy to continue making a difference in blood pressure levels.

Exercises you should avoid if you have high blood pressure include sprint training or stop and go sports such as karate, racquetball, heavy weight training and powerlifting. You may be able to resume some of these once your blood pressure is under control but only after you get an O.K. from your physician. For toning you can weight train but the amount of resistance used should be moderate (not heavy) so that you can do between 10 and 12 repetitions comfortably. Aerobic exercises, which primarily work your cardiovascular system, (heart, lungs, circulation) should also be done at moderate intensity. These exercises include walking, cycling, jogging, swimming, aerobic dance and rowing. Because a sudden increase in blood pressure can be induced by exercise it is important to warm up very slowly and increase the amount of time you exercise gradually. Breathe normally and cool down slowly at the end of your exercise routine so that your

blood pressure will stabilize gradually.

Changes in diet, exercise and other lifestyle changes can make you feel better and lower your resting blood pressure but you should never discontinue prescribed medication unless your physician tells you to stop.

A home monitor can help keep regular tabs on your blood pressure. Home monitoring will help you determine if your lifestyle changes are working and alert you and your doctor to health issues.

You should also visit your doctor. If your blood pressure is under control, you may only need to visit your doctor once or twice a year. If your blood pressure isn't well controlled, you more than likely will want to see your doctor more frequently.

Talk about your health. Family and friends can help improve your health and encourage you to take care of yourself. They can even join in an exercise program with you.

If you need more support join a support group. This can help you emotionally and even boost your morale. Support can give you valuable information the can save your life.

Last, know your condition. Educate yourself.

*If you have a fitness question or concern you would like addressed write to "Tips to be Fit," P O Box 53443, Philadelphia, PA 19105 or tipstobefit@gmail.com*

# Pneumococcal pneumonia can be life-threatening – here's what to know

## StatePoint

Pneumococcal pneumonia can disrupt your life for weeks and, in some cases, be serious or even life-threatening.

To help adults understand how they can help protect themselves against pneumococcal pneumonia, the American Lung Association and Pfizer are partnering to share important information and patient insights about the disease.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that this lung disease causes an estimated 150,000 hospitalizations annually nationwide. Symptoms include high fever, excessive sweating, shaking chills, coughing, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath and chest pain. Some symptoms can appear quickly and without warning.

## Risk Factors

The immune system naturally weakens with age, so even if you're healthy and active, being 65 or older puts you at increased risk for pneumococcal pneumonia. In fact, adults 65 and older are over 10 times more likely to be hospitalized with pneumococcal pneumonia than those aged 18-49.

In adults 19 and older, certain factors increase pneumococcal pneumonia risk compared with healthy adults of the same age. These include smoking cigarettes, chronic lung diseases like asthma and COPD, chronic



PHOTO SOURCE: (C) SEVENTYFOUR / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS

heart disease and diabetes.

## Prevention

Pneumococcal pneumonia vaccination can help protect against the disease and is recommended for at-risk groups. For adults living with certain chronic health conditions and those 65 or older, vaccination helps protect against a potentially life-threatening illness.

"Having asthma can some-

times restrict me from doing things I love, so I really try to take proactive steps to help keep myself healthy, like avoiding my known asthma triggers and following my doctors' advice," says Catherine, a patient who was diagnosed with asthma in adulthood. "I didn't even think I was old enough to get vaccinated for pneumococcal pneumonia, but when my

doctor recommended it, I got it because I trust him. I like the comfort of knowing it's helping to protect me against this potentially serious lung disease."

In addition to being up to date on your vaccinations, washing your hands, and not smoking are all habits that can help prevent pneumococcal pneumonia. Those with chronic illnesses should also follow

the care recommendations for their condition.

## Disparities

The 2025 Vaccines National Strategic Plan has pneumococcal disease vaccination rate targets of 90% for people 65 years and older and 60% for adults with underlying health conditions at increased risk of disease. Unfortunately, current vaccination rates are falling far

short of these goals – especially among black and Hispanic/Latino-communities. In 2021, pneumococcal vaccination coverage among all U.S. adults aged 65 and older was 70.1%. However, the rate was around 60% among the black population and around 52% among the Hispanic/Latino population of the same age group.

Latino and black adults are also at greater risk of developing certain chronic health conditions, such as asthma and diabetes, compared to individuals who are white. It's important that all adults at risk take steps to help protect themselves against infection.

## What You Should Do

If you're at increased risk for pneumococcal pneumonia, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about vaccination. Being an active part of your healthcare team, advocating for yourself and asking questions is important. Even if you've previously had a pneumonia vaccine, your healthcare provider may recommend additional vaccination for increased protection.

Pneumococcal pneumonia can be serious. Talk to your healthcare provider about how to help prevent this lung disease.

*You can learn more, as well as take a quiz to assess your risk, by visiting [lung.org/pneumococcal](https://lung.org/pneumococcal).*



P R E S E R V E D

# From promise made to prayer answered

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



Have you ever been so focused on receiving one type of blessing that you almost miss when God is trying to bless you in another way? I wonder if God sends these other blessings to let us know that he hasn't forgotten us or our prayer requests. This week as we are in a season of thankfulness, I am reminded about a past lesson from God about being grateful.

More than I'd like to admit, I've been in some dry spots in my own faith walk where I've spent much time in prayer and gotten disappointed by the answer coming very slowly. I remember how a few years ago I got a reminder of how God wants me to be truly grateful for

the smaller things before he trusts me with the bigger ones.

When I went to get my normal printing order before a speaking engagement, the print shop worker told me that he wasn't going to charge me for the order because it was messed up. I told him that the file was the same one that I'd sent it in the past and there should not have been a problem.

When out of habit, I reached into my purse for my wallet, he repeated that there was no charge. When I had a chance to look at the order, I thought it looked pretty good and didn't really see what he was talking about. I arched my eyebrows slightly amazed but quickly said "Thanks!" and made my way to my car. As I closed the car door, I thanked God for saving me a little over \$40.

Less than two hours after

that, I was given a check that I was not expecting by someone that I had not expected to see that day. It was only 9:30 a.m. and I was now close to \$80 richer than when I'd started my day. A few hours after that, I was given a turquoise jewelry set as a gift for speaking at a conference. As the day progressed, I kept receiving blessings like that so that by the end of day, I was over \$120 richer in cash or gifts of monetary value.

A few days after that I got a check in the mail that I was not expecting. At that point, I was overjoyed as I thought how God had blessed me in the past week. It made me want to repent for the times I questioned God about the delay in answering other prayers that I thought were more important.

This situation reminds me of Malachi 3:10: "...and see if I will not throw open

the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Sometimes we have tunnel vision faith that focuses so much on what we're believing God for when he sends these other seemingly "smaller" blessings.

These are designed to keep us encouraged as we wait in the meantime from "promise made" to "prayer answered." Have a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

*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 or follow her on Twitter @shewanda. You can also listen to her podcast at www.chocolateantiepodcast.com.*

# How to win the battle

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



Salvation is a gift. No one can dispute that statement. Second Corinthians 9:15 says, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Though salvation is a gift, you have a big role in the plan of God. You have to put forth great effort to serve God. Many people are not putting forth enough effort to serve Him. Again, I want to emphasize that salvation is a gift. You cannot be saved by works, and you have done nothing to merit it. It is a gift from God, but even so, you must do some things.

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The whole world is not saved, but whosoever believes in Him is saved.

Isaiah 53:1 says, "Who hath believed our report?" Not everyone believes the report. We find in Mark 16:15-16, "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The Gospel is preached to many people, but only those who believe receive help. You might have been sitting under the Gospel all your life, but if you fail to believe it, it will not do you an ounce of good. If you do not do something about it, you will still be damned.

In our scripture lesson, Israel was ready to cross over into Can-

aan. They had been in the wilderness for many years, and they were positioned on the east side of the Jordan. They were getting ready to step over into Canaan. Therefore, God gave them a solemn warning through Moses. He said, in essence, "When you cross over into Canaan, there are going to be some enemies in that land, and you must drive them out. I am going to give you the power, but you must do it. You must do something to win the battle."

While it is true that God took down the walls of Jericho, the people of God had their part to do. They had to march around the walls as the Lord had commanded them. Some people lay back and want God to do it all. No, they have some things that they must do.

Consider the prodigal son. Though he came to himself and thought about his father's house, God did not save him down in the hog pen. No, he came to himself and said, "I will arise and go to my father. (Luke 15:18)" Only when he arose and went to his father was he reinstated as a son.

