



Rep. Bryant Clark (D) Dist. 47

Mississippi passes DEI ban, raising concerns for Black students’ future

By Edelia “Dr. Jay” Carthan
Contributing Writer

Mississippi has become the latest state to pass legislation banning diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives at

public universities, setting off a wave of concern among educators, students and civil rights advocates who say the law threatens to reverse decades of progress in racial

equity. The Republican-led House passed House bill 1193 and voted 71 to 40 Tuesday. All Democrats in the chamber voted against it, joined by

one Independent. No Democrats supported the measure, and several members gave impassioned speeches warn-

DEI

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Aretha Franklin

Jerry Smith & Children of Israel in tribute to Aretha



Jerry Smith & Children of Israel Gospel Choir, April 2, 2025, at JSU’s Rose Embly McCoy Auditorium. PHOTOS BY CHRIS YOUNG

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

Oh, what a night of artistic excellence at Thee I Love’s Rose Embly McCoy auditorium Wednesday, April 2, 2025. How could it be anything but sheer celebration when you combine Jerry Smith & Children of Israel choir with soloists Katie Graham, Rhonda Chambers Davis, and Shelia Ramsey embracing gospel selections of the undisputed Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin.

The Queen grew up in Detroit’s New Bethel Baptist Church and was nominated forty-four times for Grammy Awards – winning eighteen, including eight consecutive years (1968-1975). Although most of her Grammy wins were in the Rhythm & Blues category, she also won for Soul Gospel Performance in 1973 and 1988, and Gospel Performance in 2008. She was twice named by *Rolling Stone Magazine* as the greatest singer of all time. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005.

Dr. Mark G. Henderson served as narrator for the free concert sponsored by Jackson State University’s Department of Speech, Communication and Theatre where he serves as chair, as well as the JSU Office of Student Success/Title III. Henderson founded the renowned MADDRAMA Performance Troup in 1998 and continues to serve as artistic director.

Whether it be with the world renowned Mississippi Mass Choir – where he served as the founding first assistant director and still serves as minister of music; the Mississippi Children’s Choir; Jerry Smith &



Soloist Sheila Ramsey



Gospel artist Katie Graham



Soloist Rhonda Chambers Davis

Children of Israel – which he founded in 1983; or as minister of music and pianist at the historic Farish Street Baptist Church in Jackson, you hardly notice when Jerry Smith first walks into the room – he is just that humble and unassuming. But when he sits down at those magical keys, oh how you feel him. As choir director, songwriter, arranger, musician and minister of music, he is inhabited by his music – you see it wash in and through him in performance.

On this inspirational night,

nearly all members of Children of Israel performed under his direction – Antirrita Hill, Jessica Winston, Jonathan Winston, Shirley LaBranche, Cedric Robinson, Harvey Johnson, Stephan Johnson, Dennis McDonald, Alisa Patrick McDonald, LaToya Knight Hubbard, Jane Graham Crowner, Sonja Powe and Sandra Thomas.

The concert began with a high voltage rendition of The Best is Yet to Come. Selections that followed included Precious Lord Take My Hand, with Sheila Ramsey out front;

What a Friend, led by Alisa Patrick McDonald, musical director of MADDRAMA and the NADSA (National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts) Intergenerational Choir; Katie Graham, who Henderson described as being “light years beyond what music can comprehend,” led Precious Memories; alongside Dennis McDonald and Rhonda Chambers Davis who was soloist for When Morning Come.

When Children of Israel took a brief break, Katie Graham returned for Never Grow Old, her heavenly voice with seemingly limitless range, delivering to the audience of over a hundred students and guests.

Sheila Ramsey came next with Amazing Grace, with a deeply personal lead-in. The Children of Israel returned to the stage, with Rhonda Chambers Davis’ powerful rendition of Mary Don’t You Weep. Graham, who spends most of her time in Atlanta, but returns to her native Jackson often, then came with How I Got Over, bringing the house to its feet – oh how she sang.

Just before the final selection, Henderson passed the mic to Jerry Smith. While performing at numerous events throughout Mississippi and as far beyond as Spain, Smith acknowledged that the Children of Israel have not performed publicly in Jackson itself in over twenty-five years. He gave thanks for the invitation. He thanked the one original member of Children of Israel, Alisa Patrick McDonald, who also serves as his business manager. He thanked other soloists Sheila Ramsey, Katie

Aretha

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‘This has got to be a moment in America,’ Cory Booker tells 1st town hall since record speech



Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., speaks at a town hall event held at the Bergen Community College on Saturday, April 5, 2025. AP PHOTO/STEFAN JEREMIAH

By Mike Catalini
Associated Press

Democratic Sen. Cory Booker took a version of his record-breaking Senate floor speech on the road Saturday to a town hall meeting in a New Jersey gymnasium, calling on people to find out what they can do to push back on President Donald Trump’s agenda. Booker took questions at suburban New Jersey’s Bergen Community College the same day as more than 1,200 “Hands Off!” demonstrations were planned around the country. The town hall event was punctuated both by celebratory shouts of “Cory, Cory” as well as at least a half-dozen interruptions by protesters.

It was Booker’s first in-person event in his home state since his speech this week, where he held the Senate floor for 25 hours and 5 minutes in opposition to Trump’s policies. In doing so, he broke the record for the longest floor speech, which was set by segregationist Sen. Strom Thurmond in opposition to the Civil Rights Act of 1957.

Questioner after questioner asked what they could be doing to show their disagreement and worry over the president’s policies. Booker told them it only takes a little bit more – could they afford a trip to Washington to lobby against budget cuts? One of the loudest moments of applause came after he addressed a woman who said she worried about what potential Medicaid cuts could mean for her son with autism.

“A gathering like this can’t be the end of our activism,” Booker said. “This has got

to be a moment in America where all of us begin to say, what more can I do?”

The questions and Booker’s response mirror what voters and other Democrats have been hearing during town halls. He said he didn’t want to focus on the Democratic Party, which has struggled to find a message since losing the 2024 election. Instead, he said, he would focus on “the people of our country.”

“I think the Democratic Party lost a lot of elections because people didn’t believe that they cared about them. So let’s stop worrying about the politics and get more focused on the people,” Booker said.

Lisa Dunn, 41, a special education teacher and social worker from Jersey City, attended the rainy Saturday event because she worried that the Trump administration’s policies are beginning to impact people. She credited Booker for the Senate speech, saying at least “he’s doing something.”

