



Mr. Chairman – Willie Simmons

A proven leader, learning early in life on a farm in Utica, Mississippi

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

As a proven leader, Commissioner Willie Simmons has a rich history that began on a farm in Utica, Mississippi. Sitting with him in his office on N. West Street in Jackson March 7, 2024, was a unique and enlightening experience. Simmons, a walking encyclopedia of transportation knowledge in Mississippi and beyond, commands an impressive understanding of dates, times, goals, people, highway routes, needs and processes. His expertise exceeds what one might typically expect from someone in his role.

Freshly reelected with over 55% of the vote, the Department of Transportation Central District benefits from his experienced leadership.

Notably, his colleagues from the Northern and Southern Districts, both Republican and Caucasian, unanimously elected Simmons as chairman of the Transportation Commission. He is among the 6% of African-American agency heads in Mis-



Commissioner Simmons with a map featuring the “west corridor” connecting Beale Street in Memphis with Bourbon Street in New Orleans. PHOTO BY CHRIS YOUNG

issippi, a state where the non-white population exceeds 40%.

The Mississippi Transportation Commission, as explained by Simmons, is vested with oversight of the state’s transportation resources and op-

erations. This three-member elected body represents three geographic areas as defined by the Supreme Court Districts: Northern, Central and Southern. The commissioners are responsible for supervising all

transportation modes, including aeronautics, highways, ports, public transit and railroads. They are charged with planning, developing and coordinating a comprehensive, balanced intermodal transportation policy for the state. The commission members select their chairman, and an executive director of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is appointed to manage the agency’s day-to-day operations. Simmons described the process of appointing the MDOT chairman as straightforward, involving a meeting and vote among the three commissioners. (Read more details at MDOT’s website.)

Statewide, MDOT oversees 29,265 highway miles, 5,812 bridges and structures, 82 airports (8 commercial and 74 public), 61 public transit provider routes and 16 public-owned river and seaports.

In his role, Simmons specifically oversees 22 counties with

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Beverly Wade Hogan: A trailblazer in higher education and advocate for change

By Edelia J. Carthan, Ed.D.
Editor

As Women’s History Month unfolds, we turn our attention to remarkable Black women whose impacts have reshaped society. Dr. Beverly W. Hogan stands out as a paragon of such influence, particularly in the realm of higher education, social justice and civil rights. Her groundbreaking tenure as the 13th president and the first woman to lead Tougaloo College is a story of resilience, leadership and transformation.

Journey from Activism to Leadership
Beverly Wade Hogan, an esteemed figure in the realms of education and social justice, embarked on her journey towards activism during her time as a student at Mississippi Valley State University. Born and raised in Mississippi, Hogan’s formative years were profoundly influenced by the social and political landscape of the American South, particularly the struggles for civil rights and racial equality.

During her tenure at Mississippi Valley State University, Hogan found herself



Beverly W. Hogan

drawn into the heart of the civil rights movement, a pivotal period in American history characterized by fervent activism and the fight against racial segregation and discrimination. However, her commitment to social justice was met with adversity when she, along with several other students, was arrested and spent a day incarcerated

at Parchman Farm, a notorious Mississippi state penitentiary known for its harsh conditions and history of human rights abuses.

Despite the challenges she faced, Hogan’s resolve remained unwavering. Following her experience at Parchman, she made the decision to transfer to Tougaloo College, a historically black institution renowned for its dedication to social activism and the advancement of civil rights. At Tougaloo, Hogan found herself among like-minded individuals who shared her passion for effecting positive change in society.

A Historic Presidency at Tougaloo College

Dr. Hogan’s presidency, which spanned from May 2002 to June 30, 2019, was a period of significant growth and advancement for Tougaloo College. She was the guiding force as the institution celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary in 2019. Recognizing the college’s stable position and potential for future growth, Hogan de-

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Iconic R&B group New Edition to be inducted into NAACP Image Awards Hall of Fame

Frankie Beverly to receive Lifetime Achievement Award



R&B Group New Edition

By Edelia J. Carthan, Ed.D.
Editor

A monumental announcement emerged today from the NAACP and BET. The illustrious Grammy-nominated New Edition is set to be inducted into the NAACP Image Awards Hall of Fame at the 55th installment of the ceremony. This prestigious accolade is traditionally awarded to trailblazers whose influence profoundly shapes their respective fields.

The group will be joining an esteemed roster of past inductees, including luminaries like Eddie Murphy, Stevie Wonder and Aretha Franklin.

In a parallel honor, the esteemed R&B artist Frankie Beverly is slated to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at the NAACP Image Awards dinner scheduled for March 14 in Los Angeles.

This award is a testament to

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From Jerusalem to Jericho: straight through to Jackson

Job Posting: seeking republican legislators who demonstrate belief in the gospels

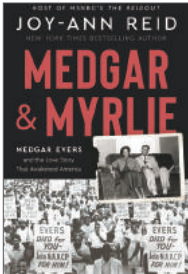
By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

According to the Gospel of Luke in the Holy Bible – New Standard Version – a lawyer questioned Jesus about inheriting eternal life. Jesus, as He always does for those who seek Him, answered. This interaction is commonly known as the parable of the Good Samaritan, a story that underscores love and mercy, fundamental for followers of Jesus Christ, those who self-identify

as Christians.

It begins in Luke, chapter 10:25, “And behold, a lawyer stood up to put Him to the test, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’” Jesus responded, “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” The lawyer answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all

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Community enlightens students and leaders at Key Elementary School with Dr. Seuss’s books in Read Across America event

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

March is a month dedicated to reading with Read Across America Day celebrated annually on March 2, the birthday of the renowned writer and cartoonist Dr. Seuss.

Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss), the author of 45 books under his pen name, has been instrumental in encouraging children to read with enthusiasm. The National Education Association (NEA) designated March 2 in 1998 as a day to emphasize the importance of reading for children in the United States.

Key Elementary School, located at 699 McDowell Rd, Jackson, MS, joined the celebration of Read Across America Thursday, March 7. Principal Elana Tate, along with the teachers and students, were energized and inspired by the participation of Jackson’s Community Voices who led the storytelling sessions.

Notable participants included Friends of Jackson, JSU Football players, JSU Omega Psi Phi and Fire Station #28. Willa Watson, representing Friends of Jackson, provided colorful, striped, high felt hats from Dr. Seuss for the reading volunteers and students. These volunteers then read and discussed stories from Dr. Seuss’s collection.

Shared stories included titles like “Hooray for Diffendoofer Day,” “Oh, the Places You’ll Go,” “Sneetches and Other Stories,” “On Beyond Zebra,” “Gerald McBoing Boing,” “Hooper Humpdink...? Not Him,” “Too Many Daves,” “The Zax” and “What Pet Should I Get?”

The event was filled with excitement



Friends of Jackson – Willa Watson and Ramona Jones – are with Key Elementary School students in celebration of Read Across America. PHOTOS BY JANICE NEAL-VINCENT



Willa Watson of Friends of Jackson challenges students at Key Elementary School as she discusses Dr. Seuss’s book, Sneetches and Other Stories.

as the students were visibly engaged, reacting with wide eyes, rocking bodies, gasps and applause to the volunteers’ expressive storytelling.

“I loved witnessing the students’ engagement, creativity and imagination. The energy was palpable, especially

when they recited and enacted ‘You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose,’” remarked Ramona Jones, a Friends of Jackson member. She expressed her joy in reading “Oh, the Places You’ll Go” to 3rd,



Key Elementary students listen attentively to one of their peers read a Dr. Seuss book.



Read Across America display at Key Elementary School.

4th and 5th graders.

This was Watson’s first Read Across America event experience. “I was truly impressed by the turnout of different community groups to support our JPS students,” she noted.

Jones reflected on her intention to



Ramona Jones of Friends of Jackson spends time with a Key Elementary School teacher and assistant at the Read Across America celebration.

serve the school and the unexpected reciprocal impact. “I went to be a blessing, but I ended up receiving a blessing from the students and their supportive teachers. I’m excited to return and engage in more activities with the group,” she said.

The students eagerly engaged with the various Dr. Seuss selections and also took turns reading to their peers. “The students listened attentively and thoughtfully responded to questions about the stories’ meanings,” stated Watson.

Watson highlighted that Friends of Jackson has been volunteering at Key Elementary School for over a year to support students in various capacities. She encourages adults to reach out to local schools to volunteer even just a few hours each month. “Your presence can significantly impact a child’s world,” she emphasized.



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Simmons

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a population of about 1 million residents. The MDOT’s budget for this year stands at approximately \$1.4 billion. Simmons’ educational journey includes Hinds County Agricultural High School, Utica Junior College and Alcorn State University. Initially a school teacher during the 1960s, he was drafted into the United States Army and proudly served as a combat veteran in the Vietnam War. Post-military service, he married Rose Sibley Simmons, his wife of fifty-two years, with whom he lives in Cleveland, Mississippi. They have four children – Avery, Christopher, Reginald, Sarita – and ten grandchildren. His political career spans over 26 years (1993-2020) in the Mississippi State Senate, where he served as chairman of the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee during the last eight years. His tenure saw over \$5 billion spent on the state’s transportation infrastructure, including roads, bridges, public transit, ports, railroads, airports and other systems. He also held roles as chairman of the Corrections Committee and vice chairman of the Public Health and Welfare Committee. Before his Senate tenure, Simmons spent seven-year years in the Department of Corrections, rising to deputy commissioner. He furthered his education during this period, earning a Master of Science in Guidance and Counseling and an Education

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cided to retire, believing it the right time to pass the leadership baton. During her tenure, Hogan’s deep understanding of the college’s history and mission, coupled with her experiences as an alumna, board member and administrator, drove significant developments. Under her guidance, Tougaloo College navigated through challenging economic periods and emerged stronger. Hogan’s leadership saw the introduction of new degree programs, the establishment of the Early College High School in partnership with the Jackson Public School District, and the creation of several centers for research and international studies. Significant technology upgrades and campus renovations, including the repurposing of the L. Zenobia Coleman Library and the construction of the Bennie G. Thompson Academic and Civil Rights Research Center, markedly enhanced the campus and its learning environment. **A Legacy of Impact and Empowerment** Reflecting on her tenure, Hogan took pride in contributing to the development of future leaders and change-makers, emphasizing the comprehensive growth of students. She believed in the power of education to create a better future through nurturing generations of leaders equipped to make sig-

New Edition

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individuals who have made remarkable contributions to both civil and human rights and the entertainment industry. NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson expressed immense pride in recognizing these iconic artists. “Celebrating the likes of New Edition and Frankie Beverly is more than an honor. It’s a recognition of their timeless talent and the profound impact they’ve had in weaving the rich tapestry of our cultural narrative. Their music is not just entertainment; it’s a resonant celebration of Black excellence,” Johnson said. Connie Orlando, EVP of Specials, Music Programming & Music Strategy at BET, also shared her excitement about the upcoming honors. “The legacy of New Edition and Frankie Beverly is indelible. They have been the architects of the modern R&B sound, influencing generations with their art. Our network’s history, notably with ‘The New Edition Story’ and honoring Frankie Beverly at the 2012 BET Awards, is intertwined with their extraordinary journeys,” Orlando remarked. For over four decades, New Edition has enchanted audiences, selling over 30 million records worldwide. The group’s members, including Bobby Brown, Johnny Gill, Ralph Tresvant and Bell Biv DeVoe, have carved out successful solo careers. They further elevated their legacy with the 2017 biopic “The New Edition Story,” a massive hit on BET. Frankie Beverly’s journey from his early days with Maze to his solo career has been marked by a string of hits like “Golden Time of Day” and “Before I Let Go.” His music has become a cornerstone of Black culture, transcending time and place. “Frankie’s voice and songs are not just heard; they are felt. They evoke a sense of community, joy and enduring hope,” commented an industry expert. The “55th NAACP Image Awards” promise to be a star-studded celebration, backed by partners including Wells Fargo, Google and Bank of America. The event, scheduled for live airing, Saturday, March 16, 2024, at 8 p.m. ET/PT on BET and CBS, is a much-anticipated fixture in the entertainment calendar. Renowned for honoring Black excellence, the NAACP Image Awards annually attract a constellation of stars from Hollywood and beyond, reaffirming the NAACP’s commitment to social justice and equality. *For further details and updates on the “55th NAACP Image Awards,” be sure to follow the event’s official Instagram handle @NAACPImageAwards.*