God told Israel to drive out the enemy. Dear One, if you are away from God today, do not wait for God to do something great in your life before you get saved. No, there is something you must do. If you know that you are wrong, then you also know what you need to do to get right. You have to make a move: you must repent. The prodigal was not reinstated as a son until he got up and made the move to return to his father's house.

*Simeon R. Green, III, pastor, First Church of God, 6517 Walmsley Blvd., Richmond, Virginia 23224.*



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# Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival talks banned books and the legacy of black women

By William H. Kelly III  
Jackson State University

The 50th Anniversary Reconvening of the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival (PWPF) Nov. 1-4, hosted by Jackson State University's Margaret Walker Center, kicked off its first full day of panel discussions and conversations Thursday, Nov. 2. Black women writers, scholars, and academicians from all over the U.S. gathered to celebrate the legacy of history-making poet Phillis Wheatly and noted author Alice Walker.

Multiple plenary sessions and key-note conversations tackled topics ranging from black literary writing kinship, ancestral preservation of Afro-Latin spiritual systems, mentorship through writing in the black female intellectual tradition, and archival justice for black women and girls, to name a few.

The schedule also included a luncheon and conversation on banned books led by authors Angie Thomas, Paula J. Giddings and Nic Stone, moderated by Angela Stewart, archivist for the Margaret Walker Center at JSU. Each panelist has experienced having their literary works banned in various institutions nationwide.

"People don't ban stories that tell fantasy. They ban books that tell the truth," Stewart said.

In 1773, Phillis Wheatley published "Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral," the first authored book of poetry by an African-American woman. Wheatley was kidnapped from West Africa and brought to America as an enslaved 7-year-old. Historians recall how Wheatley had to receive signed approval from 15 white men before being cleared for publishing.

"Fourteen of those white men died before the second book could be published, and we never got it. That sounds like a banning of a book to me," said Ebony Lumumba, Ph.D., 2023 festival chair and chair of the English and Modern Languages Department at JSU.

## A vision is born

In 1973, a young Giddings attended the original PWPF hosted by Margaret Walker, a JSU professor, to honor the bicentennial of Wheatley's published work. Giddings most recently was named the Elizabeth A. Woodson 1922 professor emerita of Africana Studies at



Angie Thomas

PHOTOS BY AARON SMITH



Paula J. Giddings



Nic Stone

Smith College. She is also the author of the biography of Ida B. Wells, "Ida: A Sword Among Lions."

Giddings met Walker during her senior year at Howard University when Walker came to hear and critique Giddings and other "would-be poets" work.

"In some ways, what Margaret was doing in '73 was another black woman's renaissance about who was being published in the early 70s, and there was a black poetry movement," Giddings said.

Later, Giddings and Walker attended the 1972 Paul Laurence Dunbar Centennial Celebration at the University of Dayton in Ohio. Dunbar is recognized as the first African American to gain national recognition as a poet.

According to Giddings, this is where Walker conceived the idea of hosting the Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival. Over dinner, the two women discussed the would-be vision for the PWPF.

"She had a way of sort of knowing more about you and believing more in you than yourself. She was a great mentor that way. By that point, I was an editor at Howard University Press and was thrilled," said Giddings, who was featured on a public policy panel and introduced Nikki Giovanni during the 1973 gathering.

"So this was extraordinary...I was very young, and not only did I always want to be a writer, but I always wanted to be in the company of writers. I always wanted to be around them. So, as you can imagine, the Phillis Wheatley Festival was like heaven, right?" she said.

## More than the struggle

Fifty years later, Thomas and Stone join the original 1973 participants to

discuss the state of black literature being banned in America. The crowd roared with applause as Thomas expressed that assault rifles should be banned to protect children, not books.

"We have young people who are finding ways to put words to their issues... then they're going home, and they're challenging their parents on their beliefs, their thoughts, the way that they view the world, and that's making their parents uncomfortable," said Thomas, who mentioned that her books have helped white children, black children and more discover their identity and understand the Black Lives Matter movement.

Thomas is the author of "The Hate U Give," which debuted at #1 on the New York Times bestseller list and became a critically acclaimed film. Her second and third novels, "On the Come Up" and "Concrete Rose," are also No. 1 New York Times bestsellers.

"So what are those uncomfortable parents doing? They're going to the school board and making a fuss, but they're ignoring the parents who are saying, 'Oh, wow. This book gave my child words. This book gave my child a voice. This book helped my child figure out that they have power. That they could be an activist'"

As the conversation persisted, viewers were introduced to the thoughts of Stone, the No. 1 New York Times best-selling author of "Dear Martin."

She emphasized how former generations were tasked with reading novels and literature that primarily highlighted the struggle of the black family, often with heavy themes of racism and enslavement, further impressing upon

young black readers that their life "must be about struggle."

Stone recalls growing up without positive black representation in the novels and books she would read.

"It made me feel translucent. It's like I was there, but I wasn't," she said. "When you go through a school system that says to you, 'you have to prove that you can be an upstanding, contributing member of society by reading and being able to discuss this particular set of books.' None of those books have you in them; it's not a great experience and doesn't send a great message."

To combat this, Stone's novels include themes of friendship, adventure, coming-of-age, and LGBTQ+ community representation. Her books include "Dear Justyce," "Blackout," "Whiteout," and middle-grade novels, "Clean Getaway," and "How to Be a (Young) Antiracist," all New York Times bestsellers.

## Mirrors and sliding doors

Stone and the panelists encouraged listeners and the audience to shed light on the spectrum that is the black experience and not only when tragedy strikes.

"There are also books about black kids who go on adventures. There are books about black kids who possess magic. There are books about black kids who fall in love," Stone said. "There are books about black kids who solve mysteries. We also do other things besides suffer and fight oppression and continue to be resilient."

Thomas chimes in, paraphrasing a quote by Rudine Sims Bishop, Ph.D., professor emerita of Education at The Ohio State University, that defines books as mirrors, windows and sliding

glass doors.

"So many of our kids need those mirrors. When I say our kids, I'm talking about black kids. They need those mirrors because if you're picking up a book and you don't see someone like you having these adventures, or you see someone like you as a stereotype, you're just going to minimize yourself. So they need mirrors to see their full selves... Then these other kids, they need windows...To look into the lives of black kids," Thomas said.

She then referred to a study that showed there are more books featuring animals and trucks as main characters in comparison to black children.

"I want my books to be the mirrors and the sliding glass doors...to step into someone's life and see their experiences...The books that inform us they don't just inform us of ourselves. They help us understand others. They help us see lives beyond our own. They help us get empathy. And I'm a firm believer that empathy is more powerful than sympathy," Thomas shared.

Day one of the 2023 festival closed with an outdoor conversation and reception led by authors Nikole Hannah-Jones, Eve L. Ewing and Dana A. Williams, Ph.D., dean of the graduate school at Howard University, followed by an exhibition featuring original photos from the 1973 festival captured by renowned photographer and filmmaker Roy Lewis.

Festival sponsors include the Mellon Foundation, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Community Foundation for Mississippi and the Mississippi Book Festival.

# Blundering ballots just part of the story

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

Participation is on the rise — just shy of 39% of voters in Hinds County cast ballots in the November 7th General Election. The Mississippi Secretary of State website says there are 165,498 active (eligible) voters in Hinds County and 64,372 voted this cycle. That sticks out as being the most important story here.

It's true that many are outraged that our elected Election Commissioners fumbled the ball.

There were significant shortages of ballots — at least nine precincts either didn't have enough ballots or they didn't have enough of the right type of ballots. Many voters left the long lines out of overall frustration or to get back to work, or for other reasons. Voters reasonably expect a well-functioning election day process; they are paying the Election Commissioner's salaries.

In Hinds County — easily the largest concentration of black voters in Mississippi — the failure is solely at the hands of the Election Commissioners and stings badly. Mississippi's history of voter suppression is well known and well earned. When things like this happen near or on election days, tempers flare and suspicions deepen.

Examples that cause suspicion include: 1) Less than two weeks before the November 7th General



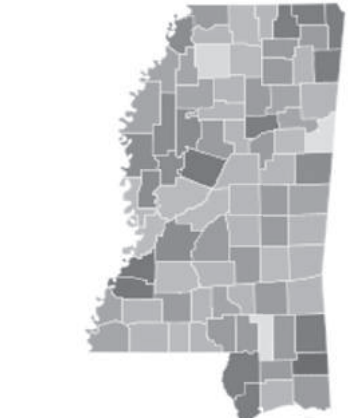
Depiction of Hinds County in relation to other counties and all of Mississippi, by worldatlas.com.

al Election the Secretary of State website, and several other state websites, went down due to an "unexpected error." Interesting timing to be sure. And not the first time either — last year there was a similar shutdown from a cyber-attack on election day itself.

