

District attorney defends the qualifications of a prosecutor hired in Trump’s Georgia election

By Kate Brumback
Associated Press

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis on Sunday defended the qualifications of a special prosecutor she hired for her case against Donald Trump and others over efforts to overturn the 2020 election in Georgia after a defense lawyer accused Willis of professional impropriety.

In her first public remarks since the accusation was made in a court filing, Willis offered a vigorous defense of her leadership of the office and pushed back against critics. She was received warmly by the congregation of Big Bethel AME Church as she spoke at a service a day before the holiday honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Willis thanked leaders of the historically Black church in Atlanta who “didn’t care what they said about me” and told her “the invite was still good” to speak.

“I hope for y’all this week I don’t look like what I’ve been through,” she said.

The allegations were in a motion filed last week by Ashleigh Merchant, who represents Michael Roman, a former Trump campaign staffer and onetime White House aide. The filing alleges that Willis was involved in an improper romantic relationship with Nathan Wade, the outside lawyer she hired, and questions Wade’s qualifications for the job.

The motion seeks to have the indictment dismissed and to disqualify Willis and Wade and their offices from further prosecuting the case.

At the church, Willis did not



Fulton County District Aattorney Fani Willis reacts as she speaks during a worship service at the Big Bethel AME Church, on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024, in Atlanta. The service celebrated Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at the historic Black church.

MIGUEL MARTINEZ/ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION VIA AP

address the allegations of an improper relationship. She did not speak to reporters after the service.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee said during a hearing Friday that he is awaiting a response from the district attorney’s office and expects to set a hearing on the motion in February. Other defense attorneys in the case, including Trump attorney Steve Sadow, have said they want to look into the allegations before deciding whether they want to join the motion.

Willis said her father, who she said met and spent time with King, told her that he saw the civil rights leader at low moments, saddened because people were cruel and unresponsive. Her father told her that King “was not a perfect man, but he was a great man, willing

to answer God’s call.”

At a low point in the past week, she said, she “penned a letter to my heavenly Father.” She framed much of her speech at the church as a conversation with God, describing herself over and over again as flawed, imperfect and hard-headed.

“You did not tell me as a woman of color, it would not matter what I did. My motive, my talent, my ability and my character would be constantly attacked,” she said.

She appeared to choke up briefly at times and talked about the loneliness and stress of her job, saying she has come to think it is “not normal if I don’t have two death threats a week” and that she’s regularly called racial slurs.

She revealed that on Christmas night, she got an emergency call saying police had

surrounded her house because a man had called 911 saying he had shot a woman there. She said she experienced “pure, unimaginable fear,” believing her older daughter was dead in her home until the incident was revealed to be “a cruel hoax.”

Willis said she hired three special prosecutors for the election case: a white man, a white woman and a Black man. They are paid the same hourly rate and no one has questioned the qualifications of the two white lawyers, she said.

While never mentioning Wade by name, she called him a “superstar, a great friend and a great lawyer.” She cited his accomplishments and past professional experience and said, “I’m just asking, God, is it that some will never see a Black man as

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Punishment after the punishment

Lifetime bans on voting rights for ex-felons in Mississippi is morally backward

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

For some it was the unthinkable happening when in early August 2023, a three-Judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals “struck down a white supremacist law that had persisted in Mississippi since it was first enacted by the state’s neo-Confederate government in 1890 to deny Black people the vote. The panel held 2-1 that a provision in the Mississippi state constitution that requires a lifetime ban on voting for people convicted of certain crimes violates the federal bar against “cruel and unusual” punishments,” contained in the U.S. Constitution’s 8th Amendment,” per Thompson Reuters, Attorney Hassan Kanu.

Justice James L. Dennis, a white man, on the Court for the past twenty-eight years, wrote in the 67-page decision... “Washington, D.C., and 39 states don’t impose lifetime disenfranchisement for offenses unrelated to election integrity, and 16 states have stopped the practice since 1974. There is sufficient evidence that evolving social standards have rejected laws like Mississippi’s. Mississippi’s law was adopted to ensure the political supremacy of the white race.” The judge said the law violated society’s evolving standards of decency and otherwise served no legitimate social purpose.

Per Hassan Kanu, “the court’s well-reasoned ruling establishes important precedent for other states to follow to eliminate all-too-common felon disenfranchisement policies that are fundamentally anti-democratic and unjust. Mississippi is one of 11 states that still permanently disenfranchises felons for offenses that don’t pertain to elections.”

The initial lawsuit, Hopkins v. Hosemann, was filed by The Southern Poverty Law Center and the law firm Simpson, Thatcher & Bartlett, LLP in 2018, on behalf of Mississippians who couldn’t vote even though they had completed their sentences – punishment after the punishment.

According to Patrick Berry, Counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice’s Democracy Program, writes, “the ban excluded over 10% of Mississippi’s voting age population from voting...the Reconstruction-era ban also disproportionately burdens the state’s Black population, disenfranchising one in every six Black adults – and that is not a coincidence.” Mississippi first adopted its lifetime voting ban as part of the state’s 1890 constitution, “in reaction to the expansion of



Lynn Fitch
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Black suffrage and other political rights during Reconstruction,” the appeals court noted.

This decision pitted the mindset of the drafters of Mississippi’s 1890 constitution with the national consensus for turning away from inequitable punishments like this one. Ten other states have very similar bans: Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming. Delaware and Virginia are Blue states, per the Cook Partisan Voting Index – all the others and Mississippi are Red states.

The restoring decision by the Fifth Circuit panel is not final. As the old Southern expression goes, “faster than a cat lapping chain lightning,” Mississippi’s Attorney General Lynn Fitch requested that the case be reheard by the entire membership of the Fifth Circuit – en banc – and the case will be argued January 23, 2024, per the Thompson Reuters article, updated on December 6, 2023.

So, what is the government of the State of Mississippi fighting by appealing the decision of the three-Judge panel? They are fighting change. Everything in Mississippi is about race, and this fight is no exception. Per numerous sources including the Sothern Poverty Law Center, The Clarion-Ledger, and Mississippi Today, over 200,000 Mississippians are being disenfranchised. with this issue. 16% or one out of every six Black Mississippians – felons who have completed their sentences - are denied the right to vote. Black Mississippians represent 38% of the state’s population but 59.2% of the disenfranchised population.

This oppression in the full light of day, currently wielded by Attorney General Fitch, is an enduring extension of comments made by Senator James K. Vardaman, another drafter of the

1890 Mississippi Constitution – “There is no use to equivocate or lie about the matter . . . Mississippi’s con-

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Governors’ final inaugural address met our expectations

Genuinely lifting Mississippi and all Mississippians definitely not in his plan

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

Perhaps it’s expected when a governor delivers an inaugural address that the focus is upbeat and positive, after all, he is at that podium as a direct result of the will of the people. The ceremonial induction into office comes with so much fanfare and in this case, so much hyperbole.

Reading from the full transcript of Governor Reeves’ final inaugural address, published by Mississippi Today, there was no exception on January 9, 2024 – on the south steps of the Mississippi Capitol. After thanking the Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court who administered the oath of office, First Lady Elee Reeves, his three daughters, his parents, and other



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family members, he went on to thank Mississippians.

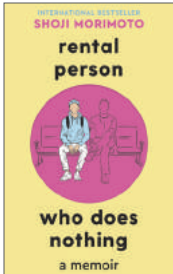
“And whether you voted for

me or not, this time or ever, I want you to know it matters not. As I did four years ago, I want to once again, make this promise to all of you – that I will be

a governor for all Mississippi.” He went on – “The longer I have served, the more I have come to appreciate that the defining characteristic about Mississippi is that sense that we are all in it together. It is not our food, our football, or even our music that makes us unique; it is our commitment to each other.”

It’s important to remember that when this Governor says things like this – all Mississippi and commitment to each other – there is a caveat attached. Even though we should reasonably expect the chief executive of Mississippi to be an authority figure and a fountain of reliability, it just isn’t that way. Reality is not his strong suit. Here’s

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The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “Stop the Violence” march ends at Medgar Evers Library

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

In November 1959, four years after Rosa Parks made her stand in rejecting a bus driver’s order to give up her seat for a white woman, and five years before the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at the University of Iowa regarding social justice. The *Daily Iowan* covered the event. They reported that during his speech, Dr. King stated, “We adopt the means of nonviolence because our end is a community at peace with itself. We will try to persuade with our words, but if our words fail, we will try to persuade with our acts.”

As a part of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday celebration, a “STOP THE VIOLENCE” march and motorcade was held Sunday, January 14, 2024 in an effort to call attention to the rising crimes of violence in the city of Jackson. The march started from ‘Freedom’s Corner’ and ended at the Medgar Evers Library, 4215 Medgar Evers Blvd. After a post-walk prayer, the marchers entered the library. Speakers included President of the Better Men Society, Christopher Cooper, Councilman Kenneth Stokes, Police Chief Joseph Wade, march participant Willie Culley as well as others that had participated in the march. Music was provided by the singing group, Divine Creation.

Councilman Stokes told *The Mississippi Link*: “I think that Dr. King would be extremely proud of Jackson, MS because we host the largest MLK holiday celebrations in the United States and in the world.” Stokes went on to say, I think Mrs. Coretta Scott King, who gave us permission to celebrate her husband’s life, is smiling down upon us.”



Marchers headed to the Medgar Evers Library



Byron Brumfield, president Reset Jackson and James Hopkins, CEO



Councilman Kenneth Stokes speaking



Post-walk prayer



Divine Creation



Willie Culley



Police Chief Joseph Wade



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a couple of things that fly in the face of his governing for all Mississippi and being committed to each other:

He curtailed the federally funded rental assistance program, administered by Mississippi Home Corporation in August 2022, despite the Census telling us that 44% of Mississippians are struggling to pay their rent/mortgage.

The day after this inauguration he opted Mississippi out of the federally funded Summer EBT program, which helps families with school age children when school is out for the Summer, \$40 per child up to a maximum of \$120 per month. His office was quoted as saying he rejects “attempts to expand the welfare state.” Thirty-five states accept the federal funds, but not Mississippi.

It is easy to be confused by what the governor says, until you grasp that his war against poor people in the poorest state in the nation and against people of color is no accident. Yet he gladly accepts welfare from the federal government each year – in the billions of dollars. Most recently, 47.31% of Mississippi’s revenue comes directly from the feds – without it, our state would be bankrupt. We are the second highest debtor state in the nation. For every \$1 paid by Mississippians in federal income tax, Mississippi gets \$2.53 in return, per www.smartasset.com.

Shifting back to his inaugural speech, here’s a good one: “Through every moment of despair, Mississippians showed the strength of our character and chose to be a light amidst the darkness.” Does that include the TANF fraud? Republican governors and their appointees taking money – up to \$97 million per many sources – specifically provided for the poorest families in Mississippi by the federal government and spending it on things that they wanted to spend it on, as opposed to what the federal government intended it for; things like building a state-of-the-art volleyball stadium at University of

Mississippi at the bequest of Brett Farve, and using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds for 12-week fitness bootcamps – all documented by numerous sources, including <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/tanf-forensic-findings.pdf>. Good character and shining a light into the darkness, really?

In his speech he said, “Mississippians are never bashful about our reliance on the Lord.” I’m crystal clear on what the Lord would think of stealing from the poorest among us.

He also bemoaned Mississippi’s children and grandchildren leaving our state and helping other places prosper. His plan to address that – “Our goal must be what I call Mississippi Forever...we can give our sons and daughters pride... we need to be bold in our goals and carry our Mississippi pride into our actions.”

“The fact is that everything we do, we do together. There is no black Mississippi or white Mississippi. There is no red Mississippi or blue Mississippi. There is only one Mississippi – and it is Mississippi Forever,” the newly reelected governor said.

When black men – contractors in Mississippi received just 4.04% of contracts for goods and services with the state in FY-22, I would say that equates with being just about invisible. White people though, he’s way off – in the same Minority Participation Report white people received well north of 95% of state contracts. How many poor people and people of color in Mississippi will see additional suffering under his Mississippi Forever goal?