She said she wishes there was a specific action to take, but she understands why there isn’t.

“I wish there was something very concrete. However, personally, I am listening. I’m taking in information. I’m trying to figure out where do I stand right now in terms of what I actually can do and what will make the most impact,” she said. “So part of me does understand that answer because I assume that probably politicians are in the same boat.”

After the event, Booker said

Booker

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Inside
Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on Our Society



Poetry Books



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Artificial Intelligence and its impact on our society

By Matthew Adams
JSU Student, The Mississippi Link Intern

Our society is forever evolving. Every industry is undergoing massive changes that have revolutionized our way of living whether through quick and easy flyers made at the stroke of a couple of keys for your band poster or assisting with diagnosis at the doctor’s office.

AI, or Artificial Intelligence, is the paradigm shift in our society that has triggered great progress. However, as it progresses further, it has also raised ethical concerns.

While AI spans decades, many believe AI is synonymous with OpenAI’s chatbot, ChatGPT, but the introduction of Artificial Intelligence began with computer scientist and mathematician Alan Turing. Turing published the book Computing Machinery and Intelligence which would provide readers with the Turing Test.

The Turing Test is an evaluation of intelligence from a computer requiring that a human being should be unable to distinguish the machine from another human being by using the replies to questions put to both.

Turing would not only innovate within the field of Artificial Intelligence, but Arthur Samuel, a Stanford professor, would joined in by coining the term



A man interacts with an AI-powered robot at a tech expo, symbolizing the growing presence of artificial intelligence in everyday life, reshaping how we live, work and connect.

“machine learning.”

Samuel developed a computer program that could learn to play checkers. With this innovation, Samuel was able to demonstrate the capabilities of the computers.

As time progresses, AI has steadily gained traction as a more convenient option, but with more convenience, issues arise. In the early 2000s, when cell phones began to become ubiquitous throughout society, voice bots began to be more common.

With this becoming more ordinary, ethical concerns began to rise as a result. Now that AI is more accessible, ethical concerns like discrimination and bias, transparency, privacy and a manifold of

other concerns need to be addressed.

Dr. Natarajan Meghanathan, a computer science professor at Jackson State University, believes that the ethical concerns of AI can be tackled in several ways.

“We can tackle [the ethical concerns] through a combination of regulations, technical solutions and public awareness,” he said.

Meghanathan elaborates further: “Governments should enforce strict regulations (like CCPA) on how AI collects and uses data, use techniques like federated learning and differential privacy to process data without exposing individuals’ information; educate people on how to identify AI-generated content and misinformation.”

As Artificial Intelligence advances, legislation begins to be continually challenging for lawmakers. While the Biden administration put out an executive order that would essentially fulfil all the problems that Americans were facing, such intellectual property theft and protection of privacy, it would ultimately be rolled back by the Trump administration.

Even though there may be ethical concerns dealing with Artificial Intelligence, there are advantages to what AI can provide for society.

There are many industries that Artificial Intelligence has impacted significantly. Health care is an industry that has made significant strides using AI.

When using AI in health care, professionals are aided with capabilities such as finding early signs of cancer or personalizing patients’ medicine prescriptions.

When asked whether AI is a detriment or an aid to our society, Professor Loretta Moore optimistically explained: “Having worked in the field of AI since the 1980s, I still believe that AI, when developed and used properly, is a great advantage to individuals and, more broadly, to society.”

Despite her optimism, Moore believes that some corporations can address the risks within their AI systems.

Moore acknowledges, “Through the use of AI as a tool, we are able to accomplish amazing tasks. However, there are significant risks within some AI systems that have not been properly addressed by developers and corporations.

AI is the tool of the future and with such a large reach globally, AI has the potential to both help and harm the world. However, with the proper regulations from our government and proper education, AI can be an ally of the next generation.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Special Election Run-off

There will be a run-off Primary Election for the City of Jackson on April 22, 2025.

Absentee voting will begin Friday, April 11, 2025 through April 19, 2025. The last day to vote by absentee ballot is Saturday, April 19, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

To accommodate the absentee voting process, the Department of Municipal Clerk will be opened on Saturday, April 12th from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and April 19th , 2025 from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Additionally, our office will be open April 14th – 18th, 2025 from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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Aretha

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Graham, Rhonda Davis, and of course the other incredible musicians – Barry Bolden on organ, Marcus Singleton on drums and Micha May on bass guitar. While it was gospel throughout, the final selection shifted to the popular for a rousing rendition of RESPECT by LaToya Knight Hubbard who brought it so

propah! Surely if our Queen Aretha was still with us – gone seven years this August – to witness this tribute concert, we would have no doubt seen her incomparable glow, her timeless smile, and her meaningful nod – her unquestionable stamp of appreciation and approval.



Mark G. Henderson



Soloist Alisa Patrick McDonald



Soloist LaToya Knight Hubbard

DEI

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ing of the damage it could do—especially to Black students.

Among those speaking out was Democratic Rep. Bryant Clark, who rarely takes the podium but broke his silence to deliver a powerful rebuke of the bill. Clark is the son of the late Robert Clark, the first Black Mississippian elected to the state Legislature since the 1800s and the first Black speaker pro tempore since Reconstruction.

“We are better than this, and all of you know that we don’t need this with Mississippi’s history,” Clark said. “We should be the ones that say, ‘listen, we may be from Mississippi, we may have a dark past, but you know what, we’re going to be the first to stand up this time and say there is nothing wrong with DEI.’”

The legislation bans the use of state funds for any DEI office, program, training or activity in Mississippi’s public colleges and universities. While supporters claim the bill protects students from what they call “divisive ideologies,” opponents say it will strip away vital resources from students of color, LGBTQ+ students and others who rely on these programs for support, belonging and academic success.

According to data from the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning:

- Black students make up approximately 38% of total enrollment at Mississippi’s public universities
- At historically Black institutions like Jackson State University, the student body is over 90% Black

- Statewide, Black residents make up about 38% of the population – the highest percentage of any U.S. state.

Many advocates say DEI efforts are essential to addressing longstanding racial gaps in graduation rates, representation among faculty, and access to mentorship and professional development. At the University of Mississippi, for example, Black students make up about 14% of the student population, while white students account for more than 75%.

Student groups and campus leaders warn that eliminating DEI programs could drive down retention and morale for underrepresented students.

“This bill is a slap in the face to every student who has ever benefited from a support system that actually sees them,” said Jasmine Howard, a political science major at Mississippi State University. “We’re not asking for special treatment. We’re asking for the same shot at success.”