2) Earlier this year HB1310 was passed allowing the audit and potential purge of voters from the rolls. "The Republican leadership of the Mississippi Legislature has for years attempted to make it easier to remove voters from the election rolls...they finally succeeded with legislation which was opposed by all black members of the House and Senate and by most Democrats," per Mississippi Today. It is a lengthy process, perhaps taking up to eight years before someone is purged due to lack of voting and lack of communication with the

state, but nonetheless, it's a foothold by the state's elected white majority to police the most sacred of our constitutional rights.

3) The day before elections, more shenanigans were visited upon Jackson/Hinds. The Capitol Police "Setting up roadblocks near precincts is a very suspicious form of voter intimidation," said NAACP Jackson President Nsombi Lambricht. State NAACP leaders said they were surprised to see Capitol police officers set up a roadblock and stopped drivers near JSU one day before Mississippi's general election. "It was very alarming to us. It does raise a lot of questions about what the purpose of this checkpoint today was," Lambricht said. "They were checking both license plates and licenses of individuals passing by right next to the largest voting precinct in the state of Mis-



2019 political map by Wikipedia.com

issippi, which is Jackson State University," said state NAACP Executive Director Charles Taylor. Monday morning, close to a dozen Capitol police SUVs with blue lights flashing set up on University Boulevard at Lynch Street as students came onto and left the JSU campus, per WAPT reporting.

Ongoing oppression by the state is the norm in Mississippi — that's a big part of why we are always at the bottom, but when we shoot ourselves in the foot it is embarrassing and frustrating. The white majority will use this failure to justify their long-held stereotype that black leadership is incompetent. In the final analysis though, the Hinds County Election Commissioner's blunders alone did not seal the fate of Democratic gubernatorial challenger, Brandon Presley.

Let's look at the election result

numbers provided by the Associated Press and Mississippi Today: 792,859 votes were cast in Mississippi, 408,680 went to incumbent Governor Reeves (51.5%) and 373,378 went to Democratic challenger Presley (47.1%) and 10,801 went to Independent Gwendolyn Gray (1.4%), who had dropped out of the race on October 9th — after the ballot had already been certified in September.

In the end, 4.4% separated Presley from Reeves. That is progress! When Gray dropped out of the race, she threw her support to Presley. It's true that if her 1.4% had gone to Presley, it would have lowered the separation to just 3% — but it still would not have been enough to force a runoff. Ultimately, Reeves broke the 50% threshold by 12,251 votes, and Presley fell short by 23,000 votes.

In Hinds County, Presley earned 79.2% (50,976) of the vote compared to Reeves 20% (12,861). Once again, Gray's 535 votes in Hinds would not have been enough. Despite the blunders of the Hinds Election Commissioners, 64,372 votes were cast in Hinds County. That translates to 38.89% of the roughly 165,498 active (eligible) voters casting ballots. An improvement from past elections, and something we can be proud of. This improvement lays the groundwork to build on for the

next election. For those that are curious, in this election — with the wrinkle caused by Gray's name being on the ballot — 52.8% would have been the magic number to push Presley to victory if Hinds County was to bear the full responsibility.

We expected Hinds to vote blue — and the huge gains in voter participation are the real Hinds story. An achievement that must be celebrated and built upon.

Additionally, across the state, three counties that in recent years had just barely leaned Red, ended up flipping to Blue behind Presley's pro-Medicaid expansion and anti-corruption message. He garnered 52.6% of the vote in Lowndes County, 49.6% in Yalobusha County, and 52.6% in Grenada County. Also, in Winston County, as of one week after the election, Presley trails Reeves by a mere nine votes.

For the first time ever, we elected an African American to serve as Public Service Commissioner for the Central District. Democrat De'Keither Stamps garnered 50.4% of the vote. African American Central District Transportation Commissioner, Democrat Willie Simmons, was reelected by nearly ten percentage points.

Sure, be frustrated with our Hinds Election Commissioners, but don't lose focus of our overall successes — nothing easy about Mississippi.



LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

LEGAL PUBLICATIONS FOR 2024

Pursuant to Section 21-39-3 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, notice is hereby given that the City of Jackson, Mississippi ("City of Jackson"), seeks competitive bids for the City of Jackson's annual contract for legal publications.

Sealed bids will be received in the Department of Municipal Clerk at City Hall in the City of Jackson, until 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 5, 2023 for the publication of the City of Jackson's proceedings, ordinances, resolutions, and other notices required to be published. All submitted bids should be sealed and plainly marked "Bid for Legal Publications" on the outside of the envelope.

Each bidder is responsible for documenting its bid with the necessary attachments evidencing its qualifications and compliance with all relevant criteria set forth in Section 13-3-31 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

Each bid must be submitted on the bid form provided by the Department of Municipal Clerk. Bid forms may be obtained from the Department of Municipal Clerk. Each bidder must quote a per word rate of a one-hundred-word advertisement to the nearest one dollar, e.g., 0.005 x 100= \$5.00. The quoted per word rate must be for a first, second and third publication. Bidders must also include a flat rate for supplying a proof of publication.

Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at: [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com) and the City of Jackson's website: [www.jacksonms.gov](http://www.jacksonms.gov) under Bid Opportunities. Electronic bids and/or reverse auction bids can be submitted at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com). For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

The determination of the low bidder will be based on a per word rate of a one-hundred-word advertisement, published three (3) times and a single proof of publication. The successful bidder will be awarded a one-year contract for the term of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

By: Angela Harris, City Clerk

11/9/23 11/16/23

LEGAL

Advertisement For Bids

SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM SOLUTIONS

CITY PROJECT NO. RFP#2023-02

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 219 South President Street, P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. CST, Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from qualified providers interested in providing a Security Camera System Solutions which will function as an access control system by integrating alarm monitoring, digital video indoor and outdoor IP security cameras, ID badging, visitor badging and monitoring, and database management into a single platform.

Each proposer must submit six (6) signed copies of its proposal and of the required forms, certifications, and affidavits attached hereto or electronically submit on [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com).

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provision of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Executive Order. Failure to comply with the City's Executive Order shall disqualify a contractor, bidder, or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Division of Equal Business Opportunity at 601-960-1856. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

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

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

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal forms to be provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM SOLUTIONS, REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)#2023-02."

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

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

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

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

The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Christine Welch, Deputy Director  
Office of Transportation

11/2/2023, 11/9/2023, 11/16/2023, 11/23/2023

Professional Paralegal  
Legal Advocate  
James Scott  
769-990-3874

11/9/23

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding

Advertisement for Bids

Bid 3249 Capital City Alternative ESSER Improvements

Electronic and sealed bid proposals 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) December 11, 2023, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conferences concerning this project will be held at 2221 Boling Street, Jackson, MS 39213 on Wednesday, November 29, 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 bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at [www.jpdsmsprojects.com](http://www.jpdsmsprojects.com). A \$250.00 non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Charles Bunniran at Allen & Hoshall, Phone: 601-977-8993, or Email: [cbunniran@allenhoshall.com](mailto:cbunniran@allenhoshall.com).

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 JPSP Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

All bid openings will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSP web site at [www.jackson.k12.ms.us](http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us) at YouTube: /JPSITV for public viewing due to COVID 19, vendors will not be allowed to sit in on bids openings.

11/9/2023, 11/16/2023

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding

Advertisement for Bids

Bid 3251 Jim Hill Window Replacements and Restroom Renovations

Sealed, written formal bid proposals 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) Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning the project for Window Replacements and Restroom Renovations at Jim Hill High School will be held at 2185 Coach Fred Harris Drive, Jackson, MS 39204 on Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 2:00 P.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened. Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at [www.jpdsmsprojects.com](http://www.jpdsmsprojects.com). A \$350.00 Non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid specs/documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders, please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Anderson Ervin at Durrell Design Group. Phone:601-708-4788 or Email: [contact@durrelldesigngroup.com](mailto:contact@durrelldesigngroup.com).

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 JPSP Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201. All bid openings will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSP web site at [www.jackson.k12.ms.us](http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us) at YouTube: /JPSITV for public viewing. Due to COVID 19, vendors will not be allowed to sit in on bids openings.