Specialist degree in Counseling and Administration from Delta State University. Simmons emphasizes the importance of education, standards and accountability. His life experiences, particularly growing up on a farm in Utica, have shaped his approach to collaboration and problem-solving. He recalls observing the cooperative efforts of his father and other sharecropping family heads, which now informs his work as a commissioner. He prides himself on networking and collaborating with his fellow commissioners and staff, which has fostered a supportive environment for his vision and goals for the Central District. This collaborative approach has led to recognition in the legislature and Washington as a model for transcending partisan politics in infrastructure development. On the topic of minority contracting, Simmons acknowledges MDOT’s 2% participation rate in FY2022 and is committed to improving it. The agency’s civil rights division and the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Supportive Services program, in partnership with Systems Consultants Associates, Inc., are integral to these efforts. More information on these initiatives is available at www.msdbe.com. *To address any questions or concerns, Commissioner Willie Simmons’ office can be reached at (601) 359-7035.*

nificant societal contributions. Her contributions and leadership style were highly commended by Wesley F. Prater, M.D., chairman of the Board of Trustees. He lauded Hogan, stating, “Tougaloo College is blessed to have had President Hogan at its helm since 2002. Her optimistic worldview combined with her administrative skills and innovative mindset has Tougaloo College on a solid foundation. The Tougaloo College Board of Trustees could not have asked for anything more. She will be missed.” **Honoring a Pioneering Figure** As we celebrate Women’s History Month, Dr. Beverly W. Hogan’s story is a beacon of what can be achieved through determination, leadership and a commitment to progress and social justice. Through her tireless efforts and unwavering dedication, she has not only transformed the lives of countless individuals but has also left an indelible mark on the fabric of American society. Her enduring legacy continues to inspire and motivate, underscoring the vital role women, particularly Black women, play in shaping education and societal change. Let us come together to acknowledge and honor Dr. Beverly Wade Hogan, a trailblazer in Mississippi’s history.

Jerusalem

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your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus replied, “You have answered right; do this, and you will live.” Seeking justification, the lawyer asked, “And who is my neighbor?” At verse 10:30, Jesus recounted, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. By chance, a priest was coming down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” The lawyer replied, “The one who showed mercy on him.” Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.” This parable, both simple and profound, resonates in Jackson, under the Capitol dome, where non-neighborly thinking and deeds are rampant. Who are the modern-day robbers, and who are the ones who pass by? Who are the Samaritans? The City of Jackson owns the Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport, yet there is contention from Rankin County to claim it. This battle involves not just millions of dollars per year but also concerns about power. In Mississippi, racial dynamics often underpin such disputes. The fact that Mississippi’s largest city is governed by African-American leadership unsettles many. The effort to seize control of the airport has been ongoing for years, highlighted in last month’s Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals hearing. This situation mirrors the parable’s query: who are the robbers or Samaritans here? The attempt to take over Jackson Public Schools during Governor Phil Bryant’s administration cannot be overlooked. This situation represents another challenge to an African-American economic cornerstone, this time directly from the state. Despite the Jackson Public School District’s improvement from an “F” to a “C” grade for the 2022-2023 school year, as reported by the Department of Education (<https://msrc.mdek12.org/entity?EntityID=2520-000&SchoolYear=2022>), some legislators continue to advocate for diverting funds to

private and charter schools, potentially depleting resources for public schools. This raises the question: has there been a genuine effort to repair the damage? Any attempts to demonstrate compassion, engage experts for assistance, or simply to act neighborly? Regrettably, at the Capitol, there appears to be an overwhelming majority who resemble the priests and Levites from the parable, with only a few acting as Samaritans. Despite professing Christianity, the conservative majority among the elected officials seem to exclude Jesus’ teachings from their political actions. This exclusion results in the continued marginalization of those who are different from them, perpetuating inequality with each legislative session. The severe water crisis that Jackson faced in 2022 was not a sudden occurrence, but rather the culmination of decades-long issues. Throughout this period, the city repeatedly sought funds for essential upgrades through bond requests. Unfortunately, many of these requests were either completely denied by the state or only partially fulfilled, as exemplified in February 2021 when the city’s request for \$47 million resulted in a mere \$3 million allocation, according to CNN on September 6, 2022. Safe drinking water is a fundamental need, yet some at the Capitol saw this dire situation not as a call to action but as an opportunity to divest the Capital City of this vital utility. Illustrative of this approach is Republican State Senator David Parker, who does not represent Jackson, yet introduced SB2628 to establish the Mississippi Capitol Region Utility Act. This act aimed to facilitate the state’s purchase of Jackson Water and Sewer from the City of Jackson. Legislation for Regional Utility Act is conspicuously absent in both the northern and southern regions of Mississippi, with proposals emerging solely for the Capitol Region. Senator Parker, whose professional background as an optometrist is noted on his legislative webpage, alongside his Christian faith, seemingly capitalizes on the situation created by the federally appointed administrator’s success in improving Jackson’s water and sewer system. The enhanced efficiency and profitability of the system present an opportunity he appears keen to exploit. This initiative, which can be interpreted as an attempt to override African-American leadership in Jackson, is not an isolated stance; he is joined by others with similar objectives. Far from embodying the Samaritan’s spirit of aid and empathy, his actions align more with those of a usurper. His voting record, including his stance on HB1020 last year, further illustrates this perspective.

Free Palestine rally at the Capitol

Mississippi for Palestine speaks out as two bills seek to restrict free speech



Delana Tavakol, Nemer Afaneh and Ingrid Ali



Activist Ayesha K. Mustafaa



Post-rally march around the Capitol

PHOTOS BY CHRIS YOUNG

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

The United States’ support for Israel has been unwavering since its inception 75 years ago. The aid the United States provides to Israel eclipses aid to all other countries and has exceeded \$300 billion, according to the Council on Foreign Relations. The majority of aid is provided through the Foreign Military Funding grant program, and other aid is provided through importing arms from the US, missile defense and economic aid. In December 2023, with the Israel-Hamas War two months in, the Gallup organization polled Americans, asking, “Do you think the United States supports Israel too much, about the right amount, or too little?” Thirty-six percent of respondents answered too much, 38% answered the right amount, and 24% answered too little. While war is always complicated, the numbers of people – including women and children – being killed seem far less so. NBC News reported on March 12, 2024, that over 31,000 Palestinian people have been killed since the October 7, 2023, multi-pronged attack on Israel by Hamas, which killed approximately 1,200 Israelis. Global outcry against the atrocities in Palestine continues to grow, according to numerous sources.

Many groups are allied with the movement called BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel). Jewish Voice for Peace, IFNOTNOW, Students for Justice in Palestine, and many others have joined the movement. Locally, Mississippi for Palestine held another Human Rights rally on the south steps of the Capitol at 9 a.m., March 13, 2024, with a solid hundred people in attendance. A major focus was on stopping the Israel Support Act of 2019 – HB768, which passed the lower chamber March 6, 2024, with a vote of 104-2, with sixteen absent or not voting. The bill was transmitted to the Senate five days later, where it awaits action. The goal is to extend the repealer. This bill prohibits companies doing business with Mississippi from engaging in free speech about Israel or any form of boycotting. The companies are given a 90-day notice to cease anti-Israel speech/boycott – <https://legiscan.com/MS/text/HB768/id/2956693>. Senate Bill 2226 is nearly identical to HB768, extending the repealer for another four years, until 2028. It passed March 12, 2024, with a vote of 41-0, with eleven senators absent or not voting – <https://legiscan.com/MS/rollcall/SB2226/id/1408318>. Just before the event began, Attorney Blake Feldman spoke to reporters. “Today there is a call

for a Global Day of Action for the genocide and ongoing actions by Israel, including documented starvation. We are here today to also call on our legislators to not pass two bills that are designed to punish Mississippians for exercising free political speech by participating in boycotts against Israel. The silence of our elected leaders at the Capitol coupled with legislation to intimidate people who support Palestine or speak out against Israel makes it especially egregious to us. We’re here today to exercise free speech to protect free speech. It’s especially important here, there’s no place for these bills in Mississippi given Mississippi’s history toward oppressed groups and boycotts.” When asked by WAPT about Israel shooting themselves in the foot with their ongoing actions, Feldman responded, “I’m not an expert in geopolitics, but I would say that Israel’s standing in the world and its credibility has suffered, and the United States has also for providing political cover for what they have done.” Candace Abdul-Tawwab served as emcee for the rally where numerous advocates and activists stepped up to the loudspeaker to share their voices. A persistent theme was the growing number of children dying. CNN reported March 8, 2024, that the

death toll for children since the war began is 12,800 – with airstrikes, malnutrition and dehydration being the causes. Many speakers at the rally mentioned the hypocrisy of claiming a culture of life here in Mississippi, while trying to restrict free speech against a nation-state that is killing children daily. Have we heard any of our legislators speaking out publicly about the atrocities in Palestine? By not casting a no-vote on these bills, aren’t they effectively turning a blind eye to not only the injustice in Gaza but also to the injustice of the Republican majority endeavoring to restrict free speech? Is the abundance of absent/not-voting indicative of apathy, feeling outnumbered by the majority, or a form of protest by chance? This question was put to Senator Hillman T. Frazier (D-27) with over 43 years in the Mississippi Legislature. When reached by telephone, he indicated, “There are some real problems over there in Palestine, and many of us are deeply concerned. By not voting on it is a way of protesting.” In addition to not voting, perhaps we can look forward to some of this group coming forward to the microphone and telling how they really feel. Again, there was not one no-vote on SB2226.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BRADLEY

Nissan Cars and Coffee Event

Saturday, March 9, 2024 • Nissan Plant • Canton, MS

Cars and Coffee is a gathering of auto enthusiasts who meet to enjoy coffee and cars.



Greater Mt. Calvary M.B. Church marks its 54th anniversary in a grand celebration

By Edelia J. Carthan, Ed.D.
Editor

Greater Mt. Calvary M.B. Church, a beacon of faith and community in the region, celebrated its 54th anniversary March 10, 2024, with a grand ceremony that uplifted and inspired its congregation and guests. The event, held at 11 a.m., was a remarkable testament to the church's enduring legacy and its profound impact on the lives of its members and the community at large.

The event commenced with Joan Truly serving as the mistress of ceremonies. Her grace and eloquence set the tone for an event that was both spiritually enriching and joyously celebratory. Truly's guiding hand ensured that the program flowed seamlessly, highlighting the church's vibrant history and its vision for the future.

A significant highlight of the celebration was the special tributes presented to Pastor Dr. John E. Cameron, Sr., and First Lady Lenora Woods Cameron. These heartfelt tributes, offered by the Greater Mt. Calvary M.B. Church family, reflected the deep admiration and respect the congregation holds for their spiritual leaders. The Camerons' dedication and service over the years have been pivotal in the church's growth and its profound community impact.



Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr., senior pastor, First Institutional Baptist Church, Phoenix, Arizona



Greater Mt. Calvary gospel choir

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Deacon Johnny Straughter bringing the special tribute to Pastor and First Lady Cameron



Rev. Hosea Hines introduced the guest speaker, a long time friend



Reverend Klaus Tate



Pastor John E. Cameron



Reverend Ted T. Taylor, Sr., associate minister

The introduction of the keynote speaker, Rev. Hosea J. Hines, pastor of Christ Tabernacle Church in Jackson, Mississippi, was a moment of great anticipation. Rev. Hines, known for his dynamic and insightful preaching, brought a message that resonated with all in attendance, encapsulating the essence of faith, perseverance and community.

Adding to the spiritual ambi-

ance of the occasion, The gospel choir of Greater Mt. Calvary delivered several musical selections. Their powerful and soul-stirring renditions were not just performances but a form of worship that deeply moved the congregation, further elevating the celebratory atmosphere.

The anniversary message, delivered by Dr. Warren H. Stewart Sr., senior pastor of

First Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix, Arizona, was a cornerstone of the celebration. Dr. Stewart's message, imbued with wisdom and guidance, served as a beacon of hope, encouraging the congregation to continue its journey of faith with renewed vigor and purpose.

The event drew to a close with remarks from Dr. John E. Cameron, Sr. His words, filled

with gratitude and a vision for the future, reminded everyone of the church's foundational principles and the collective journey ahead. Dr. Cameron's closing remarks were not just a reflection of the past 54 years but also a rallying call for continued faith, service and community engagement.

As Greater Mt. Calvary M.B. Church looks forward to the years ahead, its 54th anni-

versary celebration stands as a milestone, not only commemorating its past but also sowing seeds for a future filled with faith, community service and spiritual growth.

The church, under the steadfast leadership of Dr. and Mrs. Cameron, continues to be a pillar of hope and a source of spiritual nourishment for its congregation and the wider community.

Music

FOR THE HEART & SOUL

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FREE EVENT

Saturday, April 27, 2024 • 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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email health.equityoffice@msdh.ms.gov
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MISSISSIPPI
STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Empowering Mississippi: the urgent case for Medicaid expansion

The National Coalition of 100 Black Women

The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Central Mississippi Chapter (NCBW), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has consistently been a strong partner in community building through advocacy initiatives focusing on empowering Black women and girls. NCBW believes in empowering women and girls to alleviate poverty, dependency and improve planning at the family and community level, resulting in healthier people and communities. We advocate for opportunities for Black women and girls to participate fully in an inclusive and equitable world, contributing to the economic and social vitality of their communities.

We aim to engage our larger community in important issues for achieving the quality of life we desire for ourselves and our families. Awareness, we be-

lieve, will spark interest and inspire action, moving us toward healthier families and communities. The first of our monthly “Issues of the Day” series focuses on Medicaid Expansion, currently under consideration in the Mississippi legislature. We view this issue as central to developing healthy families and communities.

Medicaid should transcend partisan politics. It’s the primary option for the working poor, providing healthcare coverage to qualified individuals based on income and assets, who must meet the Federal Poverty Level. Eligibility extends to low-income pregnant women, families with children, people with disabilities and parents or caregivers.

Access to quality health care is increasingly vital as communities face risks of hospital closures and limited access to

preventative or primary care.

Mississippi is among 12 states that haven’t expanded Medicaid under the 2010 Affordable Care Act, with approximately 60% of voters supporting expansion to uninsured, low-income residents. The Mississippi House of Representatives recently passed a bill for Medicaid expansion, now with the Senate. If approved, the bill would enable negotiations for Medicaid expansion for the working poor earning up to the federal poverty line, approximately \$20,000 annually for an individual. This includes those working 20 hours weekly or full-time students.

Mississippi has one of the nation’s highest uninsured rates, with 16.4% of individuals aged 19 to 64 and 17.3% of those 65 and older uninsured, according to the American Community Survey. As a medically under-

served state with poor health outcomes, access to quality preventive and primary care services is crucial for improving the health of many Mississippians.

Research indicates that Medicaid expansion enhances access to healthcare for pregnant and postpartum women, with improvements in adverse pregnancy outcomes and declines in maternal mortality and morbidity. Medicaid expansion correlates with reduced mortality, decreased food insecurity and poverty rates, fewer home evictions and better self-reported health and behaviors.

Beyond healthcare coverage, Medicaid expansion brings indirect fiscal benefits from new federal dollars, appearing as a fiscally prudent opportunity to enhance the health and well-being of Mississippi’s vulnerable residents. Notably, 30%

of Mississippi children live in poverty, with stark racial disparities: 49% of Black children compared to 16% of White non-Hispanic children live in poverty. This disparity is alarmingly evident in 21st-century Mississippi.

Additionally, 34% of Mississippi’s 74 rural hospitals, crucial for vulnerable populations, are at risk of closure, exacerbating poor health outcomes. Studies show Medicaid expansion helps reduce hospital closures.

Further research suggests that expansion’s financial impact on states is largely positive, including budget savings and economic growth. The multiplier effect indicates that increased health care revenue leads to more employment, business and consumer activity.

We strongly believe the benefits of Medicaid expansion

outweigh the disadvantages. It can significantly improve poor health outcomes, enhancing Mississippians’ ability to live productively and contribute to state economic growth.

We commend the House of Representatives for advancing this legislation and remain hopeful for the Senate’s action. It’s time for our state to invest in its most vulnerable citizens, anticipating the rewards that will follow. We echo the words of former U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey, “The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.”

*Issues of the Day Task Force
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Central Mississippi Chapter*

It’s tax time: 3 ways the pros can help you save this year

StatePoint

As tax season unfolds, you might wonder how an effective tax strategy can assist in achieving your financial objectives, whether you’re a young professional filing taxes for the first time or nearing retirement.

During tax time, prioritize this aspect of your financial plan by engaging with a Certified Financial Planner™ professional.

Here are three ways a CFP® professional can help you maximize tax deductions, tax credits and tax-advantaged accounts.

Avoid Surprises

Receiving a tax refund may seem advantageous, but it actually means you’ve provided the government with an interest-free loan. On the other hand,

owing a large tax bill is equally undesirable. A CFP® professional can assist in fine-tuning your tax estimates or withholdings to achieve a more balanced outcome at the end of the year. If you do receive a refund, they can guide you in reinvesting that money effectively within your overall financial strategy.

Plan for the Future

The maximum employee deferrals to defined contribution plans like 401(k)s and 403(b)s have significantly increased. A CFP® professional can help you ascertain the optimal monthly contribution amount to effectively shield more of your income from taxes. This strategy is particularly beneficial if you’re close to a higher tax

bracket; reducing your taxable income may shift you into a lower bracket, resulting in savings. Additionally, increasing your deferrals can significantly enhance your retirement readiness.

Become a Strategic Giver

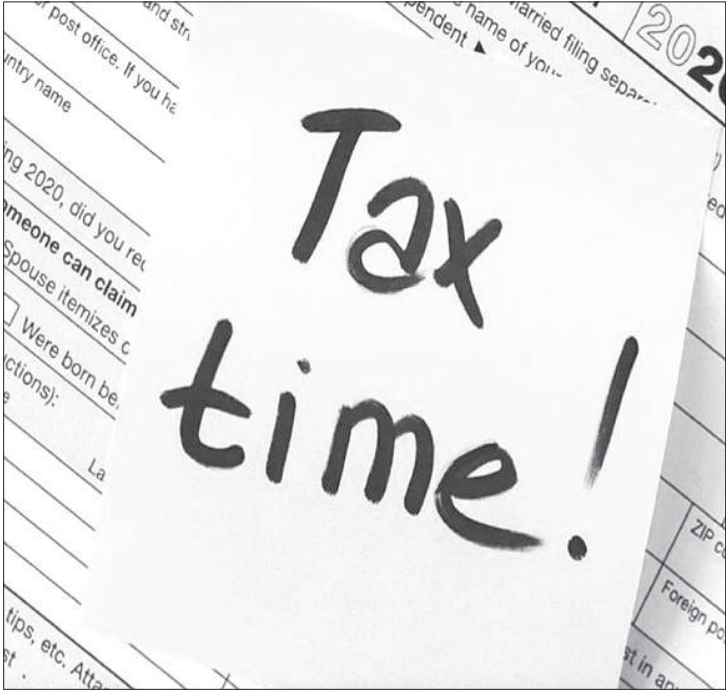
If you’re accustomed to filing taxes annually, you might have noticed the high threshold for claiming deductions on charitable donations. For 2023, the standard deduction is \$13,850 for single filers and \$27,700 for married couples filing jointly. A CFP® professional can advise you on establishing a donor-advised fund to “bunch” your donations, allowing you to qualify for deductions immediately. This method is not only

tax-beneficial for you but also advantageous for your chosen charities, as it lets your contributions potentially grow before allocating them.

CFP® professionals stay abreast of the latest changes in the tax code that average investors might not be aware of.

Navigating the complexities of taxes is a crucial aspect of financial planning. With a financial advisor’s guidance, you can avoid surprises, preserve more of your hard-earned money, and position yourself effectively to achieve your goals.

To connect with a CFP® professional who is committed to your best interests during tax season and beyond, visit Lets-MakeAPlan.org



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The Mississippi Link™

Volume 30 • Number 21

March 14 - 20, 2024

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Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge announces retirement

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Marcia Fudge Announces Departure from Biden-Harris Administration

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Marcia Fudge, a former Congressional Black Caucus chair and staunch advocate for the Black Press of America, has announced her departure from her role in the Biden-Harris administration. The 71-year-old Fudge disclosed that her last day in office would be March 22.

After decades of public service, she'll return to her home state of Ohio. "It's time to go home," she told USA TODAY. "I do believe strongly that I have done just about everything I could do at HUD for this administration as we go into this crazy, silly season of an election."

Fudge, the second Black woman to lead HUD, has been a key figure in steering the agency through the housing crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. She has also pushed for the federal government to include the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) on behalf of



Fudge

the Black Press of America in its advertising spend

"The NNPA salutes and forthrightly acknowledges the leadership, service and commitment of the Honorable Marcia L. Fudge as the accomplished Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development (HUD)," said NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

"The Black Press of America expresses our gratitude to Secretary Fudge in particular for helping tens of thousands of underserved Americans increase their opportunities to

become homeowners."

Fudge's departure comes amid the intensifying campaign season, with President Joe Biden facing off against twice-impeached and four-times indicted Republican former President Donald Trump.

"It is not a red or blue issue," Fudge declared. "Everybody knows that it is an issue, so it's not one-sided. It's an American issue."

Despite her efforts to enhance HUD's role in supporting families with housing needs, addressing homelessness and fostering economic development, Fudge expressed concerns about inadequate funding. She highlighted the need for more than \$70 billion to address the demand for affordable housing and to repair aging public housing developments.

President Biden echoed Fudge's call for bipartisan attention to affordable housing in a statement: "A fair housing market and access to quality and affordable housing are critical to the fulfillment of the American dream, and no one

understands that better than Secretary Marcia L. Fudge," Biden said.

CBC Chair Steven Horsford (D-Nevada) and members praised Fudge's leadership and decades of service. "Since her confirmation in March of 2021, Secretary Fudge has worked tirelessly to provide access to safe and affordable housing to millions of American families, with a particular focus on racial equity and addressing the gap in Black homeownership," the CBC's statement read. "Under her leadership, the agency has supported nearly a quarter of a million Black people in purchasing a home and has taken significant steps to root out racial bias in the home appraisal process. She leaves her mark on the agency as a passionate leader, the first African-American woman to lead the department in decades and only the second in our nation's history."