Nationally, at least 20 states have introduced similar legislation targeting DEI in higher education. Mississippi’s bill stands out for the breadth of its restrictions and the symbolic weight it carries in a state with a long and painful civil rights legacy.

“I come from a family that has seen the worst of what this state can be,” Rep. Clark told his colleagues. “But we also believe in what it can be. This bill is a step backwards.”

Programs Now at Risk

This bill doesn’t just attack abstract ideas – it threatens real,

life-changing support systems. Here are some of the programs that could disappear:

- Colleges & Universities:
- Multicultural Affairs Offices
- LGBTQ+ Resource Centers
- Black Student Unions and Cultural Centers (if institutionally funded)
- Women’s and Gender Equity Initiatives
- DEI-related scholarships, fellowships and internships
- Bias Response Teams
- Diversity orientation sessions
- Inclusive hiring practices
- Faculty workshops on cultural competency, bias or anti-racism
- K-12 Public Schools
- Culturally responsive teaching programs
- Restorative justice and equity-based discipline programs
- Professional development on inclusive instruction
- Events celebrating Black History, Hispanic Heritage or other cultures
- Safe spaces and student clubs supporting marginalized identities.

These aren’t just “woke ideas” – they are programs designed to close achievement gaps, affirm identity, reduce discrimination, and help students and educators feel seen, valued and heard.

Booker

Continued from page 1

he was reluctant to tell people the exact tactics to use, citing civil rights activists like the late John Lewis. He said creativity has a role to play.

“I know one thing it’s not is sitting down and doing nothing and just watching on TV and getting stuck in a state of sedentary agitation,” he said. “Everybody has to be taking measures to put the pressure on to change.”

Booker, who ran unsuccessfully for president in 2020, said after the event that he was focused on running for reelection to the Senate in 2026 and that 2028 “will take care of itself.”

Booker, 55, is in his second full term in the Senate. He chairs the Strategic Communications Committee, his party’s messaging arm. His team is focused on boosting Senate Democrats’ presence across social platforms through more frequent and casual content.

Booker himself has amassed one of the largest followings on social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok and X, where his commentary appears to connect with the party’s base. But staffers are now focused on how to transfer that success to Booker’s fellow senators, who are often less digitally fluent and face different political landscapes in their home states.

That has involved turning the communications committee into a nerve center for testing and coordinating the easiest-to-use formats for lawmakers looking to boost their digital brands.

Booker hopes to double the engagement senators receive with their content directly online and increase the caucus’ appearances with online digital media personalities.

The start of Saturday’s event included six disruptions, including by several people who decried the treatment of Palestinians. Police in the gymnasium escorted them from the arena.

“I hear you and I see you,” Booker said.

Associated Press reporter Matt Brown in Washington contributed.

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The College Hill family celebrates 118 years of Faith and Family

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

The story that College Hill Baptist Church was established under an oak tree in 1907, on the south side of Florence Avenue in West Jackson, has been well documented over the years. Initially, services were held in Robinson Hall on Rose and Pascagoula Streets. After a few months, with the approval of the Board of Directors, Dr. Luther G. Barrett, second president of Jackson College, (now Jackson State University), set aside a piece of land to be used as a church site as a gift to the community for worship which reads:

By the state of Mississippi – County of Hinds: "In consideration of \$1.00 (one dollar) and other goods, and special considerations, cash on hand paid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, we hereby grant, bargain, sell, convey and warrant to Robert Dawson and Thomas Young, as Trustees of the College Hill Baptist Church, the following described land and property situated in Hinds County, State of Mississippi, to-wit: Lot No. 2, Block of Jackson College Addition, said lot being 60 X 115 feet as there of which is on file in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds County, Jackson, Mississippi. (In accepting this lot, it is specially agreed and understood that if it should ever be used for other than religious purposes, said lot is to revert back to the grantors.

This church was initially a framed building with a sanctuary where kerosene lamps were



Standing in the College Hill pulpit are (L/R) Rev Calvin Peoples, Rev I.D. Thompson, Pastor Chaucy Jordan, Rev. Eric Williams, Rev. William Wheeler and Min. Kenneth Vance with College Hill deacons standing below.

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Linda Rush and Tim Rush, program guides



Deaconess Sherry and Deacon LaVaughn Rankin, program co-chairs



Pastor Chauncy L. Jordan, Sr., College Hill Baptist Church



Guest speaker Pastor Eric Williams, Farish Street MB Church

used for light and an iron stove was used to heat the building 118 years ago. The church continued to grow, not only structural, but it grew with diversified memberships of families and friends, which continues today.

To commemorate its anniversary, the College Hill Family held a family movie night Friday, April 4, 2025. Attendees watched the movie "The Forge" and enjoyed hot dogs, various other snacks, and received door

prizes. The celebration continued Sunday, April 5, beginning with a Sunday School overview given by Clara Williams Mason, followed by worship service, celebrating the theme: "Faith and Family Rooted in God's Love." Brother Timothy Rush and Sister Linda Rush presided over the service.

Prior to the call to worship, vocalist Katie Graham brought the congregation to their feet

after making a surprise appearance and singing "I'm glad that God Made Me in His Image." Graham, a native of Jackson, was in the capital city for another engagement.

College Hill son of the house, Rev. Calvin Peoples, gave the call to worship, first stating after hearing a powerful Sunday School review from Sis. Clara Mason, and the surprise solo rendered by Graham, he wondered if he should just open the

doors of the church.

Three College Hill members received special awards from Gail Gettis, who represented the Public Relations Ministry. The Member of the Year Award was presented to Deaconess Bobbie Anderson; Most Valuable Player Award was presented to Youth Ministry Leader, Larenda Franklin, and the Protégé Award was given to Ethan Franklin, Jr. Superintendent of Sunday School. Each of the in-

dividuals serves in several other capacities at College Hill.

The speaker for the occasion was Rev. Eric D. Williams, pastor of Farish Street Baptist Church in Jackson. He was introduced by the pastor of College Hill, Rev. Chauncy L. Jordan, Sr.

Pastor Jordan described Pastor Williams as the epitome of a servant leader. He said, "Pastor Williams is a giant among us who lives as an example for others to follow. He prioritizes the needs of others before the needs of himself."

Pastor Williams preached his first sermon on March 9, 1997, at College Hill and was ordained to the gospel ministry January 14, 2001, also at College Hill.