11/16/2023, 11/23/2023

LEGAL

Electronic Bidding

Advertisement for Bids

Bid 3250 ESSER Program: Restroom Improvements & HVAC/Indoor Air Quality Upgrades for Johnson Elementary and Lanier High School

Sealed, written formal bid proposals 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) Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference concerning the project for Johnson Elementary and Lanier High School will be held at 833 Maple Street, Jackson, MS 39203 on November 29, 2023, at 10:00 A.M. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to withhold the acceptance of any bid if approved for forty-five calendar days from the date bids are opened.

Plan holders are required to register and order bid documents at [www.jpdsmsprojects.com](http://www.jpdsmsprojects.com). A \$250.00 Non-refundable deposit shall be required on each set of bid specs/documents and must be purchased through the website. All plan holders are required to have a valid email address for registration. Questions regarding website registration and online orders, please contact Plan House Printing, 607 W. Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804, (662) 407-0193. Questions regarding bid documents please contact Kenan Morris at Durrell Design Group. Phone:601-708-4788 or Email: [contact@durrelldesigngroup.com](mailto:contact@durrelldesigngroup.com).

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 JPSP Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201. All bid openings will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSP web site at [www.jackson.k12.ms.us](http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us) at YouTube: /JPSITV for public viewing. Due to COVID 19, vendors will not be allowed to sit in on bids openings.

11/16/2023, 11/23/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A PUBLIC HEARING IS SET FOR Tuesday, December 5, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 219 S. PRESIDENT STREET, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39201. IT IS HEREBY SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS THE RENAMING 723 ROSE STREET TO THE INTERSECTION OF ROSE STREET AND LYNCH STREET TO ALPHA DELTA ZETA CHAPTER, ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC. STREET IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING:

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI HONORARY RENAMING 723 ROSE STREET TO THE INTERSECTION OF ROSE STREET AND LYNCH STREET TO ALPHA DELTA ZETA CHAPTER, ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC. STREET.

11/16/2023

LEGAL

Advertisement for RFP 2023-20

Publishing Platform, Website, Mobile App, Mass Notification System, and Social Media Integration from a Single Vendor

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), December 06, 2023 at which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. 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 JPSP 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 JPSP Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

Also, until further notice, all opening will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSP 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.

11/16/2023, 11/23/2023

LEGAL

Advertisement

CITY OF JACKSON

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

FOR SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES

The City of Jackson (City) is requesting proposals from qualified Service Providers to provide residential solid waste collection and transportation to a designated transfer station or landfill. Award of a contract for this project is subject to the availability of funding.

It is the City's intent to evaluate the proposals based on technical merit, experience, and price and to choose the Service Provider whose proposal provides the best value to the City. The City reserves the right to waive any irregularities, reject any and/or all proposals, in whole or in part, when, in the City's opinion, such rejection is in the best interests of the City.

Selection of Service Provider for Contract negotiation will be based on an evaluation of the following criteria:

1. Technical Proposal (15%)-Plan for performing the required services
2. Minority Business Participation (5%)
3. Fee proposal (80%)-How cost compares to other proposals in this algebraic equation:

((Lowest Priced Proposal divided by Service Provider's Price) multiplied by 80) equals the number of points/percentage assigned.

Example: If the Lowest Price is \$100.00 and is submitted by Service Provider A, and Service Provider B's Price was \$200.00 then the equation to determine Service Provider B's score would be:  
(\$100/\$200) X 80= 40 points  
Service Provider A gets 80 points  
Service Provider B gets 40 points

Minimum qualifications are five-years of experience as a prime contractor providing solid waste collection services to a municipality or a subsection of a municipality comparable in population to the City of Jackson. All garbage collection vehicles to be used for collection must be no more than two model years old at the time the service begins.

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. Each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provision of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Executive Order. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1055. Copies of the Executive Order, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

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

Respondent Service Providers shall provide:

- 1) One ( 1) electronic and ( 1) bound hard copy of the complete original version of the proposal including all attachments in a searchable Microsoft Office® format, preferably in Word® or Portable Document Format (PDF®) labeled accordingly and including the required EBO Plan, as well as one (1) unbound, signed original EBO Plan.

Section components must be clearly distinguished as follows:

- a. COVER LETTER Transmittal Form Sheet (Attachment A)
- b. COMPONENT 1 - Technical Proposal
- c. COMPONENT 2 - Cost Proposal

- 2) One (1) electronic and five (5) bound hard copies of COMPONENT 1 - Technical Proposal in a searchable Microsoft Office® format, preferably in Word® or Portable Document Format (PDF®).

- 3) If the proposal contains confidential or trade information, one (1) additional confidential or trade electronic copy of the complete proposal including all attachments, shall be labeled CONFIDENTIAL, and shall redact the confidential or trade information only, and shall be submitted in a searchable Microsoft Office® format, preferably in Word® or Portable Document Format (PDF).

All documents shall be submitted in a sealed envelope or box marked "Solid Waste Collection Services". The original and copies of the proposals shall be indexed with tabs as requested in Section 2.6 Proposal Contents. The Cost Proposal shall be submitted in a separate sealed envelope that will be submitted in the same sealed envelope or box as the Technical Proposal. This sealed envelope shall be clearly labeled "Cost Proposal" and include the name of the proposer on the outside of the envelope.

Electronic proposals MUST be submitted at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com). For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

All proposals (both electronic and physical hard copies) must be received no later than 3:30 p.m. Central Standard Time, on December 18, 2023. All physical hard copies shall be submitted to the attention of:

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

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

Specifications and the Fee Proposal Form for the project are available for inspection at the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Specifications and the Fee Proposal Form are available for download through Central Bidding online at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com) and at the City of Jackson website, [www.jacksonms.gov/bid-opportunities/](http://www.jacksonms.gov/bid-opportunities/).

The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Robert Lee, P.E., Interim Director  
Department of Public Works

11/16/2023, 11/23/2023



LEGAL

ORDINANCE CLOSING AND VACATING A PORTION OF UNIMPROVED AND UNNAMED ALLEYS IN CLOVERHILL SUBDIVISION IN FAVOR OF THE ABUTTING LANDOWNER.

WHEREAS, Damian Murriel, hereinafter referred to as “Petitioner”, petitioned the City of Jackson, Mississippi to close and vacate portions of platted but unimproved and unnamed alleys north of Block 11 Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Clover Hill subdivision and between Block 6 Lots 21 and 22 of Clover Hill subdivision, hereinafter referred to as “Street”, located in the City of Jackson, First Judicial District, Hinds County, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the Petitioner presented his petition pursuant to Section 110-5 of the Jackson Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Petitioner is the owner of all property abutting the Street on both sides, and has, at his own expense, furnished the City of Jackson with a survey plat; and

WHEREAS, the Site Plan Review Committee of the City of Jackson reviewed the petition to close and vacate the Street on August 3, 2023, and approved the petition on September 12, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the Street sought to be closed and vacated is no longer needed as a public thoroughfare and will not be needed as a public thoroughfare in the foreseeable future.

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, THAT:

SECTION 1. The herein described portion of an unnamed alley constitutes a publicly dedicated right-of-way, with said right-of-way being described as follows:

20.00 feet alley, lying between the North line of Lots 1,2,3 and 4 of Block 11 and South line of Lots 21 and 22, of Block 6 of and that certain 10.00 feet alley, lying between East line of Lots 21 and the West line of Lot 22, of Block 6 of all in Clover Hill Subdivision, 0.117 ACRE PARCEL.

Begin at a set iron pin on the east right-of-way line of Brown Street, marking the northwest corner of Lot 1 of Block 11, and the southwest corner of a 20.00 feet alley, (not opened) in Clover Hill Subdivision, according to a map or plat thereof on file and of record in plat book 2 at page 17 in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds County, at Jackson, Mississippi, reference to which is hereby made in aid of and as a part of this description, and run thence NORTH for a distance of 20.00 feet along said east right-of-way line of Brown Street to a set ½ inch rebar marking the southwest corner of Lot 21 of Block 6 of said Clover Hill Subdivision; Run thence EAST for a distance of 110.00 feet, along the south line of Lot 21 of Block 6 and the north line of said 20.00 feet alley to a set ½ inch rebar marking the southeast corner of Lot 21, Block 6 and the southwest corner of a 10.00 feet alley; Run thence NORTH for a distance of 50.00 feet along the east line of said Lot 21, Block 6 and west line of said 10.00 feet alley to a set ½ inch rebar marking the Northeast corner of Lot 21 of Block 6 of Clover Hill Subdivision; Run thence EAST for a distance of 10.00 feet to a set ½ inch rebar on the east line of said 10.00 feet alley and the west line of Lot 22 of Block 6 of Clover Hill Subdivision; Run thence SOUTH for a distance of 50.00 feet along the east line of said 10.00 feet alley and the west line of Lot 22 Block 6 to a set ½ inch rebar marking the southwest corner of Lot 22 of Block 6, and the north line of said 20.00 feet alley; Run thence EAST for a distance of 110.00 feet along the south line of Lot 22 of Block 6 and the north line of said 20.00 feet alley to a set ½ inch rebar marking the southeast corner of Lot 22, Block 6 on the west right-of-way line of Holmes Avenue; Run thence SOUTH for a distance of 20.00 feet along said west right-of-way line of Holmes Avenue to a set ½ inch rebar marking the northeast corner of Lot 4 of Block 11, of Clover Hill Subdivision and the south line of said alley; Run thence WEST for a distance of 230.00 feet along the north line of Lots, 4,3,2, and 1 of Block 6 of Clover Hill Subdivision and the south line of said alley to the POINT OF BEGINNING.