Biden praised Fudge's leadership, her dedication to rebuilding HUD and her expanding efforts to build generational wealth through homeownership. He expressed

gratitude for her contributions and wished her well in her next chapter as she transitions from public service to private life.

"Under Marcia's transformational leadership, we have worked hard to lower housing costs and increase supply," Biden asserted. "We've proposed the largest investment in affordable housing in U.S. history. We've taken steps to aggressively combat racial discrimination in housing by ensuring home appraisals are more fair and by strengthening programs to redress the negative impacts of redlining. Thanks to Secretary Fudge, we've helped first-time homebuyers, and we are working to cut the cost of renting. And there are more housing units under construction right now than at any time in the last 50 years."

For her part, Fudge said she's simply done with politics. "Don't look for me to ever be on another ballot, another appointee or anything like that," she insisted. "I really do look forward to being a private citizen."

NAACP urges Black student-athletes to reconsider Florida colleges amid DEI funding controversy



By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

NAACP president and CEO Derrick Johnson has called on Black student-athletes to reconsider their decisions to attend public colleges and universities in Florida. The call comes in response to a new state policy preventing institutions from utilizing government funds for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs.

In a letter sent to current and prospective student-athletes of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) on Monday, NBC News reported that Johnson urged them to "choose wisely" amidst the ongoing debate surrounding DEI funding in Florida. He emphasized the crucial role of diversity, equity and inclusion in ensuring equitable and effective educational outcomes, noting that Black athletes' value to large universities is unmatched.

The controversy stems from a bill signed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis last year, restricting public colleges and universities from using state and federal funds for DEI programs. "If these institutions are unable to completely invest in those athletes, it's time they take their talents elsewhere," Johnson declared, according to NBC News.

The University of Florida's recent

decision to eliminate all DEI positions, complying with the state rule, drew condemnation from NFL Hall of Famer Emmitt Smith, an alum of the school. Smith emphasized the need for minority athletes to be aware and vocal about such decisions.

The trend against DEI programs has heightened, with Republican politicians in more than 30 states introducing bills to restrict or regulate such efforts. Texas Governor Greg Abbott, for instance, signed a law last year ordering the closure of DEI offices at state-funded colleges and universities.

The NAACP's call comes on the heels of a similar message from Birmingham, Alabama Mayor Randall Woodfin, who asserted that if his state passed a bill blocking funding for DEI in public colleges, he would encourage student-athletes to explore programs in other states.

Florida's significance in Division I athletics and its central role in college sports business are one issue the NAACP zeroed in on. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the University of Florida's sports teams generated over \$177 million in revenue from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

"If any institution is to reap the benefits of Black talent, it is only right that they completely invest in Black futures," Johnson argued.

Congressman Thompson's response to Loudermilk's initial "Findings" report

By Edelia Carthan, Ed.D.
Publisher

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), former chairman of the Bipartisan Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol, issued the following statement addressing recent criticisms of the committee's work by Loudermilk:

"Mr. Loudermilk's latest attack on the Select Committee's efforts is patently dishonest. The final report of the Select Committee was comprehensive, incorporating testimonies from all witnesses, including those highlighted in the transcript released today, particularly at pages 127-128 and 585-592. The evidence uniformly leads to a singular conclusion: Donald Trump aspired to join his violent mob as it advanced on the Capitol and was visibly angered when prevented from doing so by



Thompson

his security detail.

"Furthermore, the Select Com-

mittee has transparently detailed its reasons for forwarding certain transcripts to the executive branch for review. This included a comprehensive explanation in our letter dated December 22, 2022. Our obligation was to safeguard sensitive information and the privacy of witnesses, steps that Mr. Loudermilk conveniently omits in his assessment. His selective narrative is a clear attempt to undermine the Committee's findings, ignoring facts that contradict his position.

"Mr. Loudermilk's actions appear to be a deliberate attempt to shift focus from Donald Trump's culpability in the January 6th violence and from his own reluctance to respond to the Select Committee's inquiries. The record and facts speak for themselves, and attempts to discredit the Committee's thorough work only serve to distract from the truth."

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS
City of Jackson
Jackson, Mississippi

Sealed, signed bids are invited and will be received by the City of Jackson, Mississippi, 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, April 02, 2024, at which time said bids will be publicly opened at the City Hall located at 219 South President Street (City Council Chambers) in City Hall for the following:

07208-040224 - Knuckleboom Trash Loader & Dump Body

BIDS ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT WWW.JACKSONMS.GOV & WWW.CENTRALBIDDING.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 Session of the Mississippi Legislature.

The City 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 business opportunities for *all persons* doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offer shall submit a *completed and signed* Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan Application, with each bid submission, in 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 shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offer, from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City's EBO Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at (601)960-1055. Copies of the EBO Ordinance, EBO Plan Application and a copy of the EBO Program are available with the Office of Economic Development at 218 South President Street, Second Floor, Jackson, Mississippi.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids. The City also reserves the right to waive any and all informalities in respect to any bid submitted. Bid awards will be made to the lowest and best bidder quoting the lowest net price in accordance with specifications. The award could be according to the lowest cost per item; or to the lowest total cost for all items; or to accept all or part of any proposal. *Delivery time may be considered when evaluating the bid proposal.* In those cases where it is known prior to advertising that the City's intention is to award according to the lowest total cost for all items, or in some variation thereof, statements to this affect will be included on the proposal form. Absence of such statement means the City will make that determination during the bid review.

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

MOtn

3/7/2024, 3/14/2024

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CITY OF JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
STATE STREET SIGNAL PROJECT
FROM HIGH ST TO AMITE ST, FROM PEARL ST TO SOUTH ST, AND AT RANKIN ST
Federal Aid Project Number: STP-6928-00(014)LPA / 108073-701000

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, P. O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30- P.M. (Local Time), April 2, 2024, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for STATE STREET SIGNAL PROJECT Federal Aid Project No. STP-6928-00(014)LPA/108073-701000, at which time said bids shall be opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

The refurbishment of nine (9) existing traffic signals along State St. in Jackson, MS. The traffic signals are located at High Street, Mississippi Street, Amite Street, Pearl Street, Pascagoula Street, Tombigbee Street, Court Street, South Street, and Rankin Street. Controller cabinets, wiring, traffic signal heads, pedestrian buttons, signage, damaged mast arms, vehicle detection systems, and related items will be replaced per plans. All other related items of work required to complete the project as shown and specified in the Contract Documents.

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

Contract time shall be 120 working days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. Liquidated Damages will be assessed in accordance with the Schedule of Deductions table in Section 108.07 of the 2017 Edition of the Mississippi Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any Contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged and women's business enterprises (DBE/WBE) will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. The award of this contract will be contingent upon the Bidder satisfying the DBE/WBE requirements as prescribed by the Contract Documents.

The attention of the bidders is directed to the Contract Documents governing selection and employment of labor. Minimum wage rates have been determined by the Secretary of Labor and are subject to Public Law 87-581, Work Hours Act of 1962, as set forth in the Contract Provisions.

The Proposal and Contract Documents in their entirety shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and deposited with the Municipal Clerk, prior to the hour and date above designated. Each Bidder must also deposit with his proposal, a Bid Bond or Certified Check in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his bid, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. No bidder may withdraw his bid within ninety (90) days after the date of the actual bid opening, without the City of Jackson's consent. The successful bidder shall furnish a payment bond and performance bond each in the amount of 100% of the bid. Bidder shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the City.

The Official Bid Documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.central-bidding.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.

Work to be performed shall be in accordance with the "Mississippi State Highway Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, 2017", together with all amendments and/or special provisions and/or addenda to the standards duly approved and adopted, unless otherwise noted in these specifications. The attention of Bidders is directed to the provisions of Subsection 102.07 pertaining to irregular proposals and rejection of bids.

Contract Drawings, Contract Specifications, and other Contract Documents are on file and open to public inspection in the office of the Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, Warren Hood Building, 4th floor, 200 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Copies of the Contract Documents, Contract Drawings and Contract Specifications may be procured Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com, upon payment for each set, which will not be refunded.

The award of a Contract, if made, will be to the lowest and responsible qualified bidder whose proposal complies with all the requirements prescribed herein and in the Contract Documents. The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Robert Lee, P.E.
City Engineer

3/7/2024, 3/14/2024

LEGAL

RULE 81 SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION
IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
CHARLIE FLOYD ROBINSON, JR., DECEASED

CAUSE NO. P2024-82 T/1

PETITIONER: JAYLA COLLINS

SUMMONS

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI


TO: THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF CHARLIE FLOYD ROBINSON, JR., DECEASED

You have been made a Defendant in the suit filed in this Court by Jayla Collins Petitioner, seeking the adjudication of heirs of Charlie Floyd Robinson, Jr., Deceased.

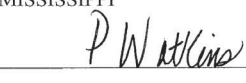
You are summoned to appear and defend against the complaint or petition filed against you in this action at 1:30 o'clock p. m., on the 8th day of May, 2024, in the Chancery Courtroom of Hinds County before Honorable DeWayne Thomas, Chancellor. In case of your failure to appear and defend a judgment will be entered against you for the money or other things demanded in the complaint or 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 the seal of said Court, this the 6th day of March, 2024.



EDDIE JEAN CARR
CHANCERY CLERK OF HINDS COUNTY,
MISSISSIPPI



3/7/2024, 3/14/2024, 3/21/2024

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CITY OF JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
STATE STREET SIGNAL PROJECT
FROM HIGH ST TO AMITE ST, FROM PEARL ST TO SOUTH ST, AND AT RANKIN ST
Federal Aid Project Number: STP-6928-00(014)LPA / 108073-701000

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, P. O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30- P.M. (Local Time), April 2, 2024, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for STATE STREET SIGNAL PROJECT Federal Aid Project No. STP-6928-00(014)LPA/108073-701000, at which time said bids shall be opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

The refurbishment of nine (9) existing traffic signals along State St. in Jackson, MS. The traffic signals are located at High Street, Mississippi Street, Amite Street, Pearl Street, Pascagoula Street, Tombigbee Street, Court Street, South Street, and Rankin Street. Controller cabinets, wiring, traffic signal heads, pedestrian buttons, signage, damaged mast arms, vehicle detection systems, and related items will be replaced per plans. All other related items of work required to complete the project as shown and specified in the Contract Documents.

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

Contract time shall be 120 working days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. Liquidated Damages will be assessed in accordance with the Schedule of Deductions table in Section 108.07 of the 2017 Edition of the Mississippi Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any Contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged and women's business enterprises (DBE/WBE) will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. The award of this contract will be contingent upon the Bidder satisfying the DBE/WBE requirements as prescribed by the Contract Documents.

The attention of the bidders is directed to the Contract Documents governing selection and employment of labor. Minimum wage rates have been determined by the Secretary of Labor and are subject to Public Law 87-581, Work Hours Act of 1962, as set forth in the Contract Provisions.

The Proposal and Contract Documents in their entirety shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and deposited with the Municipal Clerk, prior to the hour and date above designated. Each Bidder must also deposit with his proposal, a Bid Bond or Certified Check in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his bid, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. No bidder may withdraw his bid within ninety (90) days after the date of the actual bid opening, without the City of Jackson's consent. The successful bidder shall furnish a payment bond and performance bond each in the amount of 100% of the bid. Bidder shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the City.