He mentioned in his speech that he seeks God’s guidance, “and I ask that you ask God to guide me when you pray as well.” Mr. Governor, I do ask God to guide you. I pray daily that the Lord will guide you toward correction, toward repentance, toward loving all Mississippians. And Mr. Governor, love is

“Origin”: A Cinematic Odyssey connecting MS to global stories of oppression

By Edelia J. Carthan, PhD
Contributing Writer

In an enthralling new film by Ava DuVernay, “Origin,” based on Isabel Wilkerson’s *New York Times* bestseller “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents,” the deep-rooted history of Mississippi becomes a focal point for a global conversation on oppression. Starring the incredibly talented Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor, this cinematic journey resonates profoundly with the history and experiences of Mississippians.

In her portrayal of various characters in “Origin,” Ellis-Taylor brings an authenticity and depth that is rooted in her own experiences growing up in Mississippi. She passionately states, “I want to be able to bring my full self to work every day. I don’t want to have to leave the truth at my house. I want to be able to go to work and bring the truth with me.” This sentiment echoes throughout the film, as it tackles the harsh realities of caste systems and their manifestations in everyday life.

Ellis-Taylor’s connection to the subject matter runs deep. She reflects on the significance of Wilkerson’s book, particularly the eight pillars of caste that it outlines. One such pillar, ‘Terrorism’, as a means of control, resonates profoundly with her. “That’s what I lived with. I’m from Mississippi. I lived with those Confederate flags every day of my life,” she recounts. These personal experiences bring an unparalleled authenticity to her performance, making the film a compelling watch.

“Origin” is more than a historical analysis; it’s a challenge to contemporary leaders and a call for change. Ellis-Taylor expresses a bold desire for the film: “What I want from this film is I want Governor Tate Reeves and Ron DeSantis and all those blocks of governors, I want them to be mad about this film.” This statement is a testament to the film’s potential impact – it aims to provoke, to challenge, and to stir a dialogue about the deeply ingrained systems of oppression, not just in history, but in current times.

As “Origin” releases Friday, January 19, it extends a special invitation to the people of Missis-



sippi. This film is a reflection of your history, an acknowledgment of the everyday struggles against symbols and systems of oppression. Ellis-Taylor’s portrayal and DuVernay’s direction are calls to confront and discuss these realities openly.

Mississippians are encouraged to witness this powerful narrative in theaters, to engage with its profound message, and to support a movie that doesn’t shy away from the truth. Your presence in the theaters will be an act of solidarity, a recognition of the past, and a step towards a future where the truth is not left at the doorstep but is carried into every aspect of our lives.

In “Origin,” the personal and the historical intertwine, creating a film that is as much about the universal experiences of caste as it is about Mississippi’s particular place in this narrative. It’s a film that invites reflection, demands attention, and seeks to ignite change.

This Friday, let’s fill the theaters, not just as viewers, but as participants in a movement towards understanding, acknowledgment, and transformation.

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stitutional convention of 1890 was held for no other purpose than to eliminate the [African American] from politics. Not the ‘ignorant and vicious,’ as some of the apologists would have you believe, but the [African American],” as reported by www.mississippifreepress.org.

Despite the political rhetoric of this being Mississippi’s time (implying movement away from the bottom), whenever the 100% White statewide elected officials or their 94% White agency heads encounter the intersection of change and status quo, they push back just exactly like Fitch is doing now. Pushing back against change with a glowing hot poker as if change is the devil. Pushing back against national trends, policies, and norms rooted in fairness and justice.

There is a painful disconnect far deeper than politics that keeps discrimination booming in Mississippi – a disconnection from liberty and justice for all. These modern-day Confederates often say the right thing, wrap it in nationalism and religion, then do just the opposite. Last week Fitch posted a tweet on X centered on the Pledge of Allegiance, “...I encourage you to carefully reread these words. It is my hope that we will be reminded of the important truth that we are a nation under God and ignite a renewed commitment to pursue unity, liberty and justice for all.”

Plainly, her words do not match her actions, and that seems unlikely to change. So let us focus our hopes on the active judges of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, men and women who have devoted much of their lives to justice – in their rehearing of Hopkins v. Hosemann. May they find, as their panel did last August, that justice must be more than a word – especially in Mississippi.

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qualified, no matter his achievements?”

Merchant wrote in her motion that she can find no evidence that Wade, whose law firm website promotes his experience in civil litigation, including car accident and family law cases, has ever prosecuted a felony case. She questioned his qualifications to try this case.

Merchant’s filing offered no proof of the alleged relationship or trips that she said that Willis and Wade had taken together.

Merchant also alleges Willis did not get necessary approval from county leaders to hire Wade and that no special prosecutor’s oath had been filed for him.

Pete Skandalakis, a former district attorney who is executive director of the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council, said district attorneys do not have to seek permission before hiring a special prosecutor. McAfee previously said when another defendant raised the issue that it did not appear Wade was required to file the oath.



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Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade

PHOTOS BY JAYJOHNSON

The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. parade, spearheaded by Councilman Kenneth Stokes, was held in Jackson at 10 a.m., Sat., Jan. 13. It kicked off at the historic ‘Freedom’s Corner’ where high school bands, cheerleaders, dancers and motorcades lined up to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King. Parade watchers gathered to cheer them on. It ended at Lanier High School, 833 Maple Street.





Mississippi officials say water in state capital is safe one day after E. coli scare



Ted Henifin, Jackson's interim water manager

By Michael Goldberg
Associated Press/Report for America

One day after Mississippi health officials told residents in the state's capital that dangerous bacteria could be in their tap water, the State Health Department said Friday that city water was safe to consume.

Mississippi health officials lifted their health advisory after a new round of test results did not find E. coli in Jackson's supply. The announcement reverses the Mississippi Department of Health's Thursday instructions for Jackson residents to boil their water before consuming it.

The move came hours after Ted Henifin, Jackson's interim water manager, said repeat samples taken from the city's water system tested negative for E. coli. The new round of results, which were collected from the same locations where state officials reported positive results the day before, show the previous test was likely a false positive caused by lab contamination, Henifin said.

In a statement Friday, the Health Department stood by the initial test results and dismissed the idea that its lab had been contaminated. Officials have detected E. coli in Jackson's water system 29 times since 2003 and during the same period, three times in the nearby suburb of Flowood, the department said.

"Clean drinking water and its availability to the public are fundamental to protecting the health, well-being, and safety of everyone,

with no exception," said Dr. Dan Edney, the state health officer.

Earlier on Friday, Henifin did not expect the boil water notice to be lifted after one day because state regulations require officials to obtain clean results for two consecutive days before lifting it.

Greg Flynn, a spokesperson for the State Health Department, said federal law allows samples from the same site to be submitted within 24 hours, and if negative, boil water notices can be lifted. The state has more stringent requirements requiring an additional day of clean tests. That state rule was waived in this case following pushback over the extra requirements.

"Jackson's water met the federal standard, and the health department was satisfied with the results," Flynn said. "That's the nice, political way to put it," he said.

At news conferences Thursday and Friday, Henifin said state officials refused to validate the lab results before issuing the boil-water notice.

"I still do not understand why the Mississippi Department of Health issued the city-wide boil-water notice before confirming the initial results," Henifin said. "The damage to confidence in our water system and economic impact to our area businesses is enormous."

State health officials imposed boil-water notices in Jackson and Flowood following positive results in both cities Thursday. The bac-

teria's presence indicated that the water may have been contaminated with human or animal waste, the department initially said.

Flynn said the boil-water notice is still in effect in Flowood, pending further tests.

Henifin said it was unlikely that samples from Jackson and Flowood would be contaminated at the same time because the cities' water systems are not connected and do not draw from the source.

A federal judge appointed Henifin in November 2022 to oversee reforms to Jackson's long-troubled water system after infrastructure breakdowns during the late summer of that year caused many city residents to go days and weeks without safe running water.

The E. coli scare came just days before the expected arrival of a blast of cold weather that could further disrupt the local water infrastructure. Cold snaps in 2021 and 2022 caused frozen pipes and drops in water pressure across Jackson.

The positive tests and boil water notices sent lab technicians scrambling to test samples from 120 locations ahead of the winter weather.

Michael Goldberg is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow him at @miker-goldberg.

Congressman Bennie G. Thompson announces \$7.7 million to G.A. Carmichael Family Health Center



Mississippi Link Newswire

Representative Bennie G. Thompson (MS02) announced January 11 that the G.A. Carmichael Family Health Center will receive \$7.7 million in federal monies from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Community Facilities Program to renovate one of their buildings into to new medical facility that will service the area of Yazoo, MS.

The purpose of this new community healthcare facility is to provide healthcare services to the underinsured, unin-

sured and underserved citizens around the community. The facility will provide new cutting-edge healthcare services such as dental, mental health and pharmaceutical services. Lastly, the facility will build a walking trail for their Diabetes Education Program to help promote the importance of good health.

"The benefits that this facility can bring to the Mississippi Delta will make a difference in the health desert and have a lasting impact on the lives of citizens in this area," said Congressman Thompson.

Gabriel Amir Williams assists at state capitol



(L-R) Senator Bradford Blackmon, Gabriel Amir Williams and Lt Governor Delbert Hosemann

Mississippi Link Newswire

Gabriel Amir Williams of Jackson recently served as a page for the Mississippi Senate. Pages generally run errands for officials and Senate staff. His visit was sponsored by Lt. Governor Delbert Hosemann and Senator Bradford Blackmon.

Gabriel is the son of Rahshad and Jana Williams and attends Bailey APAC Middle School. When asked about the week,

Gabriel said, "My experience as a page for the Senate extended my knowledge of the legislative process. I met compelling individuals, who taught me the methods and the process to achieve great things in this discrete field. We visited the Mississippi Supreme Court, the Governor's Mansion and the Civil Rights Museum. I had the chance to converse with significant people and expand my knowledge to improve my character."

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Federal prosecutors seek death penalty for white man who fatally shot 10 black people in Buffalo grocery store

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Federal prosecutors announced Friday, Jan. 12, their intention to pursue the death penalty for Payton Gendron, a 20-year-old white man responsible for a racist rampage that claimed the lives of 10 Black shoppers at a Buffalo grocery store in May 2022. Prosecutors revealed the decision in a court filing before a scheduled status conference hearing at the Robert H. Jackson Federal Courthouse in Buffalo.

Gendron is already serving a life sentence without parole after pleading guilty to New York state murder charges in November 2022. Defense attorneys have expressed Gendron's willingness to plead guilty to federal hate crimes and weapons violations if prosecutors choose not to pursue the death penalty.

"Today's decision by the Department of Justice provides a pathway to both relief and a measure of closure for the victims and their families," said civil rights attorney Benjamin Crump. "They have been pleading for full justice for nearly two years, and today they are one step closer. We thank the DOJ for its diligence and for fighting for those whose lives were so tragically affected by this atrocity. We ask that you continue to keep the victims, their families, and the entire Buffalo community in your prayers as they continue to grieve and pursue full justice for those who were stolen from them."

The announcement follows a nearly 20-month Justice Department case review, marking the first time Attorney General Merrick Garland has authorized a new capital prosecution. President Joe Biden, who campaigned against the death penalty, faced criticism from civil rights groups, arguing that the death penalty historically and disproportionately affects racial minorities and



Gendron is already serving a life sentence without parole after pleading guilty to New York state murder charges in November 2022.

the poor. Garland issued a moratorium on federal executions in 2021, which remains in place but does not prevent prosecutors from seeking a death sentence.

In 2023, emotions ran high at a sentencing hearing as the sister of one of the victims confronted Gendron. Chaos erupted when an enraged man charged at the defendant, leading to authorities rushing Gendron out of the courtroom. After returning, Judge Susan Egan acknowledged the pain experienced by the victims' families but emphasized the need for appropriate conduct.

Gendron, who had targeted a specific predominantly Black Buffalo zip code, admitted to the racially charged massacre. He said he regretted his actions, attributing them to online hate and the belief in the "replacement theory." Gendron was sentenced to life in prison by Judge Egan, who condemned his ideologies as "ignorant, hateful and evil."