The above described parcel of land described that certain 20.00 feet alley running East and West, lying between Lots, 1,2,3, and 4 of Block 11 and Lots 21 and 22, of Block 6 of and that certain 10.00 feet alley running North and South, lying between Lots 21 and 22, of Block 6 of all in Clover Hill Subdivision, according to a map or plat thereof on file and of record in plat book 2 and page 17 in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds County, City of Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi and contains 0.117 acres, more or less.

SECTION 2. Pursuant to operation of law, a certified copy of this Ordinance shall serve to convey, quitclaim, and release the City's right, title, and interest in and to said right-of-way, as herein described, to the abutting landowners of record.

SECTION 3. The conveyance of said right-of-way is subject to any dedications, limitations, restrictions, reservations, or easements of record.

SECTION 4. The Petitioners shall assume all responsibility and liability for the herein described right-of-way.

SECTION 5. The herein described right-of-way is hereby closed and vacated.

SECTION 6. The Director of the Department of Public Works is hereby authorized and directed to indicate the closing and vacation of the herein described portion of the Street on the official map of the City of Jackson.

SECTION 7. Any and all ordinances of the City of Jackson, or any parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith shall be, and the same are hereby, repealed.

SECTION 8. The cost of publication of this Ordinance shall be borne by the Petitioner.

SECTION 9. This Ordinance shall be effective thirty (30) days after passage and after publication by the Municipal Clerk.

Council Member Stokes moved adoption; Council Member Lindsay seconded.

Yeas – Banks, Foote, Grizzell, Hartley, Lee, Lindsay, and Stokes.  
Nays – None.  
Absent – None.

ATTEST:  
Angela Harris  
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Regular Council Meeting September 26, 2023 and recorded in Minute Book “6X, Pgs. 882-884”.

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 9th day of November, 2023.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

11/16/2023

LEGAL

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI HONORARY RENAMING REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DRIVE, FROM WOODROW WILSON AVENUE TO MAPLE STREET TO JUDGE LARITA COOPER STOKES DRIVE.

WHEREAS, it is befitting for the City of Jackson to recognize, honor and celebrate individuals whose lives have had a significant and positive impact in the community; and

WHEREAS, LaRita Cooper Stokes was the first black female County Court Judge to be elected in Hinds County, Jackson, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Cooper-Stokes represented District 2 in the county court, she was also a former member of the Jackson City Council, serving Ward 3 representative from 2012 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, Cooper-Stokes was a licensed attorney for almost 38 years, was a graduate from Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University. She was a longstanding public servant within Hinds County and the City of Jackson.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI hereby honorary renames Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, from Woodrow Wilson Avenue to Maple Street to Judge LaRita Cooper Stokes Drive.

Council Member Stokes moved adoption; Council Member Lindsay seconded.

Yeas – Banks, Foote, Grizzell, Hartley, Lee, Lindsay and Stokes.  
Nays – None.  
Absent – None.

ATTEST:  
Angela Harris  
Municipal Clerk

I, Angela Harris, the duly appointed qualified Municipal Clerk and lawful custodian of records and seal of said City of Jackson, Mississippi, certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of an Order passed by the City Council at its Regular Council Meeting October 10, 2023 and recorded in Minute Book “6Y, Pg. 2”.

WITNESS my signature and official seal of office, this the 9th day of November, 2023.

SEAL Angela Harris, Municipal Clerk

11/16/2023

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A PUBLIC HEARING IS SET FOR Tuesday, December 5, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 219 S. PRESIDENT STREET, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39201. IT IS HEREBY SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS THE RENAMING 723 ROSE STREET TO THE INTERSECTION OF ROSE STREET AND LYNCH STREET TO ALPHA DELTA ZETA CHAPTER, ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC. STREET IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING:

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI HONORARY RENAMING 723 ROSE STREET TO THE INTERSECTION OF ROSE STREET AND LYNCH STREET TO ALPHA DELTA ZETA CHAPTER, ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INC. STREET.

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Week of November 12, 2023



# Artificial Intelligence could impact black voting during 2024 elections

Black leaders call for safeguards against it

By Barrington M. Salmon  
TriceEdneyWire.com

For much of the last century, segregationists and their anti-black racist allies who were intent on ensuring that African Americans couldn't exercise the right to vote, erected an assortment of barriers to that end.

Segregationists used the courts, local and state laws, literacy tests, poll taxes, fraud, brute force, violence and intimidation by the Ku Klux Klan to impede and prevent black people from exercising their constitutional right.

In the 21st century, voter suppression has gone high-tech with the same characters still plotting to control who votes, when and how. They are employing an assortment of methods including artificial intelligence (AI). Concerns about misuse of AI in the electoral ecosystem is what brought Melanie Campbell and Damon T. Hewitt to testify before the U. S. Congress.

Campbell, president & CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP) and Convenor of the Black Women's Roundtable (BWR), spoke of the urgency around creating safeguards and federal legislation to protect against the technology's misuse as it relates to elections, democracy, and voter education, while fighting back against the increasing threats surrounding targeted misinformation and disinformation.

"AI has the potential to be a significant threat because of how rapidly it's moving," Campbell said. There was Russian targeting of black men with misinformation in 2020 to encourage them not to vote. It started in 2016."

Both civil rights leaders warned that misinformation driven by artificial intelligence may worsen considerably for African-American voters leading up to the 2024 presidential election.

"What we have seen though our work demonstrates how racial justice, voting rights and technology are inextricably linked," said Hewitt, president and executive director of The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law during his testimony. "Voters of color already face disproportionate barriers to the ballot box that make it more difficult and more costly for them to vote without factoring in the large and growing cost of targeted mis- and disinformation on our communities."

Hewitt said AI technologies could be used to refine and test data to generate targeted lists of voters based on the patterns, interests and behaviors of specific individuals.

"Forget using zip codes as a proxy for race; the targeted lists of tomorrow will weaponize sophisticated machine learning technologies, using individual identities or behaviors to target black voters with surgical precision, all in order to mislead and harm them," he warned.

Campbell and Hewitt said that during recent election cycles, African Americans have been specifically targeted by disinformation campaigns.

"AI technology threatens to turn already fragile conditions for our democracy into a perfect storm," Hewitt said. "The spread of misinformation and disinformation online to influence elections and disenfranchise voters, often specifically black voters, is already commonplace. Communities of color who already sacrifice so much to cast a ballot and make our democracy work are increasingly subjected to new downsides of technological innovation without reaping the rewards."

The pair referred to a lawsuit, NCBCP vs. Wohl, filed by the Lawyers' Committee and involving NCBCP which was a plaintiff two men who targeted black voters in



Melanie Campbell, president/CEO, National Coalition Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio disinformation via robocalls in an effort to sway the outcome of the 2020 Elections.

"In the weeks before the 2020 Election, the Election Protection hotline received complaints from voters about robocalls using deceptive information to discourage people from voting. After investigating, we found that two individuals, Jack Burkman and Jacob Wohl, had sent 85,000 robocalls largely to black Americans," Hewitt said.

The goal was to discourage African Americans from voting by mail, lying that their personal information would be added to a public database used by law enforcement to execute warrants; to collect credit card debts; and by public health entities to force people to take mandatory vaccinations.

"These threats played upon systemic inequities likely to resonate with and intimidate black Americans," Hewitt said. "We filed a lawsuit, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation v. Wohl, in which a federal court issued a restraining order to stop the robocalls and later ruled that this conspiracy to silence black voters was intimidating, threatening, and coercive in violation of the Voting Rights Act and Ku Klux Klan Act. The methods used for those deceptive robocalls in 2020 look primitive by 2023 standards. But they hold three important lessons for democracy when surveying the AI technology of today and tomorrow."