The Official Bid Documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.central-bidding.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.

Work to be performed shall be in accordance with the "Mississippi State Highway Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, 2017", together with all amendments and/or special provisions and/or addenda to the standards duly approved and adopted, unless otherwise noted in these specifications. The attention of Bidders is directed to the provisions of Subsection 102.07 pertaining to irregular proposals and rejection of bids.

Contract Drawings, Contract Specifications, and other Contract Documents are on file and open to public inspection in the office of the Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, Warren Hood Building, 4th floor, 200 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Copies of the Contract Documents, Contract Drawings and Contract Specifications may be procured Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com, upon payment for each set, which will not be refunded.

The award of a Contract, if made, will be to the lowest and responsible qualified bidder whose proposal complies with all the requirements prescribed herein and in the Contract Documents. The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Robert Lee, P.E.
City Engineer

3/7/2024, 3/14/2024

LEGAL

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE
ESTATE OF CHARLIE FLOYD
ROBINSON, JR., DECEASED


CAUSE NO: P2024-82 T/1

JAYLA COLLINS, ADMINISTRATOR

NOTICE TO UNKNOWN CREDITORS

Letters of Administration having been granted on February 20, 2024, by the Chancery Court of Hinds County, Mississippi to the undersigned Administrator upon the Estate of Charlie Floyd Robinson, Jr., Deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons having claims against said estate to present the same to the Clerk of this Court for probation and registration according to the law, within ninety (90) days from the first publication of this notice, or they will be forever barred.

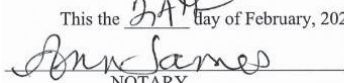
This the 21st day of February, 2024.

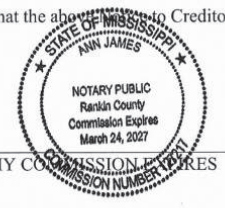

Jayla Collins, Administrator

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF HINDS

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority in and for the jurisdiction aforesaid, the within named, Jayla Collins Administrator for the Estate of Charlie Floyd Robinson, Jr., deceased, who having been by me first duly sworn, states that the above is true and correct as therein stated.

This the 24th day of February, 2024.


NOTARY



Damon Stevenson, Stevenson Legal Group, PLLC
1010 N. West Street, Jackson, MS 39202
Telephone: (769) 251-0207, Facsimile: (601) 608-7872

2/29/2024, 3/7/2024, 3/14/2024

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CITY OF JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
WOODROW WILSON AVENUE SIGNAL PROJECT
Federal Aid Project Number: STP-0250-00(052)LPA/108072-701000

The City of Jackson, Mississippi, will receive bids for the WOODROW WILSON AVENUE SIGNAL PROJECT, Federal Aid Project No. STP-0250-00(052)LPA/108072-701000 no later than 3:30 p.m., Local Time, April 2, 2024, at the Office of the Municipal Clerk located at 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. All bids received will be publicly opened and read aloud. The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

Installation of traffic signal equipment at the intersections of Woodrow Wilson Avenue at Bailey Avenue, Woodrow Wilson Avenue at Bailey Avenue Extension, Bailey Avenue at Glendale Street, and at Woodrow Wilson Avenue at Medgar Evers Blvd (5 Points) and all other related items of work required to complete the project as shown as specified in the contract documents.

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

The attention of bidders is directed to the Contract Provisions governing selection and employment of labor. Minimum wage rates for Federal-Aid projects have been predetermined by the Secretary of Labor and are subject to Public Law 87-581 Work Hours Act of 1962, as set forth in the Contract Provisions.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged and women's business enterprises will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion or national origin in consideration for an award.

The award of this contract will be contingent upon the Contractor satisfying the DBE/WBE requirements.

Plans, specifications and contract documents are on file and open to public inspection at the Office of Stantec Consulting Services Inc., 2300 Lakeland Terrace, Suite 200, Jackson, Mississippi, 39216 and the Engineering Department of the City of Jackson. One (1) copy of the Plans, Specifications and Contract Documents may be procured upon payment of \$200.00 (by check, made payable to "Stantec Consulting Services Inc.") from 2300 Lakeland Terrace, Suite 200, Jackson, Mississippi, 39216. The payment is nonrefundable.

901-1

Each bid shall be accompanied by a Cashier's check, Certified Check on a solvent bank or a Bidder's Bond issued by a Surety Company licensed to operate in the State of Mississippi, in the amount of five percent (5%) of the total bid price, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. Bidders shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the County. The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Payment bond each in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract amount.

The proposal and contract documents in its entirety shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and deposited with the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi prior to the hour and date above designated.

Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.central-bidding.com. Electronic bids can be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810- 4814.

Work to be performed shall be in accordance with the "Mississippi State Highway Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, 2017", together with all amendments and/or special provisions and/or addenda to the standards duly approved and adopted, unless otherwise noted in these specifications.

The attention of Bidders is directed to the provisions of Subsection 102.07 pertaining to irregular proposals and rejection of bids.

Robert Lee, P.E.
City Engineer

3/7/2024, 3/14/2024

U-RENTAL
Van Company



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This project in Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the US Government.

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

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Sudoku Solution

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

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Week of March 10, 2024

P R E S E R V E D

Face to face

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



“I have a what on my where?” I asked my doctor as she reexplained what I’d obviously been too pre-occupied to hear. Honestly, I knew I’d heard it right but, I was just hoping she’d say something different the second time. By the time I collected my thoughts, the reality of what she said was literally staring me in the face: I had a fungus on my face!

Initially, I’d noticed the quarter-size strange dark spot while I was putting on makeup as I got ready for work a number of years ago. Fearful of what it might be, I immediately made a doctor’s appointment. After the doctor gave me the prescription for the problem

and explained how she wanted me to use it, I asked her if I could still wear makeup. She looked at me with a mixture of surprise and amusement, “Eye makeup and lipstick only” was her quick response.

Funny thing is she couldn’t tell me where the fungus came from. She just said sometimes as women age, our bodies do strange things. Tell me about it, I thought.

Even though I was glad that I finally knew what this mysterious “thing” was on my face, I was not looking forward to walking around in public with no makeup for two weeks. To convince myself that I wasn’t a makeupless menace to society, I said for the first few days of the treatment was that I was getting my face “back in shape.” But oh, how scary looking I must have looked with no makeup.

My friends even told me all the right things like, “You are pretty without makeup.” However, the best thing about not wearing makeup is that I saved at least 15 minutes off my time in getting ready for work in the mornings.

In the end, the cream that the doctor prescribed worked within a few days. There were days when I wanted to cover the spot with makeup where others couldn’t see it, but I’d still know that it was there. It’s like I was put in a position where I had no choice but to be transparent. She warned me that if I tried to cover up my face while it was trying to heal, it would hinder the healing process and might even make it worse.

In the end, I felt like God taught me how to be transparent, embrace and not hide my flaws. I didn’t die like I

thought I would by not wearing makeup.

In order to be completely healed, I had to risk being transparent. In much the same way, when we choose to be transparent and are honest about our flaws (no matter how many), we also choose to take the first step to embracing God’s promises of emotional and spiritual healing as it says in Jeremiah 33:6, “I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.”

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.

P A R T 2

From promise made to prayer answered

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



There are people who can sit under the most powerful sermons and leave. Why? Simply because they are asleep to the things and the ways of God. They are asleep to the calling and wooing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit pleading and dealing with them. They are asleep in that condition.

You don’t know what tomorrow holds; you don’t know what this very day holds.

“Oh, you’re just trying to scare us.” No, I’m telling you the reality of life. I’m telling you the truth. Life is uncertain. People need to be awakened out of their sleep of sin and sometimes the most powerful messages just cannot stir them. They are unaware of the opportunity offered.

An opportunity is not a tangible thing you can take and put in the bank and go capitalized on whenever it is presented.

If you’re asleep to the things and the ways of God, you’ll be given an opportunity to come and taste and see that the Lord is good. You’ll be given an opportunity to give your life to God and leave the power of sin. What will you do with this opportunity? Again, an opportunity is not a tangible thing you can take and put in the bank

and go capitalize on anytime you want The Bible says, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

You need to hear the call, you need to hear the preaching, because God chose “by the foolishness of preaching to save (awaken) them that believe.” They need to come to the place where they will receive the gift of God – salvation and eternal life. That is so much more appealing than continuing down the road with the thief who is there to steal, to kill and to destroy. What will your decision be?

Sleep is a state where people are hard to shake awake sometimes. The devil is here, and if you’re in sin, he’s telling you that this preacher is just an old fogey. I may be, but he’s a liar.

He’s not going to tell you the truth. The devil is there telling you, “No, not now, not now, not now,” but if you’re going to be awakened to the things and the ways of God, you’re going to have to come to the place where you’re going to defy him. You’re going to have to shake yourself loose from that state of being asleep, and come to the altar and ask God to forgive you.

I promise you, on the authority of God’s Word, that you will never be sorry. Read Psalm 34:8.

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



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Affordable dental coverage gives older adults a reason to smile

StatePoint

Taking care of your mouth is a crucial part of maintaining health and vitality as you age. Neglecting dental health can lead to gum disease, poor nutrition, infections and can even affect your emotional well-being.

However, many older adults are missing out on proper oral care. The Kaiser Family Foundation reports that over 20% of Medicare beneficiaries haven't visited a dentist in five years, largely due to cost.

Upon retirement, many people lose their dental coverage.



Dr. J.B. Sobel, chief medical officer with Cigna Healthcare's Medicare business, notes that affordable options are available. "Original Medicare doesn't cover routine dental care, but Medicare Advantage (MA) plans often include dental coverage at no extra cost. These plans may offer the choice of any provider or require the use of network providers. Some MA plans even offer no-cost transportation to the dentist."

Dr. Cary Sun, chief dental officer with Cigna Dental and Vision, emphasizes the importance of dental care for reasons including:

- Preventing Oral Health Issues**
Routine teeth cleanings are essential to prevent cavities, gum disease, infections and gingivitis, which can lead to tooth loss and costly procedures like root canals or crowns. Those with chronic conditions like diabetes are at an increased risk of infection due to poor oral hygiene. Regular dental visits, brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and flossing are vital. Using an electric toothbrush or water flosser can simplify these routines.
- Addressing Dry Mouth**
Many older adults take medications that cause "dry mouth," leading to difficulties in chewing, swallowing or speaking and

increasing the risk of tooth decay and oral infections. Dentists can suggest treatments like saliva substitutes and lifestyle changes, including drinking water regularly and reducing tobacco, caffeine and alcohol.

Facilitating Good Nutrition
A healthy mouth is essential for proper nutrition, especially in older adults. Issues like gum disease or ill-fitting dentures can make chewing difficult. Dentists can help address these problems.

Screening for Oral Cancers
Oral cancers are more common in older adults, and early detection is key. An annual oral cancer exam can help in early diagnosis.

Maintaining Confidence
Healthy teeth can boost confidence, improve communication and encourage social interactions.

Dr. Sun concludes, "Maintaining dental health is essential. With Medicare coverage, secure dental insurance and see your dentist regularly to protect your overall health. Through preventive care, you can avoid costly procedures in the future. It's never too late to start practicing better oral hygiene."

To explore MA plans in your area, visit Medicare.gov.



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Proteins

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Proteins should make up about 15% of your body mass. Proteins are found in all of your body's cells, fluids and tissue except bile and urine. If protein is found in your urine you have a serious health problem. The primary functions of proteins are to build and repair bone, muscles, connective tissue, skin, internal organs, blood and aid in your growth.