After an initial prayer, Rev. Williams spoke of the history he had with College Hill over the years. He spoke of the intercessory prayer ministry that had prayed him through seminary many years ago.

Williams chose as his subject "The Mystery of God's Power." He stated God's power is demonstrated in compassion and ethical wisdom which is formed by Jesus Christ. This power which Pastor Williams spoke so passionately about was the power of love. He stated that this power is a matter of resisting all that would divide and tear humanity apart.

Music was provided by the College Hill Mass Choir, directed by Brandon Mitchell.

Co-chairs of the Church Anniversary Committee were Deacon LaVaughn Rankin and Deaconess Sherry Rankin.



Wild turkeys, yes! Health care, not so much

Our Republican-controlled Legislature showcases bizarre priorities as Mississippians suffer

By Christopher Young
Contributing Writer

The future of wild turkeys in Mississippi was obviously a priority for the Republican dominated legislature in 2025. With the passage of SB 2280, “Mississippi has secured a consistent, long-term revenue stream to directly benefit wild turkey conservation and habitat restoration efforts across the state. This dedicated funding stream will significantly enhance habitat restoration projects, scientific research and active management strategies, reinforcing Mississippi’s commitment to conservation and its rich hunting heritage,” per the National Wild Turkey Federation.

“Turkey hunting is a proud tradition in Mississippi,” said Lynn Posey, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks executive director. “With the creation of the Wild Turkey Stamp, we’re making sure that tradition has a strong future. We’re grateful to the Legislature, our partners and the hunting community for standing up for Mississippi’s turkey hunting heritage.”

Congratulations. Three cheers for the proud tradition of hunting turkeys. This effort has been three years in the making and over the finish line it finally went this session. That extra \$10 for the Wild Turkey Stamp (to be added to regular license price +



Wild Turkeys

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAILY LEADER FILE PHOTO

fees) for residents and \$100 for non-residents, will surely add up. “Hunters reported a harvest of 11,257 turkeys this year compared to 9,926 turkeys harvested in 2022. It is important to note that while GameCheck is required by state law it does not reflect the true number of birds harvested due to outlaws. Mississippi is ranked 17th for the most turkeys harvested in the country,” all per The Daily Leader on May 2, 2023.

Enough gobbling about turkeys, except to say that it sure seems like a whole bunch of people are dedicated to ensuring a strong future for turkey hunting in Mississippi, while making some extra money along the

way. Wouldn’t it be righteous if we could say the same about our state’s health care? Mississippi is ranked by US News & World Report (www.usnews.com) as 50th in the country.

Reaching out to Representative Zakiya Summers, a Democrat serving Hinds and Rankin counties, she shared there were a few bright spots relating to health care this session. She worked across the aisle to co-sponsor three bills that all advanced per www.Legiscan.com:

HB662 titled: “Medicaid; revise criteria for presumptive eligibility for pregnant women to conform to federal laws and regulations,” was passed without the Governor’s signature.

HB1063 titled: “MS State Employees Paid Parental Leave Act; was voted against by sixteen Senate Republicans, but it was approved by the Governor.

HB1401 titled: “Community health workers; provide for certification by Health Department and for Medicaid reimbursement for services of,” became law without the Governor’s signature.

As grateful as we are for every morsel of progress on the healthcare front, the overall picture for this legislative session was horrible. Consulting the Center for Mississippi Health Policy website, it is clear that at least 100 of the 498 bills that died in committee were related

to health and health care. Examples include: SB2818 Mississippi Hospital Recovery Trust Program; create to provide grants to public hospitals at high financial risk; SB2881 Regional health authorities; create the Delta Regional Health Authority; HB55 Medicaid; expand eligibility under federal Affordable Care Act and under CHIP; HB131 MS Hospital Emergency Grant Program; create to provide grants to hospitals having financial difficulties. See <https://mshealthpolicy.com/2025-legislative-bill-list> for more details.

It’s hard for a reasonable person to make sense of what happens at the Mississippi Capitol.



Rep. Zakiya Summers (D- 68, Hinds & Rankin Counties)

PHOTO FROM WWW.LEGISLATURE.MS.GOV

God knows there are some, like Representative Summers, for example, that are trying hard. Sadly, people like her are vastly outnumbered by others who simply don’t. Aren’t they supposed to be doing things that help our state? Wouldn’t that be the goal? We are swimming in debt, and they do their best to take away a massive funding stream (tax cuts). We are worst in the nation in health care, and despite healthcare advocates and the public insisting on change, the issue gets mostly ignored.

Instead, our majority Republican legislators mindlessly focus on national Republican talking points and policy memoranda from hard-right organizations like Americans for Prosperity, American Legislative Exchange Council, and the State Policy Network, all while our citizens suffer. 50th in healthcare, but they just sent HB1193 – “Public K-12 and Postsecondary schools; prohibit DEI statements and practices,” to the governor’s desk. Anything whatsoever to do with fairness and equity, anything to attempt to reverse gains made during the Civil Rights Movement – our Mississippi Republicans are on board.

Somehow, somehow it seems like turkeys are better off in Mississippi than most Mississippians.

Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus: A vision for unity and progress

By Rep. Kabir Karriem
MLBC Chairman



achievement. More importantly, it is a sacred trust bestowed upon me by my fellow members – a commitment to lead with virtues, listen with empathy, and amplify our collective voice for the communities we serve.

I am reminded of the legacy we have inherited from pioneering leaders like emeritus Speaker Pro Tempore Robert G. Clark, the first Black member of the legislature since Reconstruction, as well as Rep. Reedy Dickson, Rep. Rufus Straughter, and the late Senators Alice Harden and Bennie Turner. Their dedication to justice has incredibly shaped our path. Their names resonate not just as titles but as powerful symbols of our struggle and aspirations. These legislators, and many more, were warriors for justice, laying the groundwork for the work that lies ahead of us.

In our oath, we affirmed our commitment to serve with integrity, wisdom, and courage – advancing equity, justice, and opportunity for African-American communities and all people of Mississippi. We will strive to be a voice for the voiceless, a defender of civil rights, and a champion for education, economic justice, health equity, and criminal justice reform. This is not merely a political obligation. It is a moral imperative. As the scripture reminds us, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18).

COMMENTARY

This truth will guide our actions and decisions as we move forward.

We find ourselves at a critical juncture. The echoes of regression threaten to drown out our progress, as some of our colleagues seek to undermine the hard-won rights and opportunities that have taken generations to secure. It is essential that we do not allow ourselves to be divided in this challenging climate. Our strength lies in our unity. We must come together as one voice – unyielding and resolute.