Prominent Civil Rights leaders share insights on King's perspective on Middle East, Ukraine and Trump

By Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.
President and CEO of the NNPA

During his short life, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stepped on all kinds of powerful toes in his fight for civil rights, and he was a courageous and determined leader who refused to let prison or violence sway his end mission. He also never lost sight of the fact that civil rights — addressing racial and economic injustice — were inextricable from peace.

As the leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), King led a nonviolent movement to abolish the triple evils crippling American society: racism, poverty and militarism. Associates said he believed those forces were contrary to God's will for humanity and that they could only be opposed by a religious vision of nonviolent social change.

In April of 1967, King spoke publicly against the war in Vietnam. Today, as the nation observes Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, civil rights activists, including those who knew the slain leader, offered their thoughts on what his position might be on conflicts in the Middle East and Russia and on the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former President Donald Trump.

"At the March on Washington in 1964, Dr. King talked about Alabama Gov. George Wallace having his lips dripping with interposition and nullification," said the Rev. Peter Johnson, who began working for the Congress of Racial Equality in Plaquemine, La., and later was recruited by Andrew Young to work for King in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta. "What's the difference between George Wallace and Donald Trump? You're not going to hear Trump publicly say the n-word, that's the only difference," Johnson remarked. "King would easily have seen that Trump is a bigot in the true sense of the word who actually believes he is superior to people of color."

Johnson and others said the conflict between Israel and Palestine and Russia and Ukraine would have stirred King to declare that there was little difference from the demand for civil rights and the cry for peace.

"[Israel's Prime Minister] Benjamin Netanyahu is on the wrong side of history," legendary civil rights leader the Rev. Jesse Jackson told the Black Press. "What led up to Oct. 7 (when Hamas attacked Israel) is the issue, not what happened on Oct. 7?" Jackson, like he said King would have, decried the mass killings taking place in the Middle East and the war strategy occurring in Ukraine. "Those cap-



Rev. Jesse Jackson

tured," Jackson demanded, "should be allowed to go home under the supervision of the United Nations and anyone tried should be done so in the World Court."

Jackson noted that King spoke of a deeper malady in American society. His view was that presidential administrations have been embroiling themselves in conflicts across the globe for the wrong reasons.

"Dr. King was outspokenly anti-war and anti-racism," said Rev. Mark Thompson, a civil rights leader who recently joined the National Newspaper Publishers Association as the trade association's global digital transformation director. "There's no question King would oppose the war in Ukraine and seek diplomatic solutions. I believe he would also call for a ceasefire in Gaza."

Thompson added that the reason for King's cancellation of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1967 — one year before his assassination — suggests King had an evolving posture on the Israel-Palestine question. "In canceling the pilgrimage during the Six-Day War, King said, 'I just think that if I go, the Arab world, and of course African and Asia for that matter, would interpret this as endorsing everything that Israel has done, and I do have questions of doubt,'" Thompson said.

"I believe his posture on Congress's dysfunction would be consistent with the words he used to describe segregationist intransigence in his 'I Have a Dream' speech — interposition and nullification," Thompson declared.

NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., also an SCLC alum, concurred. "Dr. King was a nonviolent freedom fighter who believed that we all are members of one humanity. We need Dr. King's wisdom, inclusive theology and leadership courage today more than ever before."

As legal challenges mount, some companies retool diversity and inclusion programs

By Alexandra Olson, Haleluya Hadero and Anne D'innocenzio
AP Business Writers

Advocates of diversity efforts are steeling themselves for a fight this year as a growing number of lawsuits take aim at programs intended to advance racial equity in the corporate world.

Lawsuits making their way through the courts have targeted prominent companies and a wide array of diversity initiatives, including fellowships, hiring goals, anti-bias training and contract programs for minority or women-owned businesses. Most have been filed by conservative activists who have been encouraged by the Supreme Court's June ruling ending affirmative action in college admissions and are seeking to set a similar precedent in the workplace.

The battle has been a roller coaster of setbacks and victories for both sides, but some companies are already retooling their diversity programs in the face of legal challenges, and the expectation that the conservative-dominated Supreme Court will eventually take up the issue.

"There's a dragnet that I think we should all be concerned about," said Alphonso David, President & CEO of the Global Black Economic Forum and a legal counsel for the Fearless Fund, an Atlanta-based non-profit that is facing a lawsuit over a grant program for businesses owned by Black women.

"It's all coordinated to reverse existing law and advance a chilling effect throughout many industries," David said.

One conservative activist, Christopher Rufo, claimed a victory this month with the resignation of Harvard's first Black woman president, Claudine Gay, after allegations of plagiarism and a furor over her congressional testimony about antisemitism.

Rufo, who has cast Gay's appointment to the job as the culmination of misguided diversity and inclusion efforts, vowed on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, not to "stop until we have abolished DEI ideology from every institution in America."

Civil Rights advocates are fighting back. On Monday, the National Action Network, led by the Rev. Al Sharpton, plans to announce a national drive to defend diversity programs at an annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day breakfast in Washington.

Sharpton and other prominent civil rights activist have rallied around the Fearless Fund as it fights a lawsuit brought by the American Alliance for Equal Rights, a group founded by anti-affirmative action activist Edward Blum, the man behind the college admissions cases the Supreme Court ruled on in June. The lawsuit alleges that one of the Fearless Fund's grant contests discriminates against non-Black women and asks the courts to imagine a similar program designed only for white applicants.

In late September, a federal judge in Atlanta refused to block the contest, saying the grants are donations protected by the First Amendment and the lawsuit was likely to fail. But days later, a three-judge federal appeals panel suspended the contest, calling it "racially exclusionary" and saying the suit was likely to succeed.

Oral arguments in the case are scheduled for Jan. 31. The outcome of the case could be a bellwether for similar diversity programs.

Advocates say the legal backlash comes at a time when investment in diversity programs are slowing



Sophia Danner-Okotie has ambitious plans for her Nigerian-inspired clothing line but a sense of dread has punctured her optimism as she watches a lawsuit try to take down a small venture capital firm that was instrumental to her boutique brand's growth. AP PHOTO/JOHN BAZEMORE

following a surge in 2020 in the wake of racial protests over the police killing of George Floyd. Job openings for diversity officers and similar positions have declined in recent months. The combined share of venture capital funding for businesses owned by Black and Latina women has dipped back to less than 1% after briefly surpassing that threshold — at 1.05% — in 2021 following a jump in 2020, according to the nonprofit advocacy group digitalundivided.

Faced with a messy legal landscape, companies are being cautious. Most major companies have so far stuck by diversity initiatives, which many ramped up in the face of pressure from some shareholders, employees and customers. Starbucks and Disney are among companies that have so far prevailed in court against challenges to their Diversity Equity and Inclusion policies.

But some have made changes to diversity programs to try to protect them from legal scrutiny.

Among those are two prominent law firms that had faced lawsuits by Blum's group. The firms, Morrison Foerster and Perkins Coie, opened their diversity fellowship programs to all applicants of all races in October, changes the companies said were in the works before Blum's lawsuits, which he subsequently dropped.

In May, Comcast said business owners of all backgrounds would be eligible to apply for a grant program originally intended for women and people of color when it launched in 2020. The telecommunications settled a lawsuit last year over the program brought by the conservative Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty on behalf of the white owner of a commercial cleaning business.

The Wisconsin Institute filed another lawsuit in October, this one on behalf of two construction firms. The lawsuit seeks to dismantle the U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, which dates back to the Reagan administration and requires that 10% of funds authorized for highway and transit federal assistance programs be expended with small business owned by women, minorities or other socially and economically disadvantaged people.

Dan Lennington, an attorney with the Wisconsin Institute, said he considers Comcast's changes "progress," but the anti-affirmative action movement is looking for a broader victory that could change case law on workplace diversity programs.

The Supreme Court's ruling on affirmative action "opened up a whole new world," Lennington said. "This decision just really injected new life into the whole debate."

Many of the lawsuits challenging diversity programs, including

the case against the Fearless Fund, are relying on a section of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which prohibits racial discrimination in contract agreements. The law was originally intended to protect formerly enslaved people, but conservative activists are citing it to challenge programs designed to benefit racial minorities.

Some conservative officials and activists are also alleging that companies crossed a line by announcing goals for increasing Black and other minority representation. Companies say such goals are not quotas but aspirational targets designed to measure the effectiveness of policies like widening candidate pools and rooting out bias in hiring.

Misty Gaither, vice president for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging at Indeed, said the online jobsite is sticking with its goal of increasing the representation of underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities in its U.S. workforce to 30% by 2030.

"We are doubling down on our efforts because we believe it's the right thing to do," Gaither said.

Conservative activists have seized on the goals to argue that hiring managers are being pressured to make race-based decisions in violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits taking race into account in hiring decisions.

America First Legal, a group run by former Trump adviser Stephen Miller, sent a letter in November to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission seeking an investigation into Macy's DEI policies, including its goal of achieving 30% ethnic diversity among its leadership at the director level and above by 2025, in part to better serve its customer base, which is about 50% non-white. The retailer launched a leadership training program for selected managers of color, and last year required that candidates for director roles include ethnically diverse applicants. It also has incorporated its DEI goals into annual performance reviews for directors and company-wide incentive calculation.

America First Legal cited those initiatives to argue that Macy's "has set explicit racial and other quotas for hiring." The group has sent dozens of similar letters to the EEOC targeting companies from IBM to American Airlines.

Macy's declined to comment on the letter. But in a previous interview with The Associated Press, outgoing Macy's CEO Jeff Gennette said the company is sticking with its DEI policies while closely watching legal developments.

"Our enthusiasm and our commitment to all the prongs that we had with DEI, and our strategy, remains. We might express it differently based on court rulings and in the future," Gennette said, without providing details.

Cold weather can hurt

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Did you know that prolonged exposure to cold could use up your body's stored energy? This can lead to hypothermia or abnormally low body temperature. If your body temperature is too low it can affects your brain, making you unable to think clearly or move well. There is also a relationship between the cold weather and respiratory illnesses.

Hypothermia is produced by a below normal body temperature that can lead to loss of consciousness, cardiac arrest and death, if you don't receive treatment. Frostbite is caused by long exposure to cold, which can freeze the skin and damage body tissue.

The cold weather can affect us even after a short time of extreme cold or a prolonged exposure to mild cold. Our normal body temperature is about 98.6°F. Hypothermia happens when our core temperature drops below 95 degrees. Severe hypothermia is when your core body temperature drops to 82 degrees or lower.

Diabetes, thyroid conditions, some medications, severe trauma and using drugs or alcohol can all increase the risk of hypothermia.

The activity of the heart and liver produce most of your body heat. As our core body temperature cools, our organs produce less heat, causing a protective "shut down" to conserve heat and protect our brain. A low body temperature can slow your brain activity, breathing and heart rate. Low body temperature will cause confusion and



fatigue. This will hamper your ability to understand what's happening and make an intelligent choice to get to safety.

Your body loses heat through evaporation of water from your skin, radiation, conduction and convection. Evaporation of water from your skin, or if your clothing is wet, will cause you to lose body heat through evaporation and through respiration when the body temperature is higher than 99°F. Intense exercise can cause your body to lose 85% of its heat through sweating. Heat loss from evaporation and respiration increases with dry, windy weather conditions.

Radiation heat loss is the normal process of heat moving away from the body. This occurs in air temperatures lower than 68°F. The body can lose 65% of its heat through radiation.

Conduction heat loss happens with contact with something cold and air temperatures lower than 68°F. The body loses about 2% of its heat through air conduction. Water causes more heat loss from the body than air does, so heat can be lost from the body quickly when in cold water.

Convection heat loss happens when the wind blows on you. Riding a motorcycle is an example of convection heat loss. Your body loses 10% to 15% of its heat through convection.

Mild hypothermia – Core temperature of 89-95 °F – Shivering and complaining of cold, numbness in fingers and toes, body temperature slightly below normal.

Moderate hypothermia – Core temperature of 82-89 °F – Shivering, numbness in fingers and toes, lack of coordination and/or speech, confused or unusual

behavior, impaired judgment.

Severe hypothermia – Core temperature Lower than 82 °F – Person has stopped shivering and complaining of cold, lack of coordination and/or speech, confused or unusual behavior, impaired judgment, glassy stare, breathing has slowed down or stopped, possible unconsciousness.