Much of your body is made of protein molecules. Molecules of proteins are large molecules, which can have molecular masses up to 3,000,000 single amino acids. The muscle protein titin has a 27,000 single amino acid chain. Muscle, cartilage, ligaments, skin and hair are made of protein. All of your hormones, antibodies and the enzymes that regulate your body's chemical reactions are all made of protein.

Without the protein your body's needs, your blood wouldn't clot properly and cuts wouldn't heal. Protein can also be used for energy and converted and stored as fat.

All proteins are made of large complex molecules made up of a string of building blocks called amino acids. There are 20 amino acids that your body needs. These 20 amino acids can be linked in a thousand different ways to form thousands of different proteins, each having a unique function in your body. There are nine amino acids that are called essential amino acids because the body cannot make them. The other 11 are considered "nonessential" because the body can make them.

All of your essential amino acids must come from food or supplements. Complete protein contains all the essential amino acids in amounts your body needs. Animal proteins from eggs, meat, fish, poultry, cheese and milk are complete proteins. Plant proteins from fruits, vegetables grains and beans are often low in one or more essential amino acids and are incomplete. Both the amino acids produced in your

liver and those produced from your digestion of the proteins you eat are absorbed into the blood stream and taken up by your cells and tissues to build the type of proteins your body needs.

Your diet must include all nine essential amino acids and must be in a fixed ratio. A diet that is 20 to 25 percent protein should meet all of your protein needs. A shortage of any one of your essential amino acids will reduce your body's ability to function. Your foods contain different ratios of the essential amino acids. By mixing foods that are rich in some amino acids with foods that are rich in others, you can get all your needed amino acids.

A protein deficiency can lead to fatigue, insulin resistance, hair loss, loss of hair pigment (hair that should be black becomes reddish), loss of muscle mass, low body temperature, and hormonal irregularities. A severe protein deficiency can be fatal.

While not enough protein can cause a deficiency, an excess of protein can also cause problems. These problems can include your immune system overreacting, liver dysfunction and possibly bone loss due to increased acidity in the blood. A diet rich in animal protein, which also contains a lot of saturated fat and cholesterol, raises harmful LDL cholesterol levels. This can increase your risk of coronary heart disease, diabetes, stroke and several types of cancer.

The most common mistake body-builders make is eating too much protein believing it will build muscle. Exercise builds muscle. Muscle is over 70% water and only about 20% protein. Increasing calories from carbohydrates to provide your body with energy to work out will insure that your protein will be used for building muscle tissue.

Dieters think eating more protein is the best way to lose weight. Excess protein has to be changed to something your body can use. This

process can overwork your kidneys. Too much protein can weaken your bone structure because of the affect it has on your calcium.

Only 20% of your daily calorie intake needs to be protein. The average person needs 50-65 grams of protein or at least .4 grams of protein per pound of body weight each day. If you work out or do heavy manual labor, you may need more protein.

Americans eat more than enough protein. You should eat protein in small amounts of 20 to 30 grams per meal. One egg has 7 grams of protein and 3 oz of beef has 20 to 30 grams of protein. Excess protein can be stored as fat. So only eat what your body needs. We only need a small amount of protein to function well.

Protein digestion starts in your stomach. In your stomach, an enzyme called pepsin along with hydrochloric acid acts on protein. In your stomach, protein is changed into peptides. As it leaves your stomach, it passes the pancreas and is mixed with the enzyme trypsin. The protein then goes to your small intestines where the enzyme erepsin helps to change the peptides into amino acids. The amino acid is the last step in the digestion of proteins.

Protein tends to be more satiating than carbohydrate. That is, proteins and fats linger longer in your stomach than carbohydrates. This is why, having a high-protein and high-fat eggs and bacon breakfast stays with you longer than does a high-carb bread with jam breakfast. By curbing hunger, you have fewer urges to eat. This will easily cut calories. In most cases, you start to crave carbohydrates and binge eat.

Protein is a very important nutrient that you body needs daily. It is not a magical diet nutrient nor will it pack on muscle. But you do need it. Make it a part of your diet every day.

Before starting any health or fitness program consult your physician.

How to raise a healthy, active child

StatePoint

Many factors impact the wellness of your child or teen, including your living environment, genetics and other influences. Experts emphasize that you can encourage a healthy lifestyle for your child, which helps prevent obesity and other illnesses that can persist into adulthood.

"Raising a healthy, active child involves more than just nutrition and physical activity," says Natalie D. Muth, a pediatrician and registered dietitian. "It also includes ensuring adequate sleep, a positive approach to screen use, social-emotional wellness and, to the best of your ability, creating an environment that supports healthy routines."

In a time when few children and adolescents meet the recommendations for nutrition and activity, a new clinical report from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), titled "The Role of the Pediatrician in the Promotion of Healthy, Active Living," provides guidance to optimize a child's health regardless of weight. It offers strategies based on solid science to prevent obesity from infancy through adolescence.

Here are practical tips from the AAP to address issues within your control:

- Educate yourself about good nutrition. Visit MyPlate.gov for tips on planning and preparing meals as a team, actively involving kids in their dietary choices. The site accommodates cultural traditions with examples of healthy meals using familiar foods.



- Opt for water. Sugary drinks like 100% fruit juice, sodas, sports drinks and fruit drinks contribute to 24% of added sugar intake in the U.S. diet for those aged one year and older. Their consumption is linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, childhood obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other health risks, according to USDA statistics. Aim for one sugary drink or fewer per week. Drinking water also cleanses teeth and gums, preventing cavities and fostering lifelong dental health.
- Limit ultra-processed foods. While completely avoiding ultra-processed foods might be unrealistic, try to minimize their presence. Teach children and adolescents about the benefits of whole foods like fruits and vegetables. Discuss the health risks associated with excessive consumption of "junk food," which is high in sugar and salt, fails to promote satiety and often leads to overeating.
- Implement a family media plan. Sensible screen time limits benefit everyone, making room for healthier

activities. Involve kids in creating a plan for the whole family.

- Prioritize movement. Organized sports aren't the only way to be active. Your family can also engage in walking, biking, swimming and dancing. For indoor activities, consider active gaming or online fitness classes to strengthen muscles, improve coordination and alleviate stress.

- Manage stress effectively. If your schedule is overcrowded, leaving no room for healthy downtime, reassess your commitments. Rest is crucial for rebuilding the body's systems after a challenging day or week, so make time for it.

- Seek support. Not all neighborhoods offer safe play areas, walkable school routes or access to nutritious, affordable food. Furthermore, factors like racism, toxic stress, housing or food insecurity and safety risks can affect your child's health. Creating a safe home environment and relying on the support of schools, health care systems and the wider community can lead to a healthier life for your child. Your pediatrician is an important resource; discuss ways to support an active, healthy lifestyle for your child with them.

"Remember, feeling loved, seen and appreciated is as crucial to your child's health as nutrition and exercise. The brain and body operate as one system – when kids feel safe and secure, their bodies function effectively," says Dr. Muth.

For more tips and resources, visit healthychildren.org.

“Bloody Sunday” never forgotten

59th Anniversary Jubilee – a commemoration more akin to a pilgrimage

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

Merriam-Webster says a pilgrimage is a journey of a pilgrim, especially one to a shrine or sacred place. And so it was Sunday, March 3, 2024, as thousands gathered on this hallowed ground – the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Fifty-nine years removed from the horror of the day known as Bloody Sunday when 600 non-violent demonstrators began the freedom march from Selma to Montgomery, a fifty-four mile stretch of road, simply seeking the right to vote in Alabama. They were terrorized by white Alabama state troopers. Ninety-seven years after the ratification of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the black foot soldiers were viciously attacked by white lawmen – recorded and then televised around the globe.

On March 7, 2020, Congressman John R. Lewis, posted on Twitter, now known as X, “55 years ago today, we were beaten, tear gassed and trampled by horses. I thought I saw death. I thought I was going to die. I don’t know how I made it back, but I know we cannot rest. We cannot become weary. We must keep pushing and pulling and find a way to get in the way.” He died four months after this post.

Ten weeks after the vicious attacks on the bridge, “the bridge in 1940 was named after Pettus, a Confederate general and reputed Ku Klux Klan leader,” per NBC News, “the voting rights bill was passed in the U.S. Senate by a 77-19 vote May 26, 1965. After debating the bill for more than a month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill by a vote of 333-85 July 9. President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law August 6, 1965, with Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders present at the ceremony,” per Smithsonian.com.

Lewis, whose skull was broken on March 7, 1965, was co-founder and chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at the time, per numerous sources. Among the group alongside Lewis that day was Dr. R.L. Patterson, pastor in his 47th year at Abyssinia Missionary Baptist Church in Birmingham, and president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Birmingham Chapter) who graciously shared with *The Mississippi Link* newspaper. “I’m 80 years old. I was one of the first marchers. I come here every year with my family. It’s a little hard with my age, but I’m coming anyway until the end.”

When asked, with white supremacy at a fevered pitch in our country right now, what are we going to do, what can we do – is that the way you see it? He replied, “That’s the way I see it. The things that have happened over the years have changed. Instead of us fighting for democracy, we’re turning against ourselves. Our young people don’t feel what we feel, they haven’t



Crowd view after beginning to ascend the bridge

PHOTOS BY CHRIS YOUNG



Edmund Pettus Bridge shortly after public opening

PHOTO BY CHELSEA THOMAS



Vice President Kamala Harris
PHOTO BY CHELSEA THOMAS



Original marcher Dr. R.L. Patterson



Troopers Corporal Thomas, Senior Troopers Ryans and Walker

gone through nothing. They were born into the reality of the day that we struggle, and that’s why we have

a lot of this going on. We’re still not able to vote and do that right. We’re living in difficult times, but we as old

people, we’re still fighting, and we’re gonna fight to the end.”

When asked what could bring about

a groundswell of change in beliefs and attitudes – do you ever think about things like that? He shared, “Last week we started mass meetings again and we’re gonna do that every month from now on. Our strategy is to be on the streets; the sheriff is going to be with us for protection, we’re going from door-to-door. This problem belongs to us all. We’ve got to stand up to what’s going on. I have dedicated my life. We work out here in the streets and in the prisons trying to save men. We are a people of God.”

Among the many speakers at what is known as the largest annual civil rights commemoration event in the country, were Deputy Secretary of US Department of Agriculture Xochitl Torres Small, President and CEO of SCLC Charles Steele Jr., Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tanya Bradsher, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Marcia Fudge, US Representative for the Alabama 7th District Terri Sewell and Vice President Kamala Harris.

After being introduced by Azali Fortier, youth member of Selma Jubilee and sixteen-year-old English major at Spelman College, Vice President Harris began speaking about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and provided great detail about the atrocities.

She called for the immediate ceasefire for at least a six-week period so that aid can be provided.


“The Israeli government must do more to significantly increase the flow of aid. They must open new border crossings. They must not impose any unnecessary restrictions on the delivery of aid. They must ensure humanitarian personnel convoys are not targeted, and they must work to provide basic services in Gaza so that more food, water and fuel can reach those in need.”

Turning her focus to Selma, comments included: “The story of Selma is a story of our nation. Freedom is fundamental to the promise of America. Freedom is not to be given, it is not to be bestowed, it is ours by right. The power behind the promise of freedom has always been in the fate of her people and our willingness to fight for freedom. Our fight for freedom is not over because in this moment we are witnessing a full-on attack on hard-fought hard-won freedoms. Starting with the freedom that unlocks all others – the freedom to vote – the sacred freedom to vote. Today in states across our nation, extremists pass laws to ban drop-boxes, prohibit early voting and restrict absentee ballots. Whatever happened to love thy neighbor? The hypocrisy abounds. President Biden and I will continue to demand that the United States Congress pass the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.”