The more than 1.1 million Black Mississippians are counting on us to be their unwavering voice within the State Capitol walls. We will engage our communities across the state through town hall meetings and college tours across the state. We invite every constituent to actively participate because we need to learn of your concerns, intentionally collaborate towards policy solutions, and ensure your voices are at the center of our work. This is a call to action for all of us. Let us be led by wisdom, inspired by courage, and driven by love. Our ancestors remind us, “We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated.” We will build a brighter future for all Mississippians.

On behalf of the Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus, thank you so much for your support as we continue this critical work. May we remain steadfast and united in our mission, and may God bless each of you and the great state of Mississippi.

Please stay in touch at www.msblackcaucus.com as well as on our social media channels.

When the bill comes due

Eliminating the state income tax is a risky gamble in uncertain times and raising the gas tax adds insult to injury

By Senator Derrick T. Simmons
Senate Minority Leader



means investing in schools, maintaining roads, supporting hospitals, and ensuring working families aren’t left behind. It also means making responsible fiscal choices that protect our future.

Unfortunately, with the passage of House Bill 1, Mississippi has taken a step in the wrong direction.

At a time when our financial outlook is increasingly uncertain, the legislature approved a sweeping tax plan that eliminates the state income tax and raises the gas tax. Cutting the income tax will strip more than \$2 billion from the state budget – money that supports our schools, hospitals, roads, and public safety. This reckless decision threatens the very services our economy and families rely on.

And the benefits won’t be shared equally. Mississippi’s wealthiest residents will receive a tax cut roughly equal to the average Mississippian’s yearly income. Meanwhile, families with low-incomes might save just enough to buy an extra gallon of milk each month.

Raising the gas tax only makes things worse. While eliminating the income tax benefits higher earners, increasing the gas tax hits rural and low-income Mississippians hardest – especially those who drive long distances for work, school, or basic services. Not to mention, retirees and those on fixed incomes simply can’t afford to pay more at the gas pump.

This is not tax reform. This is textbook regressive taxation in favor of the rich: shifting the tax burden from those most able to pay to those who are already stretched thin.

To make matters worse, a drafting error in the bill accelerates the tax cuts even faster than intended – shrinking revenue while we’re still absorbing the 2022 tax changes. And this is happening without a clear plan to cover essential costs like the new

school funding formula or long-term healthcare obligations, especially as the state continues to reject Medicaid expansion.

Proponents claim this plan will boost the economy and attract new residents – but history says otherwise. States that eliminated income taxes haven’t seen the promised growth. Instead, they’ve raised sales and property taxes or relied on other revenue sources like tourism or oil revenue – neither of which Mississippi can count on. In places like Arizona, Kentucky and Ohio, tax cuts have led to painful shortfalls and deep service cuts.

Passing laws not rooted in reality but on political ideology and wishful thinking is dangerous. According to the Mississippi Legislative Budget Office, from July 2024 to March 2025, the state collected \$71.7 million less in revenue than it did during the same period last year – a drop of 1.36%. Also, the proposed general fund budget for the next fiscal year is \$16.7 million less than what was appropriated for the current one. We are heading into a period of tighter budgets – and yet, we just cut our most reliable source of revenue.

This is especially risky given Mississippi’s reliance on federal funding. The recent surge in state revenue that drove some of the optimism behind the tax cut decision was fueled by temporary federal aid – primarily from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). That funding is drying up.

Despite persistent misinformation that Mississippi doesn’t want so-called “federal handouts” – especially around Medicaid expansion, summer meals for children, or safety net programs like TANF and SNAP – the truth is this: federal revenue is the single largest source of funding for Mississippi’s state budget. It contributes more to our economy than all state tax collections and other revenue sources combined. Mississippi is the second most federally dependent state in the nation. Federal funds account for over 46% of our state budget – more than \$14 billion out of a total \$31 billion.

Now, we are already beginning to feel the effects of recent federal funding reductions under the Trump

administration. The Mississippi Department of Education is set to lose \$137 million in expiring COVID-related funds. The Department of Health faces more than \$230 million in cuts to essential public and mental health programs. Even cultural and educational institutions like the Mississippi Humanities Council are bracing for a \$1.5 million loss in federal support.

Passing a massive tax cut while federal funds disappear is like tearing the roof off your house just as storm clouds are rolling in. You might enjoy the sunlight for a minute, but you’re not ready for what’s coming next.

But the damage doesn’t end there. The consequences of this shortsighted policy won’t end with this legislative session. When the shortfalls come – and they will – future legislatures will be forced to fill the gaps. The most politically convenient solution will be the most painful for working Mississippians – raising sales taxes on everyday necessities, increasing property taxes, or both. If that doesn’t work, we’ll see deep cuts to core public services. And if history is any guide, education will be the first on the chopping block. This would be another regressive move that pushes the cost of government even further onto working families and weakens our communities.

In times like these, we need leadership that plans ahead – not political stunts built on wishful thinking. A strong, stable economy doesn’t happen by accident. It requires responsible governance, forward-thinking policies, and the courage to serve all Mississippians – not just the wealthy few. If we want to attract businesses, support working families, and prepare for future growth, we must make smart, sustainable economic choices.

It doesn’t have to be this way.

We can choose a better path – one that protects essential services, invests in our people, and builds an economy where everyone contributes and everyone benefits. That’s the Mississippi our families deserve. That’s the future we should be fighting for.

The Mississippi Link newspaper is partnering with

The Marshall Project

<https://www.themarshallproject.org>

to continue its work on deadly internal issues in Mississippi’s prisons and the conditions that contribute to those issues.

Please contact us if you are past/present prison staff, former inmates, family members of inmates who have knowledge about these issues that can be verified by our investigative team.

(757) 717-0639

Angry protesters from New York to Alaska assail Trump and Musk in ‘Hands Off!’ rallies

By Dave Collins
Associated Press

Crowds of people angry about the way President Donald Trump is running the country marched and rallied in scores of American cities Saturday in the biggest day of demonstrations yet by an opposition movement trying to regain its momentum after the shock of the Republican’s first weeks in office.

So-called Hands Off! demonstrations were organized for more than 1,200 locations in all 50 states by more than 150 groups, including civil rights organizations, labor unions, LBGTQ+ advocates, veterans and elections activists. The rallies appeared peaceful, with no immediate reports of arrests.