Frostbite is a serious condition in which body tissues freeze. It happens most often in the fingers, toes, ears, and nose. It often starts as skin that is paler than usual and then progresses to a white waxy appearance.

If either of these conditions should occur, call 911.

Hypothermia

1. Check for breathing and heartbeat

2. Carry the victim to a warm shelter

3. Remove any wet clothing and change to something dry

4. Place frostbitten hands or feet in a bowl of water no hotter than 105 degrees for 20 minutes and add warmer water as the water-cools

5. If the victim is conscious and can swallow, give sips of warm, sweetened, nonalcoholic beverages

Frostbite

Check for breathing and heartbeat

Carry the victim to a warm shelter

Remove any tight clothing or jewelry

Slowly warm the victim

If warm water is not available, use your own body, blankets, or newspapers to warm the skin.

6. Once the damage skin is soft, warm and feeling and color return, dry the area. Place a

clean, dry cloth over the frost-bitten skin. When fingers are involved, place dry clothes between the fingers.

When treating for hypothermia and frostbite there are a number of things you should take into consideration:

1. Don't use any form of direct heat, such as an electric blanket or a campfire, to warm frostbitten skin.

2. Don't massage frostbitten skin.

3. Don't let the victim smoke or drink alcoholic beverages while waiting for medical help to arrive.

4. Don't thaw frostbitten skin if there is a chance of it becoming frozen again before you reach help because refreezing can cause further damage.

Going outside

Don't wear clothes that restrict your circulation. Wear loose fitting clothes in layers. You can wear spandex under sweat pants and wear leg warmers around your ankles to keep the lower leg warm and absorb shock. Wear 3-5 layers of lightweight clothing and don't forget your knitted gloves. You can lose up to 40% of your body heat if your head is not covered so wear a hat or ear muffs. In extremely cold weather you should try to cover as much skin as possible.

Drinking some type of fluid before going outside is always important, even during these cooler months. It's always good to drink fluids before, during and after being in the cold weather. Water is the best liquid you can drink. You should drink small amounts of water at 10 to 20 minute intervals. If you're going to be outside more than 45

minutes, it's a good idea to bring something to drink. Drinking water helps to increase your blood volume, which will increase cardiac output. Cardiac output is the amount of blood being pumped during each heartbeat. The more blood your heart pumps with each heartbeat the more nutrients are transported throughout the body.

Older family members

Keeping warm in cold weather becomes more important as we get older. As we age if our body temperature drops there is an increased risk of strokes, heart attacks and breathing difficulties, whether or not we already suffer from a chronic health or physical disability.

Reminders for the home

We should keep the temperature of your home at about 70F. If you cannot afford to heat all the rooms in the house, keep your living room dry and warm. Heat your bedroom and your bed before you go to bed. An electric blanket is great but a hot water bottle can be just as effective. Make sure you don't use both together. You wouldn't want to electrocute yourself. Make sure you keep your bedroom windows closed at night during the winter months.

Whether you're riding a bike, running, walking, skating, going to work or just staying home you should ask yourself have I taken all the steps I need to make my yourself safe during the winter months. Use a little common sense and make your winter safe.

Before starting any health or fitness program consult your physician.

Prioritize your mental health in 2024 with these 9 tips

StatePoint

As the new year begins, many people make resolutions regarding their physical health, but it's just as important to focus on mental health in the year ahead, especially for older adults, according to experts.

"As people age, they may experience stressors such as serious illness, losing close friends and family members, managing life on a fixed income, and coping with concerns about their own mortality. While seniors may show resilience to these dimensions of vitality, when they're compounded, these losses and stressors can result in a myriad of behavioral health issues, including depression, anxiety, stress and insomnia," says Dr. Lindsay Evans-Mitchell, board certified adult psychiatrist and behavioral health medical director for Cigna Healthcare's Medicare Advantage business.

Dementia, which includes memory loss and language difficulties, is another issue often more pronounced with age, and in earlier stages, it can often mimic some symptoms of depression.

Fortunately, Dr. Evans-Mitchell says making healthy choices can improve your quality of life, including your overall mental well-being, and potentially reduce your risk of both depression and dementia:

Practice good nutrition: There is evidence that plant-based diets are associated with better health, including better emotional health. That's another reason to add more green, leafy vegetables to your diet.

Exercise: Regular exercise



(C) SABRINA BRACHER / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS

can positively affect cognitive ability. If you have a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan offering access to a fitness program at no extra cost, then make sure to take advantage of it. You can learn about Cigna Healthcare's MA plans at cignamedicareinformation.com.

Hydrate: Drink plenty of water. Dehydration can negatively affect cognitive performance. Even mild dehydration can drain energy and cause fatigue.

Enjoy some sunshine: Sunlight provides needed vitamin D. Getting sunshine may increase your serotonin and help you stave off depression caused by Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD. Also, according to the Alzheimer's Association, exposure to vitamin D can lower dementia risk by as much as 40%. Of course, make sure to take proper precautions, such as wearing a hat, using sunscreen, and wearing eye protection that shields against UV light.

Get plenty of rest: Older adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night, according to the National Institutes of Health. People who get six hours of sleep or less a night are at greater risk of developing dementia later, the organization says. Additionally, poor sleep could be a sign of depression and should be discussed with your doctor.

Stay away from harmful substances: Dealing with behavioral health issues in unhealthy ways, such as abusing prescription or illicit drugs or alcohol, will only worsen the situation. According to the National Institutes for Health, research shows heavy alcohol use can increase the risk of both dementia and depression.

Pick up a hobby: Hobbies like gardening, cooking and solving puzzles can help improve your memory and your physical and mental health.

Be social: Isolation can lead to depression, which only worsened for many during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reach out to friends and family in person, via video chat, or over the telephone.

Find help if you need it: Keep your regular medical appointments, and don't hesitate to seek additional help from your network, if you need it. This may take the form of a financial advisor, a clergy member, or a mental health professional. Medicare generally covers the cost of behavioral health services, including depression and addiction treatment, as well as talk therapy. Virtual services are often available to those living in rural areas. And if you're experiencing a crisis that includes suicidal thoughts, call 988 immediately.

World Health officials say nearly 10,000 global deaths in December were related to COVID; signal deep health crisis

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported a staggering total of nearly 10,000 global deaths in December, raising alarm bells about a worsening worldwide health crisis stemming from the continued threat of COVID-19. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also noted pressing humanitarian crises in Gaza, Sudan, and Ethiopia that exacerbates the ongoing challenges related to COVID-19.

While COVID-19 is no longer classified as a global health emergency, the virus remains a formidable threat, Ghebreyesus warned. He said newer cases, driven by holiday gatherings and the prevalence of the JN.1 variant, led to a 42% increase in hospitalizations and a 62% rise in ICU admissions.

Ghebreyesus urged governments to maintain surveillance and sequencing and ensure access to tests, treatments, and vaccines. He also noted other emergencies the WHO is responding to, including in Gaza, Ukraine, Ethiopia, and Sudan.

Ghebreyesus called it "indescribable" that "this Sunday marks the 100th day of the conflict in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory."

He said Gaza continues to face an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe to go along with rising health concerns borne out from the pandemic. The conflict has displaced nearly 90% of Gaza's 1.9 million residents, who continue to endure "excruciating conditions with long queues for limited water and nutritionally inadequate bread," the director general lamented.

He said only 15 hospitals are partially operational, and the absence of clean water and sanitation creates a breeding ground



While COVID-19 is no longer classified as a global health emergency, the virus remains a formidable threat, Ghebreyesus warned. He said newer cases, driven by holiday gatherings and the prevalence of the JN.1 variant, led to a 42% increase in hospitalizations and a 62% rise in ICU admissions.

for diseases. WHO's humanitarian aid efforts have encountered "insurmountable challenges" due to intense bombardment, movement restrictions, fuel shortages, and communication breakdowns, Ghebreyesus stated.

"People are standing in line for hours for a small amount of water, which may not be clean, or bread, which alone is not sufficiently nutritious," he asserted. "The lack of clean water and sanitation and overcrowded living conditions are creating the ideal environment for diseases to spread. We have the supplies, the teams and the plans in place. What we don't have is access."

Further, the director general stressed the need for the release of hostages and an imperative for all parties to uphold international humanitarian law, ensuring healthcare protection. He also sounded an alarm about the ongoing situation in Sudan, a nation that's grappling with nine months of conflict where there's escalating violence and mass displacement.

ment.

Ghebreyesus said Sudan residents have also experienced the rampant spread of diseases, including cholera. The WHO temporarily suspended operations in Al-Gezira due to security concerns, disrupting the annual harvest and heightening the risk of food insecurity. Even before the conflict, Ghebreyesus said Sudan faced food shortages, intensifying the crisis for vulnerable groups, particularly children under five and pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Meanwhile, in Ethiopia, the north-western region of Amhara is in the grip of a severe health crisis due to ongoing conflict since April 2023, he said. Communication challenges, damaged health facilities, and restricted movement impede humanitarian assistance. Conflict, drought, and displacement exacerbate hunger and disease outbreaks, with cholera, malaria, measles, leishmaniasis, and dengue spreading. Urgent access to affected areas is crucial, the director general affirmed.

Finally, Ghebreyesus insisted that just as governments and individuals take precautions against other diseases, "we must all continue to take precautions against COVID-19." The WHO plans to release its Health Emergency Appeal for 2024, outlining how much there's a need to protect the health of the most vulnerable people in 41 emergencies globally.

"In 2024, we aim to reach almost 90 million people with lifesaving support," Ghebreyesus declared. "The coming year will be a test for humanity; a test of whether we give into division, suspicion and narrow nationalism, or whether we are able to rise above our differences and seek the common good."

LEGAL

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
EVA D. ERVIN, DECEASED

CAUSE NO.: P2023-417

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Letters of Administration having been granted on the 24th day of October, 2023 by the
Chancery Court of Hinds County, Mississippi to the undersigned Administratrix of the Estate of
Eva D. Ervin, deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against the estate to
present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probate and registration according to law, within
ninety (90) days from the first publication of this notice, or they will be forever barred.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this the 24th day of December, 2023.

TASHI CATCHINGS, ADMINISTRATRIX OF
THE ESTATE OF EVA D. ERVIN, DECEASED


TASHI CATCHINGS

1/4/2024; 1/11/2024; 1/18/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
City of Jackson Jackson, Mississippi

Sealed, signed BID'S areinvited and wil be received by the City of Jackson, Miss-
issippi, until 3:30 P.M. in the City Clerk's Office of Jackson, the bid must be
stamped in by 3:30 P.M. Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at which time said bids willbe
publicly opened at the City Hal located at 219 South President Street (City Council
Chambers) in City Hall for the following:

BID# 07100-020624- 12 Month Contract For Police Pursuit Vehicles of 2022-2025

BIDS ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT WWW.JACKSONMS.GOV / WWW.CENTRAL-
BIDDING.COM

The above must comply with the City's specifications. Copies of proposal forms
can be obtained from the Purchasing Division, 200 South President Street, Room
604, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Copies of bid specifications are
filed with the City Clerk for public record in accordance with House Bill No 999,
1986 Regular SessionoftheMississippolLeGislature.

The Citv of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in Public
Purchasing. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal busi-
ness opportunities for allpersons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition
to selection, each contractor, bidder or offer shall submit a completeda n dsigned
Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan Application,with each bid submission,
ni accordance with the provisions set forth by authority of the City of Jackson's
EBO Ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's EBO Ordinance shalldisqualify
a contractor, bidder or offer, from being awarded an eligible contract.Formoreinfor-
mation on the City's EBO Program, please contact the Office of Economic Devel-
opment at (601)960-1638. Copies of the EBO Ordinance. EBO Plan Application
and a copy of the EBO Program are available with the Office of Economic Devel-
opment at 218 South President Street, Second Floor, Jackson, MISSISSIPPI.
The City reserves the right to reject any and al bids. The City also reserves the
right to waive anyandall informalities in respect to any bid submitted. Bid awards
will be made to the lowest and best bidder quoting the lowestnetpriceinaccor-
dancewithspecifications. Theawardcouldbeaccordingtothelowestcostperitem:orto
the lowest total cost for all items; or to accept all or part of any proposal. Delivery
timemaybe consideredwhen evaluating the bid proposal. In those cases where it
is known prior to advertising that the City's intention is to awardaccordingto the
lowest total cost for all items, or in some variation thereof, statements to this af-
fectwill be includedontheproposalform. AbsenceofsuchstatementmeanstheCity-
willmakethatdeterminationduringthe hidreview.