Tragedy. Triumph. The bridge where new bridges are forged, hallowed ground. Never forgotten.



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Jackson State University makes history as the first HBCU to offer stackable micro-Credentials

The JSU Newswire

Jackson State University (JSU) proudly announces its distinction as the first historically Black university in the nation to offer stackable micro-credentials, significantly enhancing the educational landscape and empowering learners for success in the 21st-century workforce.

Micro-credentials, bite-sized educational experiences designed to build, validate and enhance professional skills, are now a key part of JSU's academic offerings. Upon completion, learners earn a digital badge, validating their acquired skills, which they can display on LinkedIn, résumés or digital portfolios.

JSU's inaugural micro-credential, titled "Fundamentals of Cyber IT and Innovation," is set to launch March 20 and is designed for 20 multidiscipline STEM participants. Its comprehensive curriculum includes Introduction to Python Coding Language, iOS Application Development Fundamentals, Information Technology Troubleshooting and Cybersecurity Fundamentals, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality



The JSU Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development will offer stackable micro-credentials that include virtual reality and augmented reality. PHOTOS BY CHARLES A. SMITH/UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Technology Fundamentals with Lab and Advancing Innovation through Critical Thinking.

Jarrod Benjamin, senior program manager for the Division of Research and Economic Development at JSU, emphasized the value of micro-credentials. "Micro-credentials allow our students and community members the opportunity to be equipped for the global workforce with hands-on technical

skills," he said.

Almesha L. Campbell, Ph.D., assistant vice president for the division and director for Technology Transfer, underscored JSU's commitment to innovation and workforce readiness. "The Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, along with JSU's work at the Thad Cochran Mississippi Center for Innovation and Technology (MCITy), will

be pivotal. They will ensure that our students are trained and prepared as credentialed professionals, ready for the future of work from day one."

Tara N. Johnson, executive director of Trio Student Support Services, spoke about the collaboration's impact. "Partnering with the Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development is invaluable for our JSU first-generation

college students and marginalized student populations. This opportunity provides hands-on workforce development with innovative technology, setting the stage for their success in a competitive professional landscape."

The program will be offered at the JSU Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development and MCITy.

Benjamin reiterated JSU's

dedication to advancing education, fostering innovation, and preparing students for success in an ever-evolving global context.

For more information about JSU's micro-credentials or to inquire about enrollment, contact Benjamin at jarrod.d.benjamin@jsums.edu. For media inquiries, contact rachel.d.james-terry@jsums.edu.



The JSU Center for Innovation provides a space for students to engage, explore and experiment.

JSU named "Best HBCUs with Online Degrees of 2024" by Forbes Advisor Education

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Jackson State University has been recognized as one of the "Best HBCUs With Online Degrees of 2024" by Forbes Advisor Education, marking another significant accolade for the institution.

This distinction underscores Jackson State's commitment to offering accessible and flexible online education options, maintaining its dedication to higher learning and student success.

Keith Riley, Ed.D., interim director of JSUOnline, highlights the university's efforts to expand online course offerings.

"Our commitment is to continue expanding our online course offerings for students, whether through fully online classes, online programs or hybrid courses," he states.

Riley also emphasizes the importance of flexible online class options for students with various scheduling constraints. "JSUOnline is dedicated to increasing the availability of diverse choices to help students complete their degrees," he adds.

Forbes Advisor's selection of Jackson State University focuses on its range of online degree programs and flexible course delivery methods. The university offers seven fully online bachelor's de-



grees, including programs in history, professional interdisciplinary studies and emergency management technology.

The importance of collaboration among Jackson State's faculty and staff in enhancing student success and progression through their academic curriculum is also a key focus.

"Collaborating with faculty and staff involves reviewing curriculums and making necessary updates to better serve students and provide more options in selecting their desired courses," says Riley. "Engaging with the JSU community through virtual work and meetings, gathering instructor feedback and facilitating online interactions among students are

essential components of this process."

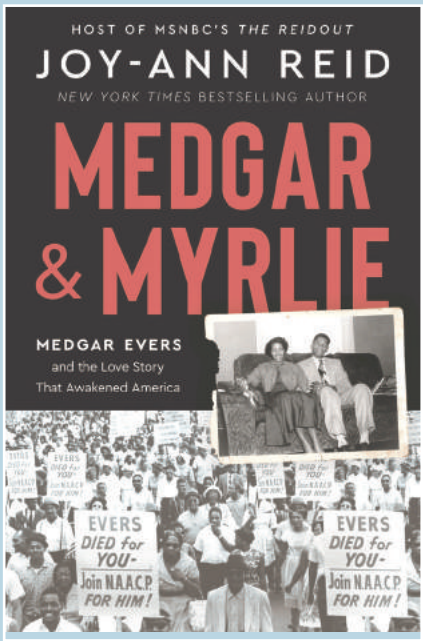
Forbes Advisor's rankings are based on a rigorous methodology that incorporates data from reputable sources such as the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as information from professional organizations and education providers.

This recognition from Forbes Advisor aligns with recent research published in the *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*. The study suggests that flexible education models, such as blended learning with reduced classroom time, can enhance access to education without compromising learning effectiveness.

The study emphasizes the importance of well-structured courses, active learning tasks, teacher-student interaction and timely feedback for optimal learning outcomes.

In response to these findings, the *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* encourages higher learning institutions to embrace flexible study programs in a blended learning format. It stresses the need to maintain the quality of educational design to ensure optimal learning experiences for students.





BOOK REVIEW:

MEDGAR & MYRLIE:

MEDGAR EVERS AND THE LOVE STORY THAT AWAKENED AMERICA

BY JOY-ANN REID

C.2024, MARINER BOOKS

\$30.00 • 343 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

Romeo and Juliet
Abelard and Heloise. Be-
yonce and Jay Z. For centu-
ries, we’ve studied the great
romances, cried over them and
dreamed of having one of our
own. Some of the great ro-
mances are educational. They
impress and entertain. And in
the new book “Medgar & Myr-
lie” by Joy-Ann Reid, some can
inspire.

When Medgar Evers came
home from World War II, he fig-
ured that if he was good enough

to be a soldier, he was good
enough to be treated the same
as a white man. He was twenty-
five years old, outspoken, bold
and a gentleman when he met
Myrlie Beasley.

He was at college on the GI
Bill. She was a freshman, away
from her grandmother and aunt
for the first time. She didn’t
know quite what to think about
Medgar Evers.

Mama and Aunt Myrlie want-
ed “Baby Sister” to get a good
education. They had big dreams
for her, and marriage wasn’t
one of them.

Still, Medgar “intrigued” her
and their romance went slow but
“Myrlie didn’t dare tell Mama.”
It took awhile for him to tell her
that he loved her. Medgar was
always ordering her around and
they argued sometimes. After
she told her elders about this
man she was dating, Medgar
had to “court” Mama and Aunt
Myrlie almost as hard as he’d
courted their girl.

On Christmas Eve, 1951,
Medgar and Myrlie were mar-
ried. Much to her chagrin, they
moved to Mound Bayou, Mis-
sissippi the next summer, where

he’d taken a job selling insur-
ance – but just as often, he was
helping his people escape debt-
ors and danger, and Myrlie was
afraid.

Even after they started a fam-
ily, after they moved back to
Jackson to a safer neighbor-
hood, she feared for his life
because of the ties he had, the
work he was doing with the
NAACP and the beliefs he
held. That was the kind of man
Medgar was, and she’d always
known it.

And one summer’s evening in
1963, she knew that she’d have

to live without him forever.


In the early pages of “Med-
gar & Myrlie,” author Joy-Ann
Reid insists that her book is a
“love story.” She’s right – it is,
but it’s not like one of those
cheap paperbacks you find at
the grocery store. It’s a boy-
meets-girl, a sweet tale of two
people who cleave together, but
also so much more. More sub-
stance. More history. More af-
terward. More heartbreak.


Indeed, you know what
happens in this romance and
the fact that it does and it did
makes this love story more poi-

gnant and more terrifying. You
know what happened more than
sixty years ago, and you can’t
go back and undo it. You want a
happily-ever-after that never ar-
rives, but in the worst way.

Do you even want to be told
that Reid will rattle you time
and again, even before you get
to 1963?

The shining knight in this
story wears working man’s
clothes. The maiden fears a
different kind of Dragon. You
can’t miss their story, so find
“Medgar & Myrlie.” You’ll
love it.





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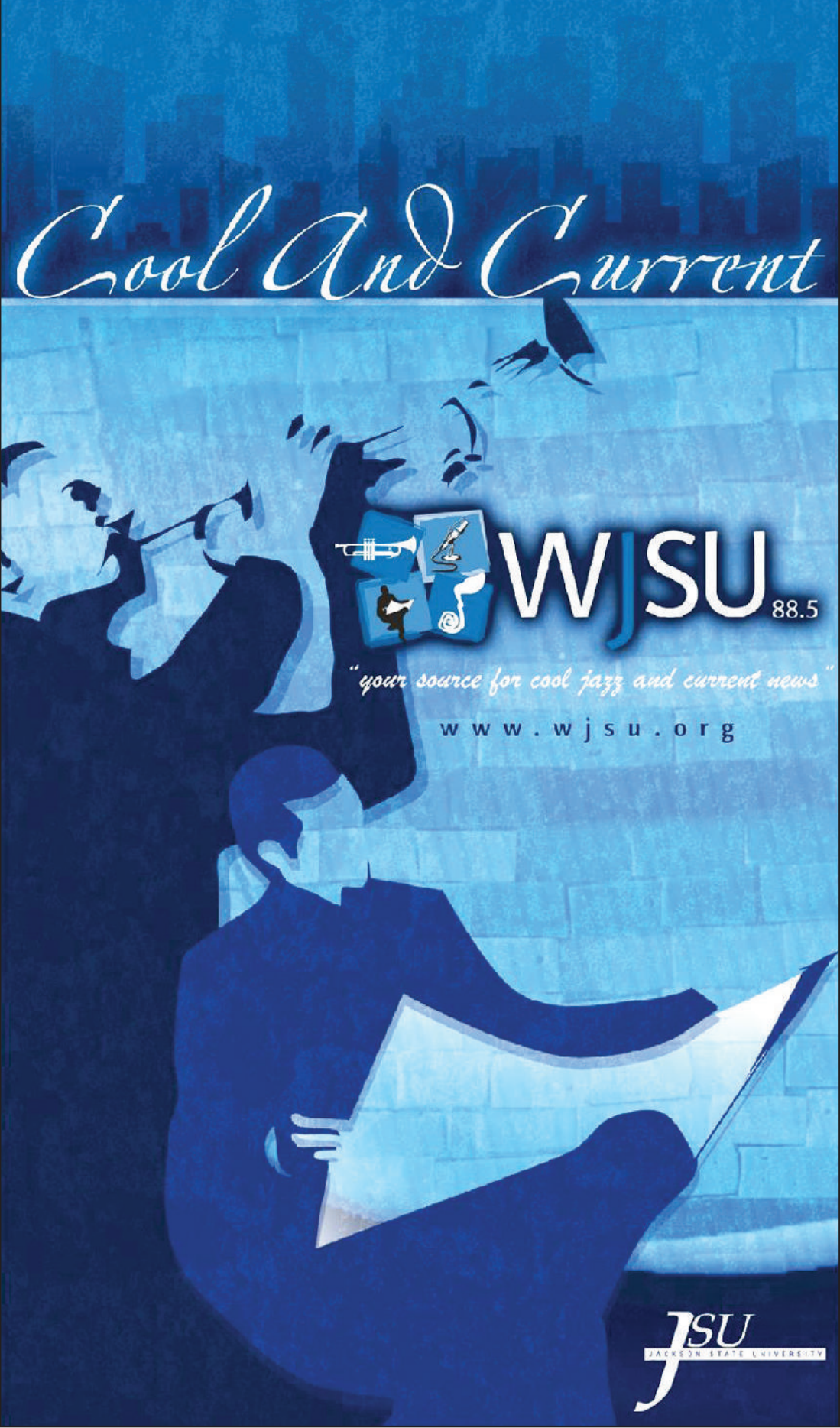
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Jackson State’s men and women basketball teams ready for SWAC tournament

By Tim Ward
Sports Writer

When it comes to Jackson State’s women basketball, in the SWAC, all they do is win. The Lady Tigers clinched their fifth consecutive SWAC regular season title last Saturday. Beating Mississippi Valley State 77 to 59 at the Williams Athletic and Assembly Center, gave JSU a perfect 18-0 SWAC record and the number one overall seed in the SWAC tournament. The SWAC tournament is being held in Birmingham, Alabama at the Bartow Arena.