Thousands of protesters in cities dotting the nation from Midtown Manhattan to Anchorage, Alaska, including at multiple state capitols, assailed Trump and billionaire Elon Musk’s actions on government downsizing, the economy, immigration and human rights. On the West Coast, in the shadow of Seattle’s iconic Space Needle, protesters held signs with slogans like “Fight the oligarchy.” Protesters chanted as they took to the streets in Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles, where they marched from Pershing Square to City Hall.

Demonstrators voiced anger over the administration’s moves to fire thousands of federal



workers, close Social Security Administration field offices, effectively shutter entire agencies, deport immigrants, scale back protections for transgender people and cut funding for health programs.

Musk, a Trump adviser who runs Tesla, SpaceX and the social media platform X, has played a key role in the downsizing as the head of the newly created Department of Government Efficiency. He says he is saving taxpayers billions of dollars.

Asked about the protests, the White House said in a statement that “President Trump’s position is clear: he will always protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid for eligible beneficiaries. Meanwhile, the Democrats’ stance is giving Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare benefits to illegal aliens,

which will bankrupt these programs and crush American seniors.”

Kelley Robinson, president of the Human Rights Campaign advocacy group, criticized the administration’s treatment of the LBGTQ+ community at the rally at the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where Democratic members of Congress also took the stage.

“The attacks that we’re seeing, they’re not just political, they are personal, y’all,” Robinson said. “They’re trying to ban our books, they’re slashing HIV prevention funding, they’re criminalizing our doctors, our teachers, our families and our lives.”

“We don’t want this America, y’all,” Robinson added. “We want the America we deserve, where dignity, safety and freedom belong not to some of us,



but to all of us.”

In Boston, demonstrators brandished signs such as “Hands off our democracy” and “Hands off our Social Security.”

Mayor Michelle Wu said she does not want her children and others’ to live in a world in which threats and intimidation are government tactics and values like diversity and equality are under attack.

“I refuse to accept that they could grow up in a world where immigrants like their grandma and grandpa are automatically presumed to be criminals,” Wu said.

Roger Broom, 66, a retiree from Delaware County, Ohio, was one of hundreds who rallied at the Statehouse in Columbus. He said he used to be a Reagan Republican but has been turned off by Trump.

“He’s tearing this country

apart,” Broom said. “It’s just an administration of grievances.”

Hundreds of people also demonstrated in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, a few miles from Trump’s golf course in Jupiter, where he spent the morning at the club’s Senior Club Championship. People lined both sides of PGA Drive, encouraging cars to honk and chanting slogans against Trump.

“They need to keep their hands off of our Social Security,” said Archer Moran of Port St. Lucie, Florida.

“The list of what they need to keep their hands off of is too long,” Moran said. “And it’s amazing how soon these protests are happening since he’s taken office.”

Activists have staged nationwide demonstrations against Trump and Musk multiple times since Trump returned to

office. But before Saturday the opposition movement had yet to produce a mass mobilization like the Women’s March in 2017, which brought thousands of women to Washington after Trump’s first inauguration, or the Black Lives Matter demonstrations that erupted in multiple cities after George Floyd’s killing by police in Minneapolis in 2020.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, protesters said they were supporting a variety of causes, from Social Security and education to immigration and women’s reproductive rights.

“Regardless of your party, regardless of who you voted for, what’s going on today, what’s happening today is abhorrent,” said Britt Castillo, 35, of Charlotte. “It’s disgusting, and as broken as our current system might be, the way that the current administration is going about trying to fix things – it is not the way to do it. They’re not listening to the people.”

Among thousands marching through downtown San Jose, California, were Deborah and Douglas Doherty.

Deborah, a graphic designer, is a veteran of the 2017 Women’s March and was nervous that fewer people have turned out against Trump this time. “All the cities need to show up,” she said. “Now people are kind of numb to it, which is itself frightening.”

Harris, Obama and Booker step up as resistance against Trump takes shape

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Is the resistance finally taking form?

As Kendrick Lamar asked during his powerful Super Bowl performance, “Are we really about to do it?” That question now echoes in the political arena as former President Barack Obama and former Vice President Kamala Harris have entered the public fray, joining voices like New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker and Texas Rep. Jasmine Crockett in confronting President Donald Trump and his administration’s sweeping changes head-on.

After months of relative silence following her defeat to Trump last November, Harris returned to the spotlight Thursday during a rare appearance at the Leading Women Defined conference at a seaside resort in Dana Point, California. According to *The Los Angeles Times*, she didn’t mention Trump by name but spoke forcefully about the anxiety many Americans are experiencing under his new administration.

“There is a sense of fear that is taking hold in our country, and I understand it,” Harris said. “These are the things that we are witnessing each day in these last few months in our country, and it understandably creates a great sense of fear. Because, you know, there were many things that we knew would happen, many things.” “I’m not here to say, ‘I told you so,’” she continued. “I swore I wasn’t going to say that.”

The appearance marked a shift in tone for Harris, who has been weighing a potential run for governor of California in 2026 or waiting until 2028 for another shot at the presidency. Still, she clarified that her political silence hasn’t equated to surrender. “We can’t go out there and do battle if we don’t take care of ourselves and each other,” Harris told the crowd. “I’ll see you out there. I’m not going anywhere.”

Obama, meanwhile, broke his silence during an appearance at Hamilton College in New York,



Graphic illustration of iconic American Capitol dome and simple ring of stars on abstract oil paint background. Conceptual graphic for political themed usage.

offering one of his sharpest public critiques yet of Trump’s second administration. He condemned Trump’s attempts to reshape the federal government, stifle dissent, and punish those who oppose his policies. “So, this is the first time I’ve been speaking publicly for a while,” Obama said. “I’ve been watching for a little bit.” “Imagine if I had done any of this,” Obama added. “It’s unimaginable that the same parties that are silent now would have tolerated behavior like that from me or a whole bunch of my predecessors.”

While calling Trump’s proposed tariffs bad for America, Obama said his larger concern lies with what he described as the White House’s alarming overreach.

“I’m more deeply concerned with a federal government that threatens universities if they don’t give up students who are exercising their right to free speech,” he said. “The idea that a White House can say to law firms, if you represent parties that we don’t like, we’re going to pull all our business or bar you from representing people effectively. That kind of behavior is contrary to the basic compact we have as Americans.”

Obama, who campaigned for Harris during the final stretch of the 2024 election, had warned that a second Trump term would endanger the nation’s democratic norms. “Just because [Trump] acts goofy,” Obama said at the time, “doesn’t mean his presiden-

cy wouldn’t be dangerous.”