Monica Oliver, Manager, Purchasing Division
(601) 960-1025 or 1028

1/11/2024 1/18/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT
ZONING CASE NO. 4241

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the
City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115
thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected
thereby, that Michael Holliman has filed with the Planning Board for the City of
Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit within a R-2 (Single & Two Fam-
ily) Residential District to allow for the placement of a manufactured house on
property located at 0 Powell Rhodes Dr. (Parcel 107-194) in the First Judicial
District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly described as:

37.5 FT W/S WHITFIED MILL RD X 100 FT S/S POWELL RHODES DR
IN LOT 2 TANNER SUBN OF LOT 6 RICHARD GRIFFITH SUBN

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew
Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. Presi-
dent Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, January 24,
2024, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both
pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which
the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jack-
son. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the
area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before
said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel
on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in
advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or
auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY
AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS
HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDE-
O OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE
SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY AT-
TEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.
JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO JANUARY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of December 2023.

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

1/4/2024; 1/18/2024

LEGAL

Public Notice

All interested public and private transit and paratransit operators within Hinds,
County, are hereby advised that the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation is applying to
the Mississippi Department of Transportation, Jackson, Mississippi, for a grant
under Section 5310 of the Federal Public Transportation Act, as amended, to pro-
vide transportation services to elderly and disabled persons. These services will
be beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Service is being
provided within Hinds County. This program consists of existing services with no
environmental impact, and no relocation resulting from the project.

The purpose of this notice is to advise all interested parties, including transit and
paratransit operators, of the service being planned for providing transportation
services for persons with disabilities within the area as described above, and to
ensure that such a program would not represent a duplication of current or of
proposed services provided by existing transit or paratransit operators in the area.

Comments either for or against this service will be received at any time beginning
December 26, 2023, through January 26, 2024, from 8:00am to 5:00pm. All com-
ments should be addressed to Mr. Primus Wheeler at the Jackson Medical Mall
Foundation at 601-982-8467 or via email at pwheeler@jacksonmedicalmall.org.

1/11/2024 1/18/2024

LEGAL

Advertisement for Electronic Bid
Bid 3254 ESSER Program: Restroom Improvements and HVAC/Indoor Air
Quality Improvements for Isable Elementary 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) Thursday, February 08, 2024, at which time
and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud. A Pre-Bid Conference
concerning the project for Isable Elementary will be held at 2185 Coach Fred
Harris Drive, Jackson, MS 39204 on Friday, January 26 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.jpstdm-
sprojects.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 re-
garding bid documents please contact Anderson Ervin at Durrell Design Group.
Phone:601-708-4788 or Email: 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 JPSTD Board Room, 621 South State Street, Jackson, MS 39201. All
bid openings will be recorded and uploaded to the JPSTD web site at www.jackson.
k12.ms.us at YouTube: /JPSTIV for public viewing. Due to COVID 19, vendors will
not be allowed to sit in on bids openings.

1/11/2024; 1/18/2024

LEGAL

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A USE PERMIT
ZONING CASE NO. 4240

By virtue of and pursuant to the authority and direction of that Ordinance by the
City Council of Jackson, Mississippi, appearing in Minute Book 3G at page 115
thereof, notice is hereby given to all persons interested in or in any way affected
thereby, that Tonia Louisville-Jones & Roddrick Jones, Sr. have filed with the Plan-
ning Board for the City of Jackson, an application requesting a Use Permit to allow
for the operation of a community recreational (event) venue within a C-3 (General)
Commercial District on property located at 6204 N. State St. (Parcel 709-37) in
the First Judicial District of Hinds County, Mississippi, and being more particularly
described as:

LOTS 6 7 & 8 BLK B BEVERLEY HGTS PT 1 LESS TO CITY FOR ST

Said application will be heard at the City Planning Board Hearing in the Andrew
Jackson Conference Room, First Floor, Warren A. Hood Building, 200 S. Presi-
dent Street in Jackson, Mississippi, at 1:30 p.m., on Wednesday, January 24,
2024, at which time all parties interested in or affected thereby will be heard both
pro and con on said question, after which a record will be established upon which
the City Planning Board can make its recommendation to the City Council of Jack-
son. Any objection thereto may be made by any person owning property within the
area, and if made in writing must be filed with the City Zoning Administrator before
said time if a hearing thereof or consideration thereof is desired, or by counsel
on said date. If a request is made to the Zoning Administrator at least 72 hours in
advance, the City will take steps to accommodate citizens need for interpreters or
auxiliary aids for the visually/hearing impaired.

DUE TO COVID-19 AND THE CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY
AND WELFARE, THE PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE APPLICANTS
HAVE THE OPTION TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDE-
O OR IN PERSON WITH REGARDS TO THE WEARING OF MASKS AND THE
SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY AT-
TEND VIA TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO BY EMAILING EAINSWORTH@CITY.
JACKSON.MS.US TO REGISTER PRIOR TO JANUARY 17, 2024.

WITNESS my signature this 22nd day of December 2023.

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

1/4/2024; 1/18/2024

LEGAL

Advertisement For Bids
MEDIUM TO HEAVY DUTY LOW OR NO EMISSION TRANSIT BUSES
CITY PROJECT NO. RFP#2023-04

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, February 6, 2024, from
qualified providers to manufacture and delivery of medium to heavy duty Low or
No Emission Transit Buses, along with training, testing/diagnostic equipment and
special tools in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in RFP #2023-
04. The Contract shall be a firm-fixed-price contract over the term of five (5) years.
Each proposer must submit six (6) signed copies of its proposal and of the re-
quired forms, certifications, and affidavits attached hereto or electronically submit
on 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 busi-
ness 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 avail-
able at 200 South President Street, Suite 223, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

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

The City of Jackson ensures that the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
(DBEs), as outlined in 49 C.F.R. Part 26, as amended, have the maximum oppor-
tunity 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 MEDIUM
TO HEAVY DUTY LOW OR NO EMISSION TRANSIT BUSES (RFP)#2023-04."
Bids, EBO and DBE plans shall be submitted in triplicate (bound/stapled sepa-
rately), 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.cen-
tralbidding.com. Electronic Bids may be submitted at www.centralbidding.com.
For any questions related to the electronic bidding process, please call Central
Bidding at 225-810-4814.

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 bid-
ding 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 contrac-
tors. 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 prefer-
ence 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

12/7/2023; 12/14/2023; 12/28/2023; 1/4/2024; 1/11/2024; 1/18/2024; 1/25/2024;
2/1/2024

Professional Paralegal
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1/18/2024

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Sudoku

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

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

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Sudoku Solution

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

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LEGAL

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

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received electronically via MAGIC or physically delivered to the office of the Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management, 501 North West Street, First Floor, Room 117, Jackson, Mississippi, 39201, until 2:00:00 p.m. (14:00:00 Military Time) on Tuesday, 02/20/2024 , for:

RE: GS# 320-093 WGCF Exterior Lighting Upgrades
 Department of Corrections
 RFx #: 3160006379

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

Professional: Corbett Legge & Associates, PLLC
Address: Post Office Box 7370
 Tupelo, Mississippi 38804
Phone: 662-587-1416
Email: kbryant@corbettlegge.com

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

Bureau of Building, Grounds and Real Property Management

1/18/2024; 1/25/2024

LEGAL

LEGAL NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CITY OF JACKSON

Notice is hereby given that Proposals will be received by the City Clerk of the City of Jackson, Mississippi until 3:30p.m., Tuesday, February 6, 2024. The City of Jackson, Mississippi requests proposals from art groups and other community development groups providing services to the citizens in the City of Jackson.

Financial assistance is available to support arts and community development activities designed to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of the arts and improve the quality of life among the citizens of Jackson. This solicitation seeks proposals with an emphasis on community exposure, history and education.

Grant awards offered by the City of Jackson shall only represent supplemental funding in support of arts projects and community development-based projects. To be eligible for funding, proposing organizations must have verifiable cash match contributions that equals to at least 50% of project cost.

For the Request for Proposal packet, please contact Beverley Johnson-Durham at 601 960 0383. All proposal must be sealed and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: Proposal for general funds Arts and Community Based Grants. Proposal packets must be received by the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 219 South President Street by 3:30pm on February 6, 2024.

The city reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Request for proposal documents can be downloaded from the City of Jackson website: www.jacksonms.gov and may be picked up at the City of Jackson Department of Human and Cultural Services located at 633 North State Street Suite 423, Jackson MS 39202

By: Pamela Scott, PhD Director
Department of Human and Cultural Services

1/18/2024; 1/25/2024

LEGAL

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF JOSEPHINE H. KING, DECEASED CAUSE NUMBER: 1:15-pr-00409

SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

TO: **THE HEIRS-AT-LAW AND WRONGFUL DEATH BENEFICIARIES OF JOSEPHINE H. KING, DECEASED**

You have been made respondents in the suit filed in this Court by CARLOS KING, AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF JOSEPHINE H. KING, DECEASED. You are summoned to appear and defend against the PETITION TO APPROVE FINAL ACCOUNTING, TO DISCHARGE ADMINISTRATOR AND TO CLOSE ESTATE filed against you in this action at **9:00 a.m. on the 27TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2024**, at the **HINDS COUNTY CHANCERY COURTHOUSE, 310 SOUTH PRESIDENT STREET, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI**, and in case of your failure to appear and defend, a judgment will be entered against you for the money or other things demanded in the Petition.

You are not required to file an answer or other pleading but you may do so if you desire.

Issued under my hand and seal of said Court, this the 11th day of January, 2024.

Hon. Eddie Jean Carr,
Hinds County Chancery Clerk

BY: *Stanley*, D.C.

PREPARED BY:

1/18/2024,1/25/2024, 2/2/2024

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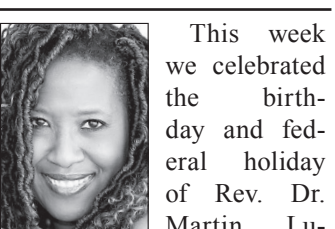
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601-981-3060

Week of December 31, 2023

P R E S E R V E D

King's dream revisited

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



This week we celebrated the birthday and federal holiday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Considering all that has happened lately regarding threats to justice and equality, in this week's column, I wanted to revisit his well-known speech from the historic March on Washington in 1963. Considering Dr. King's social justice work and the current political environment in the United States, perhaps re-reading his words will help us see their transformative truth. Below are selected quotes as well as related scriptures.

- "But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation.

So, we have come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and security of justice."

Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you. — Deuteronomy 16:20

- "We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is not time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy."

For I am ready to set things right, not in the distant future, but right now! I am ready to save Jerusalem and show my glory to Israel. — Isaiah 46:13

- "Now it the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now it the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid

rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality to all of God's children."

I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps... Many will see it and fear And will trust in the LORD. — Psalm 40:2

- "Nineteen sixty-three is not an end but a beginning. Those who hope that the colored Americans needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual."

The LORD gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly. — Psalm 103:6

- "You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive."

My brethren, count it all

joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. — James 1:2-4

- "This is our hope. This is the faith that I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope."

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. — Hebrew 11:1

For more information about Dr. King, visit The King Center www.thekingcenter.org.

Shewanda Riley is a Fort Worth, Texas based author of "Love Hangover: Moving from Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends" and "Writing to the Beat of God's Heart: A Book of Prayers for Writers." Email her at preservedbypurpose@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @shewanda.

Christ died for the ungodly

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



Time is a precious commodity. Second Corinthians 6:2 says, "Behold, now is the day of salvation."

It is now time that men need to come to Christ and repent. The devil never tells a person not to get saved, but rather he tells one to put it off. He gets him or her to procrastinate, and after a while, time runs out and all opportunities are lost.

I know of a man who allowed sin to take him down until his mind was nearly gone, leaving him lost and undone, without God. Oh, how grateful you ought to be if God has saved you and given you new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The rich man went from living sumptuously every day to a place of torments after death.