Campbell concurred. She said AI would allow this type of weaponization to be more significant using texts, video and audio.

"AI increases the ability to do that in larger formats. We are trying to address this. Elections and democracy is really, really important," she said. "So many places that you can go. So much you can do online now. You have open source where just about anyone who wants to can use AI for nefarious means. There is a lot of angst with those doing voting rights and elections work."

You don't know how bad it can be until you know how bad it's been."

Campbell and Hewitt agree that the exploding capabilities of AI technology can drastically multiply the amount of harm to American democracy. Campbell adds that Google, Microsoft and Meta are the front line companies who activists hope will step up and put guardrails in place because the 2024 elections is overwhelmed by AI-driven misinformation and disinformation.

"In malicious hands and absent strong regulation, AI can clone voices so that calls sound like trusted public figures, election officials or even possibly friends and relatives," said Hewitt. "In malicious hands and absent strong regulation, AI can clone voices so that calls sound like trusted public figures, election officials, or even possibly friends and relatives. The technology could reach targeted individuals across platforms, following up the AI call with targeted online advertisements, fake bot accounts seeking to follow them on social media, customized emails or WhatsApp messages, and carefully tailored memes."

Hewitt said the technology could



Damon Hewitt, president/executive director, on Black Civic Participation; convenor, Black Women's Roundtable

send messages reaching targeted individuals across several platforms. Then the messages would be followed up with AI calls, targeted online advertisements, fake bot accounts seeking to follow these people on social media, customized emails or WhatsApp messages, and carefully tailored memes.

During his testimony, Hewitt detailed five principals that should guide AI regulation and legislation to protect US democracy, including regulation of AI to protect Americans' civil rights, by including an anti-discrimination provision directed at online contexts and algorithms; AI should be evaluated and assessed, both before and after deployment, for discrimination and bias; developers and those deploying AI should "have a duty of care" indicating that their products are safe and effective. And if not, they should be held liable.

AI regulation should include transparency and "explainability" requirements so people are made aware of when, how and why AI is being used; using data protection requirements, to ensure that AI is not used to grab data from those who have not given their consent; and voter information should not be tied to private information to target voters without safeguards.

The effort being led by the Lawyers' Committee and the NCBCP comes against the backdrop of similar alarm from the Biden administration, some lawmakers and AI experts who fear that AI will be weaponized to spread disinformation to heighten the distrust that significant numbers of Americans have towards the government and politicians.

President Joe Biden recently signed what's described as "a sweeping executive order." The order focuses on algorithmic bias, preserving privacy and regulation on the safety of frontier AI models. The executive order also encourages open development of AI technologies, innovations in AI security and building tools to improve security, according to the Snyk Blog.

Vice President Kamala Harris echoed others concerned about this issue who fear that malevolent actors misusing AI could upend democratic institutions and cause American's confidence in democracy to plunge precipitously. In her remarks, Harris cited the need for a more expansive definition of AI safety to encompass the "full spectrum" of threats, embracing the spread of disinformation, discrimination and bias.

"When people around the world cannot discern fact from fiction because of a flood of AI-enabled disinformation and misinformation, I ask, 'is that not existential?'" Harris said in a speech at a Nov. 1 press conference at the 2023 AI Safety Summit in London, England. "For democracies, AI has to be in service of the public interest. We see the ways AI poses a threat to Americans every day, certainly in politics and we are laying the foundation for an international framework to regulate AI."

Harris concluded, "We're going to do everything we can. This is one of the biggest concerns most people have."

# Is having former President Donald Trump on the witness stand the beginning of the end?

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



The political terrain has a fair share of cracks and crevices. What was once a high mountaintop is now low in the valley. The "straight and narrow" has become crooked and uneven. What is happening to the American political system?

Power in the hands of the wrong people can lead us astray. We follow them thinking they are ethical and honest. Yet we find out later they are unethical and dishonest.

There were a lot of people who followed Donald Trump as he became president of this country. What he did while he was the president led to him losing the 2020 election.

Trump is much like the household fly. You think you have sprayed it away, but it is still flying around your house in the morning. Some thought the Trump era had come to an end. That was the wrong assumption. The former president firmly believes the last election was stolen from him, at least that's what he says publicly.

Rumors swirl saying he knows that he lost. Yet the ruse about his winning continues to stay in the media. Since the last election, he has been indicted four times. That level of embarrassment and shame does not bother him it seems. He continues to lead by a big margin in the presidential polls.

Nationally, he leads the polls against President Joe Biden. It is my thinking that he has convinced most potential voters that he is the best candidate despite his legal woes and worries.

Let's be clear and say he is in grave legal trouble.

Trump testified last week in a New York courtroom about his business dealings. According to his followers and critics alike, the "Trump brand" is taking a hit.

He is accused of overestimating the value

of his properties and finances. As a result, he gets more tax breaks. In this case, he is already guilty. The question is how much is he going to pay the state of New York?

His temper has gotten the best of him in court according to news sources. Usually appearing in court before a judge means being on your best behavior. Not Trump as he marches to the beat of a different drummer. Trump has been disrespectful to the judge in the case, Arthur Engoron. Is this surprising? No. His disrespect has also been shown towards New York Attorney General Letitia James.

As this trial proceeds, we know there will be other trials to follow, all alleging his wrongdoing and his blatant disregard for rules and regulations. At some point during the upcoming months, Trump will hear the words, you are guilty. That is my opinion.

However, Democrats should not become too complacent. Pocketbook issues, the overall economy, and the wars in Ukraine and Israel should be concerning.

Arguably, some voters would rather put up with Trump's misgivings. In the Republican debate recently, Nikki Haley continued to improve her ranking in the polls. Will this surge continue and be enough to unseat Trump?

I believe it will depend upon his legal battles. If the storm clouds become a political hurricane for him then Nikki Haley has a good chance of getting the Republican nomination.

The timing of these trials will certainly be challenging for the former president. Running a campaign and being in court almost at the same time will indeed be challenging. That is a reality that he and his team may well face.

In the meantime, we will stay tuned to this trial to see what the outcome will be. It is safe to say that he is on shaky ground. Donald Trump was once a tower of power and now he is slowly looking more like a castle made of sand.

# I am grateful

By LaShunda Calvert, Ph.D.  
Tips for a Good Marriage



One of my favorite gospel songs is called, "Grateful," by Hezekiah Walker. This song is an acknowledgment of being grateful for everything God has done. Some of the lyrics include, I could go

on and on and on about your grace because I'm grateful, so grateful just to praise your name. Further, I love singing this song because it allows me to reflect on every blessing that God has bestowed on me – including giving me a fine husband...I'm grateful, so grateful. I think it is so important to express to loved ones, especially your spouse, what you are grateful for.

Do you truly express to your spouses what you are grateful for as it relates to them? In other words, do you thank your spouse and/or show appreciation to your spouse? I'm not just talking about showing your spouse appreciation during a special holiday or for their birthday. Yes, it is outstanding and marvelous to show your spouse appreciation a few times a year, but is that enough?

Many spouses emphasis to their spouse what they are ungrateful for includes some of the following:

- Leaving the toilet seat up
- Being junky
- Not taking out the garbage
- Leaving dirty dishes in the sink
- Not listening
- Not taking you seriously
- Being a passenger or backseat driver
- Leaving the sink full of hair
- Spending too much time on social media
- Spending too much time in the bathroom.

This list of course can go on and on, but I think you get my point. Many spouses go out of their way to tell their spouses what they are ungrateful for whether they ask or not – not just a few times during the year but daily.

Some spouses will wake you up at 2:48 a.m. to tell you what they don't appreciate about you. If some spouses can't tell you face to face what they are unappreciative about – they will send a text or text messages (essay).

But are you grateful for anything that your spouse does? Does your spouse only know what you are ungrateful for? Not too long ago I arrived home, walked into our kitchen and politely asked my husband why he didn't cover up a pan of food that we had

left over from a church event. I honestly forgot or didn't think to acknowledge or express gratefulness for how he had washed and cleaned all the dishes, utensils, buffet sets, pots, pans, organized everything in the kitchen cabinets and the refrigerator. My husband immediately asked, "Is that all you noticed?" I immediately went out my way to tell him how grateful I was for him cleaning – I emphasized, "you are the best," "thank you so much," "I appreciate you so much," and he was relieved and appreciative for my gratefulness towards him.