With Trump’s second term underway, the voices of resistance are growing louder.

Sen. Cory Booker added fuel to the movement by making history on the Senate floor. He delivered a 25-hour, 5-minute filibuster that broke the record previously held by segregationist Sen. Strom Thurmond. Thurmond’s 1957 filibuster – lasting 24 hours and 18 minutes – was aimed at blocking the Civil Rights Act.

Booker used his record-breaking speech to denounce what he called a deliberate dismantling of government at the hands of Trump, Elon Musk and Congressional Republicans. “It always seemed wrong,” Booker said, referring to the Senate room still named after Thurmond. “It seemed wrong to me when I got here in 2013. It still seems wrong today.”

The New Jersey senator, a descendant of both enslaved people and slave owners, framed his marathon speech as a moral plea, reading letters from Americans affected by deep cuts and policy threats to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and SNAP. “This is a moral moment,” Booker declared. “It’s not left or right; it’s right or wrong.”

With Booker’s record-setting stand, Harris’ reemergence, and Obama’s warning shots, what once felt like fragmented frustration among Democrats may now be coalescing into something more deliberate: a resistance that is finally, visibly, on the move.

Target continues to pay the price for breaking promise to Black America

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Target is losing more than its commitment to equity, it’s losing customers. For the eighth consecutive week, shoppers have turned away from the retail giant following its decision to dismantle its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) program in January. New data from Placer.ai shows store visits during the week of March 17 fell by 5.7% compared to the same time last year. That follows a 7.1% decline the week before, bringing the average drop over the past two months to 6.2%. The fallout has been swift and steady. Target’s quiet retreat from DEI – after years of vocal support for racial and social justice and a multi-billion-dollar pledge – triggered an immediate backlash. Faith leaders, civil rights organizations, and everyday consumers responded with public pressure and calls to action.

Leading the charge is the Rev. Jamal Bryant, whose “Target Fast” boycott encouraged shoppers to avoid the chain throughout Lent. The effort surpassed its original goal of 100,000 participants, with more than 150,000 people now participating. The boycott is scheduled to end on Easter Sunday.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), representing the Black Press of America, launched a National Public Education and Selective Buying Campaign to help guide African Americans in wielding their \$2 trillion in annual spending power.

The NAACP issued a national consumer advisory, warning that Target’s rollback is part of a broader, intentional retreat from DEI by major cor-



A Target store in Houston, Texas, USA on March 13, 2022.

porations. “We encourage you to spend your money where you’re respected, support Black-owned businesses, and demand businesses prioritize people over profit,” NAACP officials said. “Above all, we must continue to advocate for policies that ensure people of color, women, veterans, those with a disability, and all protected groups have equal access to opportunities across the country.”

Following George Floyd’s murder in 2020, Target Corp. was among a list of companies making specific diversity pledges. Target vowed to spend \$2 billion with Black-owned businesses by 2025, increase its Black workforce by 20%, and establish a Racial Equity Action and Change (REACH) committee to advance racial equity within the company and beyond. It has reneged on those promises, making Target a focal point of protests. While Target remains silent on its declining traffic, the contrast with its competitors is glaring.

Costco, which maintained its DEI commitments despite political attacks, saw a 5.2% year-over-year increase in foot traffic during the same week – its

13th straight week of growth.

Walmart and McDonald’s – both of which had seen multi-week declines like Target – also saw their numbers shift slightly for the week of March 17. Walmart posted a modest 0.3% increase in foot traffic, while McDonald’s reported a 2% increase. But unlike Target, neither had matched its aggressive stance on racial justice – or its equally visible retreat.

Over the last eight weeks, Walmart’s average weekly foot traffic has been down 1.6%, and McDonald’s has seen a 3.6% average drop. Target’s 6.2% average decline puts it at the center of growing consumer frustration – and organized resistance.

“It’s been eight weeks, and the numbers don’t lie,” Deja Monet wrote for NewsBreak. “Target faces foot traffic decline for the eighth week after cutting off DEI programs, and the backlash shows no signs of slowing. With a massive boycott underway, declining sales, and silence from the brand’s top brass, Target is walking a tightrope between corporate appeasement and consumer fallout.”

The era of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) for college student-athletes has gotten our attention

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



Watching college sports has been one of my favorite past times over the years. The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat has been an expression that we have attached to student-athletes and college sports. The exhilaration when you win and the hurt when you lose is what we as fans see when the final score is given. Playing college sports is a privilege. You go into it knowing the rewards and the risks. It is not for everybody. My childhood friend Bill Earl and I were talking just last week about the

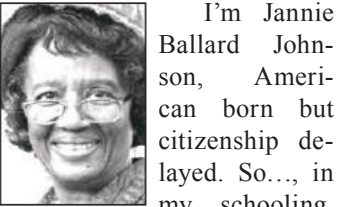
emotional highs and lows of it. We also agreed the college sports landscape has changed drastically. Some might opine that more changes are on the way. We will just have to stay tuned. Way back when, prospective college athletes were simply offered a scholarship. Some were full and others were partial. Nonetheless either one gave you a way to lessen your college expenses. Prior to Name, Image and Likeness agreements, college coaches would visit your home and talk with you and your parents. The scholarship offer would consist of tuition, room and board. That was a big deal and a big blessing. The feeling of euphoria and happiness filled your house. I know first-hand about this experience because I had it. As it was happening, I really couldn't believe it. There was a college tennis coach in my house talking with my dad and me. Mind you, this was many years ago, yet this will be forever etched in my memory bank. With great humility, I say that I had other college tennis scholarship offers. After carefully considering each, I made a decision. There was no fanfare and only a few people knew about it. Being able to get a college education and play a sport were foremost in my mind. Fortunately, I kept good grades in college and was a part of two championship teams. I graduated from college and

along the way made some life-long friends. College sports have changed in many ways. The media coverage of it is endless. At any given time, you can watch a college sport on television. Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) agreements have made college student-athletes millions of dollars. When coaches go to homes today, the conversation is very different. They talk about the school and notable alumni. However, the main conversation is about how much money the coach is willing to offer. According to reports, "Many states and universities have implemented rules requiring student-athletes to disclose their NIL activities and agreements ensuring transparency and accountability." Proponents of Name, Image and Likeness agreements point to several advantages to them. They say that the student-athletes get financial independence, life-changing opportunities and a chance to build their personal brand. Recently, LSU played UCLA in an Elite Eight NCAA women's basketball game. After the game, LSU star Flau'jae Johnson was asked about whether she would opt for the WNBA draft or return for her final year with the Tigers. According to media outlets, she will return to LSU. Johnson is a talented young woman on many levels. She is a rapper with rhymes that will make you move and groove. She has also

signed deals with Puma, Taco Bell and has an equity stake in the women's 3-on-3 basketball league Unrivaled. Johnson said, "For me it's about discipline and purpose. I know what I'm working on and that keeps me locked in. Basketball, music and financial literacy might seem like different lanes, but they all connect because they're about taking control of your future." There are other student-athletes whose names we know that are taking full advantage of their skill sets both on and off the courts and fields. These are some groundbreaking times for student-athletes in the United States of America. Let's applaud them and wish them well.