There is a Heaven to gain and a hell to shun. First John 5:11-12 tell us: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath

the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Eternal life is not in the new birth. You must be born again, but you obtain eternal life because Jesus lives in your heart. When you are born again, through the Holy Spirit, God the Father brings life into your being. Romans 2:7 tells us, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."

Everyone has an eternal soul, but having an eternal soul does not mean that one has eternal life.

He that hath the Son hath life." The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:53-54, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Paul was not talking about physical death, but of the power of spiritual death that sin brings upon people. Paul wrote in verse 55, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

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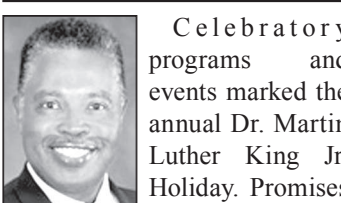
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TV BROADCAST
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We celebrated the King Holiday despite moral and political decay without losing hope

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



Celebratory programs and events marked the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. Promises and proclamations were made at city halls and places of worship across America. Our attitudes of hope seem to be buoyed when this special holiday comes around each year. It's timely in the sense that it gives us the rest of the year to practice what we say. Some years ago, I coined the expression "It's the doing of the talking." No matter how fervently we say the words of hope, we must also create actions of

hope as well. As history tells us, Dr. King was one of the early architects of the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, he was *Time* magazine's Person of The Year in 1964. His advocacy for people with little to no voice put the United States of America on notice. He said, "Our nettlesome task is to discover how to organize our strength into compelling power so that government cannot elude our demands." Over time, we have seen this axiom come to fruition. However, we know that there is still work to be done. How many times have we heard the lyrics we shall overcome some day? Those words have become synonymous with the King holiday. We want to believe that equal rights are just around the corner. Yet our quest for them is still evolving. Dr. King was an ambassador for people, both Black and White. He knew that we were better together. No man or woman is an island. We are inextricably tied together in the same fabric of brotherhood and sisterhood. He said, "Justice for Black people will not flow into society merely from court decisions nor from fountains of political oratory. White America must recognize that justice for Black people cannot be achieved without radical changes in the structure of our society." Another King holiday has passed, and our America is still being challenged by demons

today. Our vision of prosperity has been dimmed by corrupt and corrosive people. America is at a pivotal moment in its storied history. This year, we have a presidential election earmarked for Tuesday, November 5. Unless something unforeseen happens, the incumbent Joe Biden will face off against Donald Trump. Some may ask how can a person with 91 criminal charges against him run for the position of president of the country? It is because Trump's legal team is playing the game of put-off, delay and reschedule. There are many in America who want Trump to become president. I wonder about their code of ethics and honesty. Does telling the truth matter? Is it ok to assault women? Can you get away with inciting riots? It is permissible to overvalue your businesses. Can you admire dictators and want to emulate them? If your answer is yes, then you will vote for Donald Trump. Sadly, you fall into the caldron of misguided people who have replaced right with wrong. You have fallen into a sea of misery and misfortune. You are with the wrong person for the wrong reasons. Now, if you are like me and a proponent of Dr. King's philosophy of hopefulness then you will vote on November 5. Our vote will count, and our presence will matter. Don't think otherwise. Right cannot ever be taken

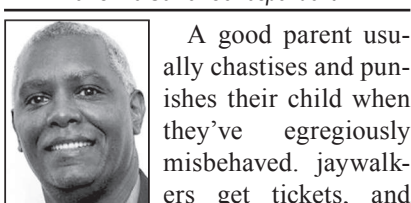
for granted as wrong is always lurking. Dr. King and other Civil Rights leaders sacrificed greatly for the rights and privileges that we have today. The King holiday must not be the only day that we give a little more and do a little more. It must become a lifestyle and a way of living. Dr. King said, "Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle." We must continue doing this if we want a better nation for generations to come. This is our responsibility and we can do no less.

The Unchecked Path: Trump's victory in Iowa sparks concerns over accountability



Just one day before his second sexual assault civil trial was to begin, Trump cruised to a landslide victory in the Iowa caucuses, solidifying his front-runner status for the Republican presidential nomination.

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent



A good parent usually chastises and punishes their child when they've egregiously misbehaved. Jaywalkers get tickets, and murderers have received the death penalty. Generally, no one goes unpunished for breaking the law in the United States unless you are of a particular social and financial status, and the crime, for the most part, isn't much more than white collar. But that's not the case with Donald J. Trump. Undoubtedly, Trump is the kid who has never been chastised or punished. And, as a grown-up, and certainly since his false election claim in 2020 and his egging on a deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol, the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former president hasn't seen a scintilla of punishment. One could argue that his parents, or America, have rewarded his unprecedented bad behavior. Just one day before his second sexual assault civil trial was to begin, Trump cruised to a landslide victory in the Iowa caucuses, solidifying his front-runner status for the Republican presidential nomination. As several outlets reported, losing one-term presidents rarely mount subsequent successful primary campaigns, much less pull off landslides that demonstrate utter dominance of their party. Trump transformed the GOP in 2016. By claiming 50% of the vote in the biggest win in caucus history, putting him on course for his third consecutive nomination, Trump showed that the current GOP is now entirely his party. President Joe Biden beat Trump in the 2020 general election, 81 million popular votes to 75 million. And while both numbers were stun-

ning, Trump's was more telling as it demonstrated that 75 million could vote for a man who single-handedly destroyed American Democracy, who championed white supremacy, caged babies, mocked the disabled, and called cowards American troops whom the enemy captured. Not all Trump followers are racist, but there's no doubt that you must be a racist to be a Trump follower. Biden's victory over Trump came in part because his slogan, his message, "saving the soul of America," resonated. It was the first time since President Obama's "Yes We Can" that Dems had a message folks could understand and get behind, mainly a message that the ultimate swing voters, African Americans, could embrace. During the current campaign, when Biden says there's a need to "save Democracy," the message falls flat particularly to African Americans who have come to a reckoning that Democracy today, like the Confederacy of decades ago, doesn't work for Black people. So, what are they saving? A system that fosters outright racism from politicians, the emphatic truth that Black lives really don't matter, and more than 75 million, including a few who were born Black (Ben Carson, Clarence Thomas, Candace Owens, Jason Whitlock, etc.) show the worst of African Americans with their allegiance to slavery and their slave master Trump. It indeed says a whole lot that Trump is the clear front-runner to return to office, where he promises that "on day one," he'll be a dictator. He'll have people – read Black people – shot by police on the spot if they are deemed to have participated in shoplifting or any minor crime. Trump will get rid of the Affordable Care Act, which provides otherwise

uninsured Black and poor people with life-saving healthcare coverage. He'll release the seditious, murderous January 6 inmates whom he calls hostages. Having already banned just about any book with a Black author or one that reveals true American history, Trump will ensure that publishing houses that produce such work will be shut down. That could also mean the Black Press of America, founded in New York 197 years ago before slavery ended in America. Trump once proudly proclaimed that he could shoot someone on New York's Fifth Avenue and get away with it. He also exclaimed on national television that he and other celebrities are allowed to grab a woman, any woman, by their private parts without permission, and it's okay. Subsequently, a jury found him civilly responsible for sexual assault, and he currently has 91 felony charges pending against him. And with a favorable U.S. Supreme Court and three of the justices he put there, Trump is on his way to proving the accuracy of his declarations of committing crimes and getting away with them. America has been good lately about canceling sexual predators, even those who were only accused of sexual assault. America has been good of late with jailing some of the January 6 perpetrators. A judge ordered Trump to pay \$5 million after being found guilty of sexual assault, another judge is on the verge of ordering Trump to pay more than \$250 million for massive business fraud, and evidence recently emerged that Trump probably sold U.S. secrets to foreign entities while in office. Yet, he swept to victory in Iowa and may easily defeat Biden in November. To Trump, there's no better parent, none more lenient, than America.

Pieces

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



According to Webster Dictionary, a piece is a fragment, a broken or irregular part of something that often remains incomplete. Are you settling for pieces in life? Do you go to restaurants and order pieces of an appetizer or entrée? Do you order pieces of things online? Do you go to a dealership and order pieces of a vehicle? Do you purchase pieces of groceries? Are you settling for pieces of a wife or pieces of a husband? Are you settling for pieces of a marriage and/or family? Are you settling for pieces of a paycheck from your employer? Are you settling for pieces of city services in your neighborhood (I know I'm being extra)? If I was in a congregational setting, I would say turn to your neighbor and say don't settle for pieces; now turn to your other neighbor, and say don't settle for pieces. Somebody say, "pieces!" Unfortunately, many are settling for pieces of a marriage and/or family, which can be detrimental to the marriage. Pieces in marriage can include the following: putting family and friends above your spouse and/or children, prioritizing jobs and businesses over your spouse like extended work hours, consistent communication with others like co-workers, pets, etc. and having nothing much to say to your spouse/children, engaging in affairs (putting the other man or other woman above your spouse, your turf versus the real grass), selfishness with finances (pieces: not helping with bills, savings, etc.), little to no intimacy, always cancelling plans, not helping with chores or the children, etc. Pieces can break a marriage down. What can happen when a spouse only gives their spouse pieces day after day, week after week, month after month, and God forbid, year after year? In other words, what happens when a spouse realizes that they are lonely, feel unappreciated and invaluable in the marriage, realize they are being put on the backburner and are being neglected? My grandmother was famous for saying, "iron eventually wears out." Yes, in other words, spouses can become impatient, lonely, jealous, envious, angry, frustrated, bitter, vengeful, engage in emotional and physical affairs, substance abuse, addictions, separation and divorce. Spouses do not allow your piece actions and responses destroy your marriage. Wives pursue their own husbands

as top priority, not the following: another man, fashion, pets, social media, your boss, your best friends, etc. And husbands, pursue your wives as top priority – cherish your wives, not the following: the gym, man-cave, your bodies, social media, video games, a supervisor, a best friend, another woman, a job, or a church if you are pastoring, etc. Please don't get me wrong, it is nothing wrong with spending time with family and friends, performing your best on your job, going out of your way to provide for your families, taking care of your health, but it becomes wrong when these things are consistently elevated above your spouses. Jobs will be here, gyms will be here, but your spouse will not always be here. In conclusion, as John Legend sings so eloquently, give your spouse all of you every day, if not every day, give your spouse your time – dedicate at least one day just for you and your spouse to spend quality time together. You can choose to do any of the following together: watch a movie, go to the gym, go bowling, dance, attend church together, take a ride somewhere and hold hands or whatever you want to hold. Let family and friends know that you are silencing your phone for a designated time to spend quality time with your boo and if it's an absolute emergency, point them to another contact. When spouses fail to give all of themselves to their spouses it can lead to a troubled marriage, which can lead to the decimation of more marriages in Mississippi. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, divorce rates in Mississippi based on provisional counts per 1,000 total population is 3.3. I love Reese's Pieces, but the Reese's Cups are so much better (wish I could indulge but chocolate breaks me out). Giving your spouse all of you is so much better than giving them pieces of you. Spouses, if you truly love one another don't give pieces to your spouse and marriage – you made a vow to have and hold your spouse from that day forward until death do you part...it's impossible to fulfill your marriage vows with pieces. Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (motivational, ministering, marriage counseling, marriage workshops, marriage seminars, marriage conferences, etc.) Marriage Ministry: The Restoration Church, Suite H, Jackson, MS. 39206, Instagram: letsstaytogether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert Email letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or call 601 874-6176.

The REAL Learning Institute exposes youth to African-American generational values of leadership with Freedom School Summer Saturdays

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

The REAL Learning Institute Freedom School Saturdays is designed to help middle school and high school youth learn leadership skills. The institute held a bi-monthly elder/youth session on face-2-face at the Afrikan Art Gallery January 13, 2024, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Elder Asinia Lukata Chikuyu, founder, conducted this first session.

The REAL Learning Institute's theme, "Preppin' Our Progeny for Leadership," reveals that the key to a higher quality of life is reflected in "real" education. Chikuyu noted that real learning is academic, spiritual and social/cultural. "If Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was right in saying that the purpose of education is to enable a man to 'achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life,' then we, the Black community, must supplement public education with REAL Learning."