In the latest national women’s basketball poll, Jackson State received one vote. With a record of 23-6, the vote raised a few eyebrows, but also garnered some respect and a comment from Dawn Staley.

Staley is the head coach of the undefeated South Carolina Gamecocks with a record of 32-0. In the past three seasons, Staley is 103-3. She literally has 100 more wins than losses from the 2021-2022 season to right now.

South Carolina just won their 8th consecutive SEC title. Amongst all her success, Staley tweeted JSU head coach Tomekia Reed and told her, “You’d have another one if I was a voter. Keep doing the BELIEVABLE! That glowing praise will resonate well in the women’s basketball world.

The next challenge is to win the SWAC tournament to ensure a NCAA tournament bid. The SWAC tournament champion is automatically selected. Depending on how strong they finish, they could possibly get ranked as high as a 14th seed. Usually SWAC and MEAC champions are ranked 16th or 15th.

Jackson State still has that sour taste in their mouth from last season. Southern’s Lady Jaguars defeated JSU on a 3 pointer at the buzzer from over 30 feet away.

Jackson State accepted an invitation and played in the WNIT.

The Lady Tigers’s first SWAC game tip off is Wednesday at 5:30 versus Prairie View. In the two wins against Prairie View, JSU won 91 to 54, but had to fight hard for the second victory winning 75 to 65.

Jackson State’s men finished the season 11-7 in the SWAC, locking up the sixth seed. The parity from the men’s division at the top was amazing this season. Although they finished sixth, JSU was only two games away from finishing 2nd.

Alcorn finished second in the SWAC at 13-5. Alcorn is also the hottest team in the SWAC winning nine consecutive games. JSU has the second hottest streak winning their last three games.

Jackson State will play Texas Southern, who finished as the number three seed. During their two battles this season, JSU split with them with each team winning by double digits at home. Tip off is scheduled for March 14 at 2 p.m. in Birmingham, Alabama at Bartow Arena.



PHOTO BY JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY



Avery Thomas, Terry

PHOTOS BY TIM WARD



Dorian McMillian, Pascagoula



EJ Paymon, Raymond



Faith Quick, Florence



Taelar Felton, Clinton



Deandre Lewis, Canton

Grambling State’s men finished as the number 1 seed, going 14-4 for the season. They will host Alabama State, the 8th seed, March 13 at 8:30 p.m.

Alcorn State plays Alabama A&M March 13 at 2 p.m. in the

battle of the 2nd vs 7th seeds. If Alcorn and Jackson State win their first round matchups, they will face each other March 15 at 8:30 p.m. in the semifinal round.

JSU lost to Texas Southern and Alcorn (in overtime) the last

time they played both teams; nothing would be sweeter than to avenge each loss and win the SWAC tournament.

Expect head coach Mo Williams to have his guys ready to compete.

The 34 annual Mississippi/Alabama All-star basketball game was played last Saturday at Mississippi College. In a great competitive games on both sides, the boys won 78 to 77. It was the first time the boys won since 2021. The girls weren’t able to hold on to their lead and loss 65 to 59. Here are the players and coaches that represented the state well.

BOYS MISSISSIPPI

Matthew Krass, St. Patrick; Dorian McMillian, Pascagoula; Amir Abdul-Rauf, Gulfport; Cordarius Hathorn, Jefferson Davis County; Tamarion Hoover, Yazoo City; Kameron Brown, Port Gibso; Tayler Berryhill, Cleveland Centra; E.J. Paymon, Raymond; Avery Thomas, Terry; D.J. Davis, Oxford; Deandre Lewis, Canton

Head Coaches: Tony Tadlock, Raymond; Assistant Coach Lorenzo Wright, Pascagoula

GIRLS MISSISSIPPI

Anaisha Carriere, Harrison Central;Dekyra Mitchell, Holmes County; Taelar Felton, Clinton; Nicole Sandifer, Magee; Zharia Leflore, Neshoba Central

Brooklyn Cuevas, Hancock; Alana Rouser, Germantown; Faith Quick, Florence; Tootie Lockett, Starkville; De’Mya Porter, Bogue Chitto; Anna Patterson, Bay Springs; Reese Moore, Tishomingo County; Brooklyn Hodum, New Site

Head Coaches: Alphaka Moore, Natchez; Assistant Coach Byron Sparks, New Site

Empowering Mississippi: the urgent case for Medicaid expansion

By The National Coalition of 100 Black Women
White Paper

The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Central Mississippi Chapter (NCBW), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has consistently been a strong partner in community building through advocacy initiatives focusing on empowering Black women and girls. NCBW believes in empowering women and girls to alleviate poverty, dependency and improve planning at the family and community level, resulting in healthier people and communities. We advocate for opportunities for Black women and girls to participate fully in an inclusive and equitable world, contributing to the economic and social vitality of their communities.

We aim to engage our larger community in important issues for achieving the quality of life we desire for ourselves and our families. Awareness, we believe, will spark interest and inspire action, moving us toward healthier families and communities.

The first of our monthly “Issues of the Day” series focuses on Medicaid Expansion, currently under consideration in the Mississippi legislature. We view this



National Coalition of 200 Black Women, Central Mississippi Chapter

issue as central to developing healthy families and communities.

Medicaid should transcend partisan politics. It’s the primary option for the working poor, providing healthcare coverage to qualified individuals based on income and assets, who must meet the Federal Poverty Level. Eligibility extends to low-income pregnant women, families with children, people with disabilities and parents or caregivers. Access to quality healthcare is increasingly vital as communities face risks of hospital closures and limited access to preventative or primary care.

Mississippi is among 12 states that haven’t expanded Medicaid under the 2010 Affordable Care Act, with approxi-

mately 60% of voters supporting expansion to uninsured, low-income residents. The Mississippi House of Representatives recently passed a bill for Medicaid expansion, now with the Senate. If approved, the bill would enable negotiations for Medicaid expansion for the working poor earning up to the federal poverty line, approximately \$20,000 annually for an individual. This includes those working 20 hours weekly or full-time students.

Mississippi has one of the nation’s highest uninsured rates, with 16.4% of individuals aged 19 to 64 and 17.3% of those 65 and older uninsured, according to the American Community Survey. As a medically underserved state with

poor health outcomes, access to quality preventive and primary care services is crucial for improving the health of many Mississippians.

Research indicates that Medicaid expansion enhances access to healthcare for pregnant and postpartum women, with improvements in adverse pregnancy outcomes and declines in maternal mortality and morbidity. Medicaid expansion correlates with reduced mortality, decreased food insecurity and poverty rates, fewer home evictions and better self-reported health and behaviors.

Beyond healthcare coverage, Medicaid expansion brings indirect fiscal benefits from new federal dollars, appearing as a fiscally prudent opportunity to enhance the health and well-being of Mississippi’s vulnerable residents. Notably, 30% of Mississippi children live in poverty, with stark racial disparities: 49% of Black children compared to 16% of White non-Hispanic children live in poverty. This disparity is alarmingly evident in 21st-century Mississippi.

Additionally, 34% of Mississippi’s 74 rural hospitals, crucial for vulnerable populations, are at risk of closure, exacerbating poor health outcomes. Studies show Medicaid expansion helps reduce

hospital closures.

Further research suggests that expansion’s financial impact on states is largely positive, including budget savings and economic growth. The multiplier effect indicates that increased health care revenue from additional state revenue leads to more employment, business and consumer activity.

We strongly believe the benefits Medicaid expansion outweigh the disadvantages. It can significantly improve poor health outcomes, enhancing Mississippians’ ability to live productively and contribute to state economic growth.

We commend the House of Representatives for advancing this legislation and remain hopeful for the Senate’s action. It’s time for our state to invest in its most vulnerable citizens, anticipating the rewards that will follow. We echo the words of former U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey, “The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.”

National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Central Mississippi Chapter
Issues of the Day Task Force

An opportunity to stop the hate: Lent and Ramadan

By Dr. John Warren
Publisher, San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Newspaper



We, the citizens of the United States of America, as well as our fellow citizens of the world, are living in a period of unprecedented conflict. While the word “hatred” is rarely used or mentioned, it is the source of the worst among us toward others.

In this country, founded upon the melting pot idea that there is room for everyone, we find

COMMENTARY

people continuing to be attacked based on their race, color, religion, nationality and appearance. It is timely that two of the world’s greatest religions would intersect this month with a shared idea that for ages has been the solution to hate and its destruction.

The Christian observance of Lent and the Muslim observance of Ramadan are intersecting with a shared religious practice known as “fasting.” The Christian observance calls for giving up certain foods or practices for a 40

day period as a symbolic sharing with Christ in his suffering. Lent is calculated based on the spring equinox.

Ramadan falls on the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which follows a lunar cycle. As a result, the dates for Ramadan change every year, and the period of fasting is for one month. Muslims fast from dawn until sunset for the entire month. The fast is broken each evening with a meal called “iftar.”

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam, which are the foundations of Muslim life. Christian

fasting in contrast, as established by the Catholic Church, leads up to Easter which celebrates the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

The importance of this discussion rests with the fact that the concept of fasting in both religions is to bring one closer to God.

For the Christian, prayer and self denial during this period seeks to draw one closer to God by reflecting on one’s life and conduct in regards to others. Muslims believe that Ramadan is a time of heightened spiritual-

ity during which they can purify their souls and seek forgiveness for their sins.

It sounds like this is a good time for all of America to engage in some prayer and fasting for a nation at odds with itself and for a people engaged in hatred and violence against others. What greater way to stop the hate than through prayer and fasting, regardless as to whether one is Christian or Muslim or any other faith. The concept of fasting with both religions appears to be in line with this scripture from the Bible in 2 Chronicles 7:14 which

says: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall

Humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

We as a nation have an opportunity during this period to set in motion the healing we all so desperately need. Prayer and fasting have changed the course of individuals, people and nations and it is not too late for us. Let’s get into the business of stopping the hate.

Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

HINDS COUNTY SCHOOL ADMINSTRATORS PAY APPRECIATION TO HINDS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

The Administrators of Hinds County School District brought gifts and expressed appreciation to the Hinds County School District board members for the work that they perform to make Hinds County Schools continue to go from good to great.

Board members included Robbie Anderson, Mary Killingsworth, Carolyn Samuel and Kayla Banger. Dr. Linda Laws was not present in person, but on zoom.