Spouses need to go out of their way and tell each other what they are grateful for. You must be grateful to your spouse about something ...Do they at least keep their breathers fresh? – Now, you know some don't keep it minty (in these cases – be romantic and tell your spouse that you want to play a kissing game – tell them to gargle some different flavors of a breath freshener and kiss you each time with a different flavor and you will kiss them double or triple times for the scent you enjoy the most – go out of your way to tell them how sexy their peppermint breath is – I'm just saying – trying to help you out).

The following are some things that you can express to your spouse that you are grateful for:

- Good listener
- Effective communicator
- Good prayer partner
- Being present
- Working
- Helping pay the bills
- Cleaning
- Helping with children
- Cutting the grass
- Having dinner prepared even if the local pizza restaurant catered the dinner
- Hanging up their clothes
- Starting your vehicle
- Folding the clothes
- Loading and unloading the dishwasher
- Showing affection and love making
- Washing the vehicles
- Patience

In conclusion, husbands and wives make it a habit of telling each other what you are grateful for daily.

Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements. Instagram: letsstay2gether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert), Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert, Email: letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or call 601-874-6176.





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# Jackson State University celebrates four students awarded as University Innovation Fellows

JSU Newswire

Jackson State University honors four students selected as part of the latest cohort of University Innovation Fellows by the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University. This prestigious program molds students into dynamic agents of change within their academic communities.

“This journey was truly engaging and eye-opening. This whole experience has expanded my understanding and altered my approach to ensure the solutions I develop are truly user-friendly and effective. I learned to look at solutions not just as a developer or service provider but also from the user’s perspective,” said Peter Goshomi, a sophomore computer engineering major.

The JSU students were chosen after submitting a proposal that focused on increasing student retention using campus resources that students may be underutilizing or unaware of their existence.

University Innovation Fellows is founded on the idea that every student develops the mindset, skills and knowledge required to succeed in a complex world and tackle global issues.

The four W.E.B. Du Bois Honors College awardees were chosen for the program because of their training program that encouraged them to adopt innovative thinking to enhance campus involvement, creativity and entrepreneurship.

At the heart of their drive for change is their dedication to developing strate-



Students named University Fellows (L-R) Emmanuel Onung, Marlvin Goremusandu, Peter Goshomi and Olusegun Olutade

gies that boost retention rates, ensuring students stay the course toward graduation.

Emmanuel Onung, a senior computer engineering major, is on his own journey through college, which he navigated against uncertainty.

“My whole experience, as I entered college, was not knowing what to ex-

pect. We’ve witnessed others face these challenges before, and we’re motivated to help solve this problem,” Onung said.

“We thought of ways to make ourselves visible to showcase these opportunities so students can easily find the resources they need.

This realization highlighted the importance of sharing our experiences and

ideas. This is why we decided to act.”

Marlvin Goremusandu, a sophomore computer engineering major, sees the program as an opportunity to contribute to the JSU community that supported him.

“I was fortunate to receive a full scholarship and secure various internships. I see this as an opportunity to

assist my peers, to be able to utilize the resources and information our university offers, so they can improve themselves,” Goremusandu said.

Students from 68 higher education institutions across 15 countries have been recognized as University Innovation Fellows. With the addition of its newest fellows, the University Innovation Fellows program has now trained over 3,100 students since it began.

After intensive training, these students will prepare for an international study experience at the University of Twente in the Netherlands. They will work on developing projects aimed at fostering positive change at Jackson State University, demonstrating their commitment to innovation and excellence in higher learning.

Jackson State University, founded in 1877, is a historically black, high-research activity university located in Jackson, the capital city of Mississippi. Jackson State’s nurturing academic environment challenges individuals to change lives through teaching, research and service. Officially designated as Mississippi’s Urban University, Jackson State continues to enhance the state, nation and world through comprehensive economic development, healthcare, technological and educational initiatives. The only public university in the Jackson metropolitan area, Jackson State is located near downtown, with four satellite locations.

For more information, visit [www.jsums.edu](http://www.jsums.edu) or call 601 979-2121.

# Six JPS scholars selected for State Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council

Jackson Public Schools newswire

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) has announced the members of the State Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council (SAC) for the 2023-2024 school year. The council includes students in grades 11-12 and their first year of college.

Among the new members selected statewide are six JPS students:

- Ariana Brumfield – JPS-Tougaloo Early College High School
- Eva Doss – Wingfield High School
- Shelby Hadley – Murrah High School
- Christian Magee – Lanier High School
- Shyla Smith – Lanier High School
- Charles Williams – JPS-Tougaloo Early College High School

The council consists of 67 new members, which includes 10 students who were semi-finalists for the State Board of Education Junior Representative position. They will join 44 students returning to the council from

the previous school year.

All students come from different backgrounds, school sizes and regions in Mississippi and will be able to share their opinions and offer advice about educational opportunities and policy in Mississippi with interim State Superintendent Dr. Ray Morgigno.

Each fall, the MDE opens applications for new members to the SAC. Students are required to write a compelling cover letter and provide answers to questions about their interest in the SAC, their accomplishments, educational concerns and academic goals.

The council’s purpose is to provide a forum for Mississippi’s students to offer diverse perspectives to the State Superintendent of Education.

The students will act as liaisons between MDE and public-school students from across the state.

Council meetings will be held three times during the school year.



Arianna Brumfield  
J-TECHS



Christian Magee  
Lanier



Eva Doss  
Wingfield



Shyla Smith  
Lanier

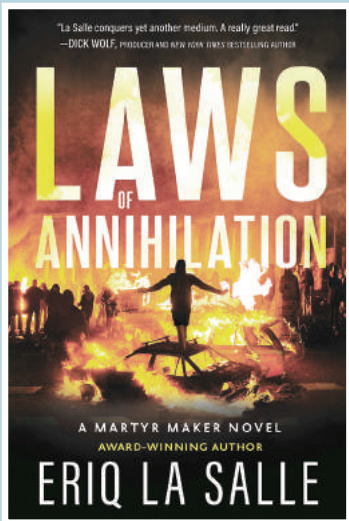


Shelby Hadley  
Murrah



Charles Williams  
J-TECHS





BOOK REVIEW:

LAWS OF ANNIHILATION

BY ERIQ LA SALLE

C.2023, LAVETTE BOOKS, POISONED PEN PRESS

\$16.99 • 413 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
Columnist

One thing or another. You have to choose, you can’t have both. This one or that one, that or the other, think about it and then pick a side. Or maybe you don’t even have to think about it. Maybe, as in the new novel “Laws of Annihilation” by Eriq La Salle, the decision was made decades ago.

Agent Janet Maclin wasn’t entirely unprepared for the news but still, it’s tough to learn that you have incurable cancer and that death is near. The di-

agnosis explained her constant pain and the ravaging of her entire body on a daily basis but it didn’t explain how she was going to break the news to her two partners in the department.

Detective Phee Freeman and Detective Quincy Cavanaugh were not just partners, but friends – maybe the only friends Maclin had anymore – and she was reluctant to share her news. She was not going to survive this, so why would it matter? They were busy enough on a huge case; there was no need to add anything else.

A young black man had been caught spray-painting hate symbols on a Jewish synagogue and the mob that witnessed his deed chased the young man to his death. Did this lead to the bloody, gruesome murders of Jewish rabbis who had called for peace in the community? Were those deaths connected to the disappearance of a man named Spider, who was heavily involved in an Islamic group in Harlem and who was the young man’s uncle? And where was Ezra Pearl, an influential man in the Jewish community who’d

been filmed leading the chase that caused the young man’s death?

The Mayor of New York was calling for calm but with both sides demanding revenge, two people missing, and a killer (or two) on the loose, Maclin knew that calm wouldn’t be that easy. Neither would solving what was a growing list of violent crimes.

As New York City seethed, she hoped she’d live long enough to see this end.

Crack open “Laws of Annihilation” and you might think


you’d stepped onto a random sidewalk in a major city somewhere in America. The events in the book are entirely plausible, given current events in the world today and last summer’s heatwave. You can almost feel the tension. You can almost smell it.


That realism sharpens the vicious gruesomeness of the murders that pepper this story, as does the authenticity in the details pertaining to religions. The latter is subtle, as author Eriq La Salle leads readers to understand without detracting

from the story itself.

And that story...? Well, let’s just say that if you plan on sharing this book, you might want to get someone their own copy. Yours will be ripped from ferocious, eager page-turning...

It may go without saying that this thriller contains violence, profanity, and a relatively quick, relatively chaste bedroom scene, but a warning bears repeating. Still, if you love a good thriller with a decent cliffhanger, “Laws of Annihilation” is one thing you should read.