The elder explained to youth and adults in attendance that "one of the major issues within the struggle for respect for Black life is deeply comprised ethics for current Black leaders." Chikuyu charged that pulling away from the status quo for value consciousness is essential for youth to develop leadership skills. "The 1964 Freedom Summer Project brought a different perspective on the elevation of the quality of Black Life,



Ada Robinson autographes Yolanda King's new book – We Dream A World. Robinson read excerpts from the book and presented the book to one of the youth attendees. In doing so, Robinson denoted that the book demonstrates "positive youth leadership." Yolanda King is the only granddaughter of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King. PHOTOS BY JANICE NEAL-VINCENT

and the leadership had a different focus," he said.

Referencing "unfinished initiatives," Chikuyu indicated that the time has come "to go back and fetch" the sentiments voiced by the 1964 Freedom School Summer Project.

Reaching the young early, according to the elder, is essential to avoid contamination of greed and selfishness. "Getting to them early is the message in Frederick Douglass' assertion, 'It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.'"

The leader clarified that in order for youth to be successful in Freedom School Saturdays, parental involvement is needed. Accordingly, parents must be

active in encouraging, requiring and assisting their children. "They have to engage with their children in absorbing the information and incorporating the relevant elements into their family lifestyle. Parents need to know that REAL Learning is a lifelong process to be open to new, and/or reiterated, learning. Where their schedules allow, they should sit-in and help teach life to the children in groups," said Chikuyu.

The elder further commented that adults often blame children for failing in life, but they, themselves, have failed their children. Some of the children, he said, have been thrust into leadership roles without adequate preparation. "We want

our children to be able to read, write, count, speak and think. Thus, The REAL Learning Institute is the Preppin' Our Progeny for Leadership as a way of planning not to fail."

The seven phases of life (infancy, childhood, adolescence, teen, early adulthood, adulthood and eldership) were shared so that youth could understand their life composition. In that regard, youth and adults shared some of their lived experiences. They concurred that knowing where they "fit" within the different stages is essential to knowing who they are.

Some who attended the session reacted.

"Finding a place for myself was important when I was

growing up during the civil rights days. It was safe for me to walk the streets. My teen years were full of following civil rights workers. I remember stopping by Big John's [Big Apple Inn] for a 25 cents hamburger." (Ada Robinson)

"A place to be is important. To be who you are, who you are meant to be, and what you are to become, is just as much a part of your purpose for being as the vocation you will choose to make a living is." (Lesli Nefert Thompson)

"This youth leadership is a breath of fresh air for our drowning youth. Due to the exceptional first-hand storytelling of our elders with our youth. Our nonprofit Legacy Change

Agents will proudly sponsor this program this year." (Dr. Constance Harvey-Burwell, Executive Director, Legacy Education & Community Empowerment Foundation, Inc).

"The Saturday Freedom School was both informative and interactive. I strongly encourage parents to bring their children or teenagers to the Afrikan Art Gallery to join a powerful session." (Justin Griffin)

Bi-monthly Freedom School Saturdays are held on the second and fourth Saturdays from 3:30-5:00 p.m. at Afrikan Art Gallery, 800 North Farish Street, Jackson, Miss. 39202.

Call 769-572-7441 or email afrikan-tbt@yahoo.com for more information.



Leslie Nefertiti Thompson, Iya' Falola H. Omobola, Asinia Lukata Chikuyu, and Ada Robinson address social consciousness, an afrikan tradition. They explain the roles that blacks played from a cultural perspective.

Grenada, Miss: 'A Legacy of Silence' unveiled

A Mississippi Freedom Trail marker now tells the story of the city's brutal racial school integration

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

The 2024 Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend celebration in Grenada, Miss. also raised awareness of a dark, brutal, racial, often silent, history of more than 57 years ago.

Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024, was the unveiling of the Mississippi Freedom Trail marker commemorating the Grenada School Integration Crisis and the 1966 Grenada County Freedom Movement.

"Civil Rights veterans, their families, local residents, and individuals from across Mississippi and the United States gather at the memory site where 150 Black school children were beaten on September 12, 1966. The students were attacked by a White mob armed with pipes and chains as they departed Lizzie Horn Elementary and John Rundle High School. The students sought refuge at Belle Flower M.B. Church, the headquarters for the local civil rights movement," a release stated.

Prior to the unveiling, individuals participated in a commemorative walk that retraced the students' route from Belle Flower Church to the 'white' school.

"The students of September 1966 are the heroes from my childhood," said Grenada native Marilyn W. Reed. "Because of the truth I was taught about the Grenada County Freedom Movement, I've always revered and looked up to Dianna Freelon Foster and others."

Freelon Foster, who would later make history as the city's first African-American and female mayor in 2004, were among those students violently attacked Sept. 12, 1966.

"Their stories deserve to be told and shared over and over again," said Reed. "The Mississippi Freedom Trail marker is critical to our history because as time passes and our elders transition the truth will be lost if we do not preserve it."



Dr. Stuart Rockoff, executive director, Mississippi Humanities Council; Dianna Freelon Foster, former mayor and founder/director, Activists With a Purpose Plus; Maggie Lowery, Visit Mississippi; John Spann, Program & Outreach officer, Mississippi Humanities Council; Fredrick (Pete Wilson) Councilman, Ward 2, Grenada, MS PHOTO BY ALFONSO WHITE

Reed is a member of the 1966 Grenada County Freedom Movement Legacy Committee who was responsible for coordinating the program and ceremony. In addition to the Grenada County Freedom Movement Legacy Committee, other spearheading entities in making Saturday's event a dream realized were Mississippi Humanities Council, Visit Mississippi, and Activists With A Purpose Plus.

Activists With A Purpose Plus, founded and directed by Freelon Foster has the mission "to work towards developing leadership and build power in local African American Communities to stand against all forms of oppression, both internal and external."

The Mississippi Link recently spoke with Freelon Foster about Saturday's, Jan. 13, unveiling and the ordeal she and others suffered during the 1966 attacks. She shared that she and others have been working on bringing forth an awareness of this magnitude regarding the 1966 Grenada Freedom

Movement for years.

She feels the unveiling is significant to the King celebration because of the important civil rights roles he, James Meredith and many others played in the movement. "Dr. King of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), was requested by civil rights leaders to come to Grenada, and he did," Foster recalled.

Regarding the day they integrated the schools, she (who was 11th grade then) told The Mississippi Link on MLK Day from her office: "Many children were beaten: grade-school children, children as young as six and seven years of age. One of the elementary student's leg was broken. It was actually one of the most violent integrations that the nation experienced."

She said students at both the elementary school and the high school were attacked before and after school that day.

"When I first went to school that morning, it was three of us: my broth-

er, another friend and I. When we were in line, a white man came up and put the gun in his face," Foster vividly recalled.

"And then, shortly before it was time for school to be dismissed, the principal started calling all the white girls to the office." She said a friend sent her a note saying that all those girls cannot fit in that office. "Something is up," the note said.

"We decided that we were just going to get up and leave because we knew something funny was going on. When we were at the top of the stairs, we saw this mob of white men in trees and on the sidewalk. Many of the women and their daughters who had been called to the office were across the street at the library right in front of the school, and they were heckling. The mob was waiting for us. Oh, it was about seven or eight of us who actually went out, and I was toward the back of the crew. We couldn't go back into the school because they were not going to allow us. And so, you know, I mean, we were children. We did what we had been instructed to do by the civil rights leaders when they prepared us for that day. We walked, we just kept walking and we walked through the mob. There was one black male in our

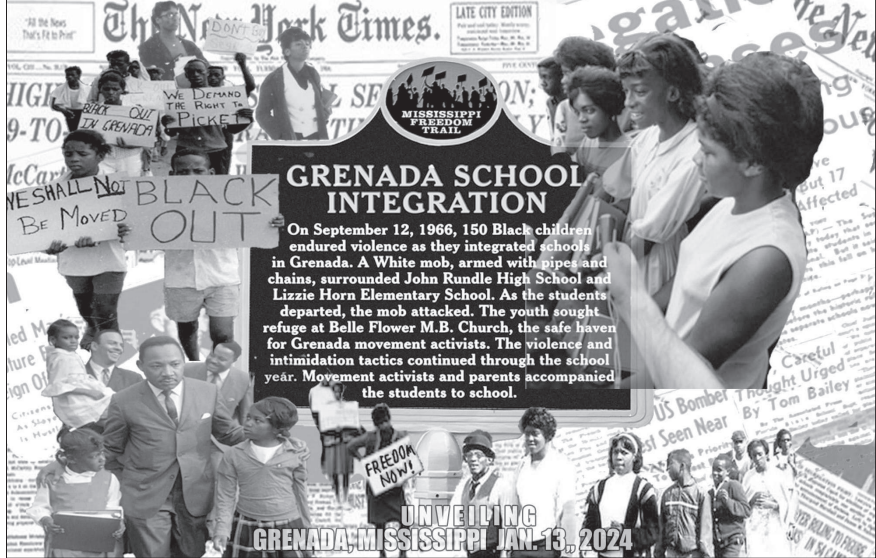
group. As we continued to walk, they began to actually beat the only male in our group. Oh, God! And of course, at some point, I looked back, and I stopped and saw them beating him. So, I turned around to go back to help him. The kids were saying, we have to keep walking. But I went back to get him and that's how I ended up getting beaten, and the others. We all thought, we all got to get back to the church – Belle Flower M.B. Church."

Foster explained that much of the "legacy of silence" surrounding what happened in Grenada during its Freedom Movement and school integration was "a silence intentional on the part of the white community; not on the part of the black community."

With the Mississippi Freedom Trail Marker, the truth is no longer silent, organizers say. They are extremely grateful to everyone involved in helping with efforts to bring it further to the forefront as the King legacy and the legacy of others who fought for equality and civil rights.


"We want everybody to go out and view the marker," said Freelon Foster. "The history can no longer be refuted."

Grenada native Marilyn W. Reed also contributed to this article.





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Closing the STEM skills gap to create new possibilities for kids

StatePoint

Over the next decade, it's projected that nearly 3.5 million manufacturing and STEM-related jobs will be available, yet 2 million are expected to go unfilled due to a skills gap, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Advocates are addressing systemic educational barriers that impact student success in order to fill this skills gap and expand opportunities for young people.

That's the idea behind Driving Possibilities, a \$110 million STEM career readiness and community engagement initiative of the Toyota USA Foundation. Its unique approach brings industry and academia together, while coordinating nonprofit services that address barriers and societal disparities – all to prepare youth for successful futures.

“From machine learning and connected technologies to autonomous vehicles and electrification, the career opportunities of tomorrow will be boundless for those with STEM skills. During this time



A teacher at West Dallas STEM School conducts a lesson with students.

PHOTO BY JASON KINDIG

of rapid industry advancement, it's more important than ever to give all young people an equal opportunity to access rewarding careers in high-growth in-

dustries tomorrow,” says Colleen Casey, executive director, Driving Possibilities.

With the goal of increasing student awareness, excitement

and interest in STEM learning, the multi-pronged approach of Driving Possibilities includes innovative, hands-on STEM programming from pre-K to

12th grade levels, professional and leadership development for teachers and industry exposure and mentorship opportunities for students. The pro-

gram also addresses students' essential needs to ensure they have the food, transportation, mental health services, after-school programming and early intervention literacy support they need to succeed.

This long-term initiative is already making a huge impact for thousands of families in such high-need locations near Toyota's operations in Michigan, Kentucky, Indiana and Alabama. And while the program looks a little different in each location because it is based on the unique needs of each community, the mission remains the same: to level the playing field for students facing educational barriers.

“Young people are tomorrow's problem-solvers, makers and innovators. But they can face many roadblocks on their journey. Listening to what students need and then working within their communities to come up with solutions, will contribute to thriving communities, stronger local economies and limitless possibilities for all,” says Casey.

To learn more, visit toyotaefect.com

President Biden accelerates student debt relief with early implementation of SAVE Plan

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Again, attempting to fulfill a key promise made during his 2020 campaign, President Joe Biden announced the accelerated implementation of a crucial provision under the Student Aid for Voluntary Education (SAVE) plan. The president reaffirmed his commitment to reforming the student loan system and ensuring that higher education remains a pathway to the middle class, “not a barrier to opportunity.”