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Raymond, MS 39154  
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Fax: (601) 857-0535

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(601) 857-8869

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- Absentee Voting begins 45 days before the Election

**MARRIAGE INFORMATION**

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  - o Both applicants must come to the Circuit Clerk's office together to apply
  - o Proof of age must be provided in the form of Driver's License, Birth Certificate or other legal document which contains name and date of birth.

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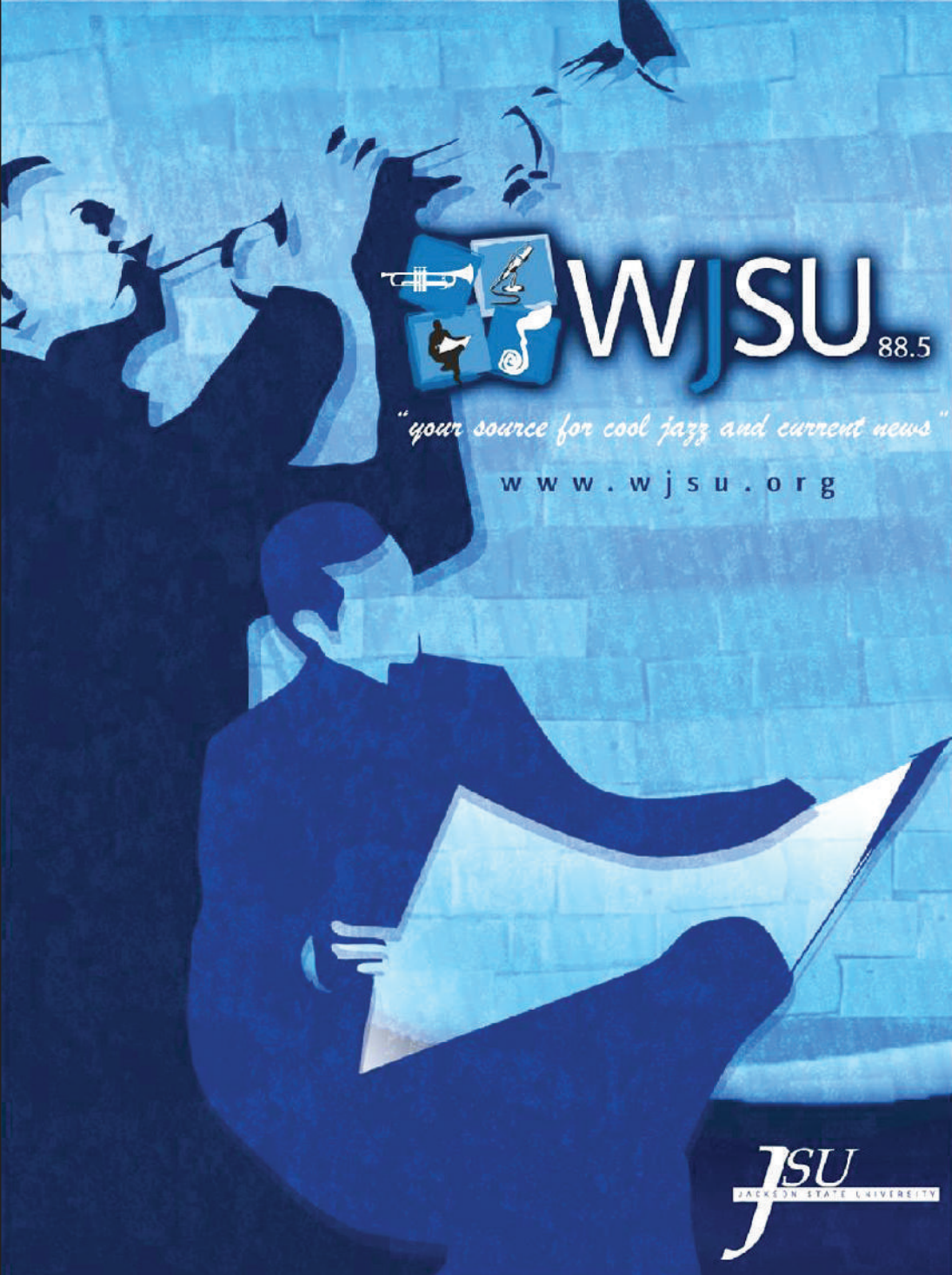
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# Alcorn vs Jackson State, the game people wait for all year

By Tim Ward  
Sports Writer

The Capital City Classic or The Soul Bowl, take your pick. It's technically no longer called the Capital City Classic, but many fans on both sides still refer to it that way. The Soul Bowl is what people of a certain era often use to reference the game. Alcorn/Jackson State that's all that needs to be said for most people.

This Saturday, JSU hosts the Alcorn State Braves at the Vet at 2 p.m. Both teams have winning records. Both teams want to beat their rival, badly.

JSU is the current 2 time reigning SWAC champions. Unfortunately for Tiger Nation, they won't be competing for a threepeat. FAMU won the East division of the SWAC a couple of weeks ago. While that dampens JSU's parade, one more thing could lift JSU's fans spirit. They can prevent Alcorn from going to the SWAC championship game. Talk about an added incentive!

The West division of the SWAC is still up for grabs. Currently, Prairie View and Alcorn are tied for 1st place. Prairie View defeated Alcorn earlier this season, giving them the tie breaker, meaning they're in 1st place if the season ended last week.

Alcorn controlled their own destiny until they lost last Sunday to Texas Southern in Houston. Due to the Houston soccer team having a playoff game, Texas Southern's game was moved to Sunday. Did that throw Alcorn's game off?

Texas Southern, who lost the previous week to Jackson State 21 to 19, defeated Alcorn 44 to 10, sending shock waves throughout the SWAC. Defeating Alcorn gave Texas Southern its third win of the season and second in the SWAC. Such a dominating victory also caught fans offguard. It wasn't a last second buzzer beater, it was a 35 to 7 halftime score.

Jackson State had a bye week last week, giving them two weeks to prepare for Alcorn. The break also gave them time to let play-

ers with injuries rest. Head coach TC Taylor got a moment to exhale from his first season as the head man.

"It has been a huge blessing to be 7-3," Taylor said. "I thought about it a little bit. It has been a great learning experience, but right now I am very appreciative as a first-year coach. I am very pleased with where we are as a football team right now. I am looking forward to the future."

Jackson State is on the recruiting trail hard looking to add talent to their roster for next season. Recruiting was something Taylor emphasized to his coaches. A lot of players had to be replaced while a new head coach took over. It was a learning experience all around.

Closing out season one, heading into season two, Taylor will be more prepared and past the learning curve. But before the season officially ends, they have business to take care of Saturday.

Jacobian Morgan will continue to start as quarterback and should be listed at QB1 in the spring. But with the transfer portal and recruiting, who knows what will happen. Those sentiments can be said for every position.

Despite not defending the SWAC championship this season, JSU as of right now is 5-2 in the SWAC. Saturday ends the season, but Tiger Nation can reflect on this season favorably. Saturday is important and won't be taken lightly. Not only ending on a good note, but to play spoiler for Alcorn's chances of reaching the SWAC championship game. It won't be easy; Alcorn has a lot to play for. Expect head coach Fred McNair to have his Braves motivated to avenge their loss last Saturday, but to win to keep their chances alive. Alcorn also wants to snap their 2 game losing streak to Jackson State.

Kickoff is Saturday at 2 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Stadium in Jackson. Fans will pack the stadium, the bands will battle, the Golden Girls vs J-Settes, the cheerleaders, etc, etc.



JSU QB Jacobian Morgan



Alcorn QB Aaron Allen



JSU head coach TC Taylor (in green shirt)



Alcorn head coach Fred McNair



JSU drum majors

PHOTOS BY TIM WARD



JSU J-Settes



JSU Cheerleaders



Alcorn Golden Girls



JSU Sonic Boom



# Hinds County School District Weekly Update

## ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

### COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

Superintendent Dr. Robert Sanders hosted two community celebrations to celebrate the successes of our individual schools and district accountability rating. On October 26th we celebrated on the Terry High School campus with Byram Middle School, Gary Road Elementary School, Gary Road Intermediate School and the Terry High School. Several food trucks came to support our district and there was plenty of food and music to celebrate this great accomplishment. We are so proud to be a “B” District and we want to celebrate with the parents and students, faculty and staff, that made this great accomplishment possible. Let’s continue to strive for perfection so we can reach an “A” Level and go from “Good” to “Great.”