“From day one of my administration, I vowed to fix the student loan system and make sure higher education is a pathway to the middle class – not a barrier to opportunity,” Biden stated.

The president asserted that his administration's SAVE plan has helped 3.6 million Americans by canceling their student debt. “The plan's goal is to create a more affordable student loan repayment structure while providing life-changing support to students and their families, Biden said.



“I am proud that my administration is implementing one of the most impactful provisions of the SAVE plan nearly six months ahead of schedule,” Biden asserted. “Starting next month, borrowers enrolled in

SAVE who took out less than \$12,000 in loans and have been in repayment for ten years will get their remaining student debt canceled immediately.”

He noted that this step should benefit community college bor-

rowers, low-income individuals, and those facing challenges in repaying their loans. Biden further stressed the importance of swift action to provide borrowers with necessary relief, enabling them to move forward

and pursue their aspirations without the weight of student loan debt.

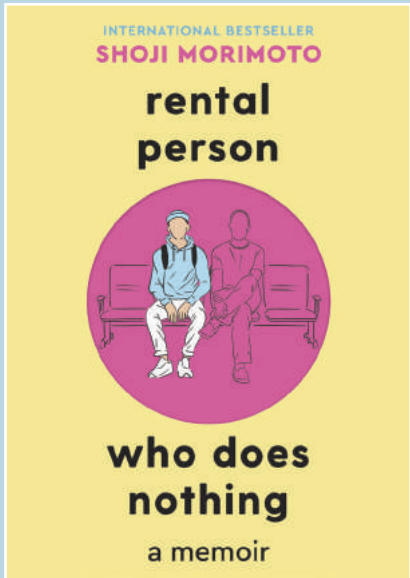
“I encourage all borrowers eligible for early debt cancellation to sign up for the SAVE plan at studentaid.gov. Already, 6.9

million borrowers are enrolled in the plan, and 3.9 million have a \$0 monthly payment,” urged Biden, highlighting the existing enrollment numbers and the program's potential impact.

The president's announcement builds upon the administration's broader efforts to tackle the complexities of student loans. He cited accomplishments such as fixing the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, increasing Pell Grants for families earning less than \$60,000 a year, and holding colleges accountable for leaving students burdened with unaffordable debts.

“In the wake of the Supreme Court's decision on our student debt relief plan, we are continuing to pursue an alternative path to deliver student debt relief to as many borrowers as possible as quickly as possible,” Biden insisted.

“I won't back down from using every tool at our disposal to get student loan borrowers the relief they need to reach their dreams,” said Biden.



BOOK REVIEW:

RENTAL PERSON WHO DOES NOTHING

BY SHOJI MORIMOTO

C.2024, HANOVER SQUARE PRESS

\$21.99 • 192 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

You need a hand there? A little help?

You know where to find it: your contacts list is full of people who’ll lend a hand, make repairs, offer assistance, lift, and oomph. You know people who’ll run to your side when you need them and you know others, as in the new book “Rental Person Who Does Nothing” by Shoji Morimoto, who’ll just stand around and watch.

In a way, Shoji Morimoto wasn’t meant to work for

someone else.

For many years, he was a freelance writer in Japan, penning ads, textbooks, and material that he found dull and repetitive. He was “stressed” by it, and by every financial aspect of merely having to work and so, looking for something totally different, he launched a service he called Do-Nothing Rental, announcing its basic lay-out on what was then Twitter.

You needed a fourth for a card game, he’d be that guy. Want someone to hold you accountable? He’d do it, but only

if it didn’t require him to make decisions. Need somebody to hold your spot in line? He was your man, but not twice. Want a lunch buddy? Tweet him and he’d meet you there. A good listener? He was on it. He’d show up when nobody else would. And yet – “Rental Person” was discerning and didn’t take just any old task, it had to be legal and interesting.

The cost? Morimoto didn’t charge for his efforts.

He was comped for transportation and usually for any meals and tickets required. Appreciative clients sent him

gift certificates and freewill offers of cash but Morimoto mostly tended to his family’s needs through financial trading and by using his savings. Still, he’s adamant that Rental Person wasn’t a volunteer gig, that it was a job but not exactly a business.

And even that all depended on what the client wanted...

“Rental Person Who Does Nothing” is one of those books that makes you tilt your head, squint one eye, and wonder what the heck you just read.


It’s quirky, to be sure. Appealing, to a point, but also


somewhat half-finished and not completely applicable – and so probably not easily doable. It’s also confounding: in keeping with his do-nothing aim, author Shoji Morimoto admits up-front that he didn’t even write this book, thus underscoring its title and reveling in the ultimate laziness – all the while ignoring an obvious (and well-exampled) need for occasional bursts of pure hustle.

For the right reader, this will sound like fun in its unpredictability and its by-the-seat-of-one’s-pants-ness. Alas, it’ll

make most business people intrigued but slightly horrified, if nothing but for the financial aspects and concerns laid out here. Those, along with repetition, ultimately competing statements and impulsivity, and the book becomes a bit of a challenge.

Still, for people-watchers and well-moneyed free spirits who’re ready to shuck the rat race, “Rental Person Who Does Nothing” may be a tiny catalyst for that one foot out the door. If you like the status quo, paycheck and all, though, it’s safe to say hands-off.





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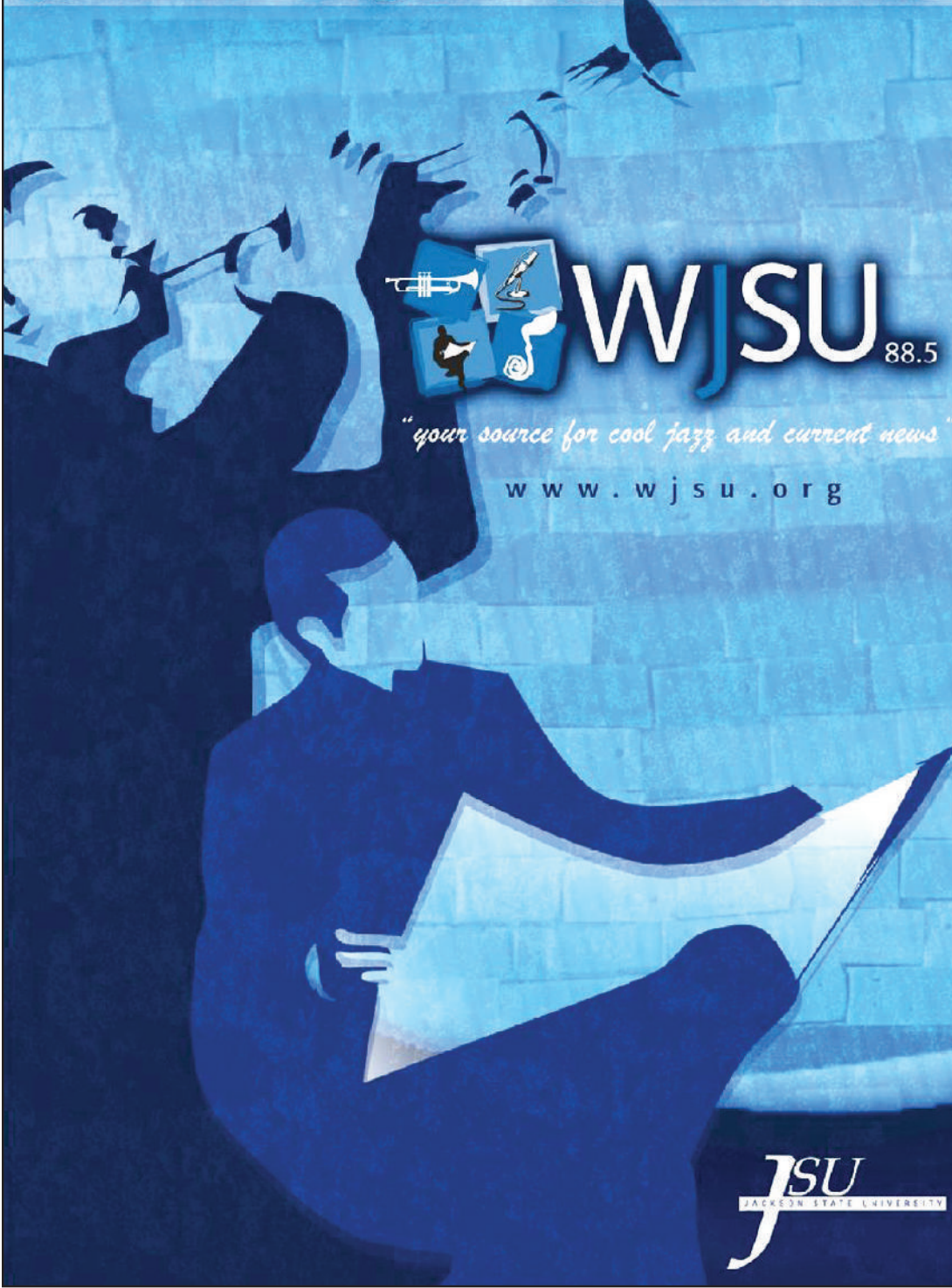
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Jackson State's men and women basketball teams undefeated in SWAC Play

By Tim Ward
Sports Writer

At 3-0, both the men's and women's basketball teams at JSU sit atop of the SWAC standings.

So far the Lady Tigers haven't been challenged thus far. Defeating Alcorn, 74 to 46, Alabama State, 75 to 49, and Alabama A&M 70-41, the Lady Tigers have jumped out to big leads early and often. Seeking their fifth consecutive SWAC title, coach Tomekia Reed has her ladies focused. Overall the Lady Tigers are 8-6 have picked up some quality non SWAC wins.

JSU will host Prairie View this Saturday at 3 p.m. Prairie View enters 1-2 in the SWAC and 5-8 overall.

JSU's Tigers mens team can boast the same 3-0 record in the SWAC. JSU is 7-9 overall with an upset win at Missouri, an SEC school. Following the same path as the women, JSU defeated Alcorn 88 to 80, Alabama State 73 to 63, and Alabama A&M 75 to 67 to have the undefeated SWAC run thus far. Head coach Mo Williams is settling in nicely and putting his fingerprints all over the program.

JSU hosts Prairie View this Saturday at 5 p.m.

Whether both teams can keep up their winning ways will be seen soon. Both squads have been good defensively and efficient offensively.



JSU Tigers men's head coach Mo Williams PHOTOS BY TIM WARD



JSU Lady Tigers women's head coach Tomekia Reed



New Hope Baptist Church
Dr. Jerry Young, Pastor
1555 Beasley Road, Jackson, MS 39206



Thirteenth Annual
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NO VOTE, NO VOICE, YOUR NO CHOICE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024 | 6PM
Civil Rights Legends Honorees Special Guest



Mrs. Maude BALLOU
(Posthumously)



Mr. Bennie RICHARD



Mr. Robert WALKER



MADDRAMA
Dr. Mark Henderson
Director

Participants:
Murrah & Jim Hill High School Color Guards, New Hope Mass Choir, NHCS:
Pre-school and Elementary Divisions, Bro. Charles Taylor and other Youth.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024 | 6PM
Grand Finalé Speaker and Special Guests



Rep. Justis GIBBS



Jim Hill High School Concert Choir
Ms. Pamela Byrd-Moody, Director



Cong. Bennie THOMPSON

Presentation of the Dr. & Mrs. Obadiah Myles Humanitarian Award



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For more information, contact: Dr. Flonzie Brown-Wright
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- 4 years of age on or before September 1, 2024
- A resident of the Hinds County School District
- Potty trained

Parents must provide the following documents with completed student application:

1. Valid photo I.D.
2. Original birth certificate (Long Form)
3. Immunization Record (State of Mississippi Form # 121)
4. Proof of legal custody or guardianship
5. Two proofs of residency

Applications are available at www.hinds.k12.ms.us

or may be picked up at Bolton-Edwards Elementary/Middle School, Utica Elementary/Middle School, Gary Road Elementary School, Raymond Elementary School, or the Bolton, Edwards, Utica, and Terry libraries.