Candidates' this... and... that...

By Jannie B. Johnson
Caring n' Sharing School

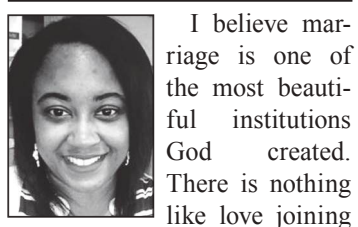


I'm Jannie Ballard Johnson, American born but citizenship delayed. So..., in my schooling, I missed a lot of that I should know but I learned a lot of this I do know.... It's the this I want to talk about because I know more about the this than I do about the that I missed. However, "I never let my schooling interfere with my education." - Mark Twain What do I hear when the candidates speak? I hear something, some nothing and some more of that I do not know? I am looking and I am listening to the candidates in the light of my knowledge, understanding and experiences. I don't hear or see the moral courage and strength needed to separate the good from the evil. The line that separates the good from evil runs through the heart of man, first; this I know. The candidates are saying lots of good, positive things: "Make our government work

again; a government we can believe and trust. We'll work together for change. I'll unite the parties, unite the people." Good. Now ... how much truth, if any, is in what they are saying? I don't know that.... There is a connection between immoral/bad/evil behavior and physical suffering. This I know! As America removes God from her equation for civility and tranquility, she will always have fight, violence, crime and corruptions. She'll always need more and more tax dollars for more security and more policing. I do not want to think or believe that we are so naïve to believe that godless laws have the power to control and protect lawless people in sight, out of sight and in the cover of the night. I didn't learn that.... Modern day Americans are sensitive, easily offended by the truth. The truth crushes their feelings. Therefore, the candidates are trying to say something without saying anything that will offend. Everything is relative, no absolutes. They talk about life without meaning, purpose or substance. They want to move the city/state forward but that direction has yet to be defined. I don't understand that.... History has shown me; experience has taught me this: man can be an evil and mean task master if there is no theism, God. This I learned. I have come to believe this: American citizens must live as if there is a God or propose there is a God. If not, there are no alternate bases for ethics. No civilization is safe until it is second in allegiance to God and His morality. So, what do you hear in the candidates' discourses? Do you hear some this and some that, too? I know what I want to hear from candidates. I want to hear a moral center for their words and behavior. I want to know if they will replace personal gain and special interests with common good; will they move from blame and fear to solutions and hope. Will they dare to move from left versus right to what is right and what is wrong? We the voting public need more of this and less of that.... This I do understand.

My red truck

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



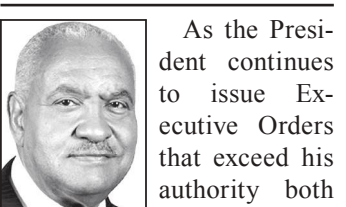
I believe marriage is one of the most beautiful institutions God created. There is nothing like love joining two people together to become one. Loving someone and having someone who loves you in marriage is comforting, delightful, intriguing and undeniably sexy. However, if you are married, and have been married for longer than five years, you probably would agree that you are not happily married every day. Marriage is a choice and sometimes the choice to stay married is not always easy. So, it swells my heart when I meet couples who have been married over 30 years. Of course, I never fail to ask them to share their secret of long-lasting love. And most, if not all, confess that it wasn't easy but they learned to make their marriage work. In other words, just because a couple celebrates being married for 30 plus years – it does not mean that it was always sunny days – there were storms too from which they recovered. Now think about it, some storms can be worse than others and depending on the damage done – it can take months to years to revitalize and rebuild – the restoration depends on both spouse's willingness to clean up after the storms. And of course, some storms cause irreversible damage – forcing many to start over in their marriage or divorce as a resolution. Let me be clear, yes married couples should certainly have more happy days than bad days; otherwise it would be a miserable marriage that may warrant divorce (review last week's article). However, for overall healthy

marriages, challenging days in marriage are inevitable. What do you do on days when marriage is not so pleasant? What do you do when your heart is pounding from disappointment, hurt, offense and frustration? What do you do when you can't deal with the things that annoy and unnerve you? What do you do on days when you contemplate is this worth it? What do you do when you believe that you would be better off alone or starting over with someone else? What do you do on days when your legs and feet are saying go, and your heart is saying no? How can you and your spouse accomplish having a long, healthy and loving marriage on the worse days? The following can potentially help: Forgive – **stop** living in the past (ask God to help you) if you can't forgive – it's simple, let the marriage go Heal – take time out to heal **self** in healthy ways Communicate – talk about it, **everything**. Get naked with each other – well not that kind of nakedness but you can do that too – this means be transparent – be gently honest with each other about everything Compromise – be flexible – I truly believe that couples should avoid saying no if it doesn't warrant any major issues, figure out ways to make it work that will benefit both spouses Become intentional about ignoring the flame of love in your marriage – example: date each other, take short getaways Reflect on your vows – Matthew 19:6 states: "What God joined together, let no one put asunder." Seek professional marriage counseling – get help. Strongly consider that second

marriages have a greater chance of ending in divorce than first marriages Be consistent – with new efforts and changes Be patient – 30 plus years reflect a lot of patience. In conclusion, I did not mention this, but reflection is important too. Try to reflect on the good in your marriage. Last Christmas, I saw this huge red truck in Hobby Lobby that I wanted and shared this with my husband. A couple of weeks later he surprised me with it and truly made my day. I sat it on my kitchen island and as Christmas drew near – I knew that the time to store my red truck away was soon approaching. Therefore, I asked my husband to paint it yellow (my favorite color and my kitchen has splashes of yellow decor). He painted it and it is absolutely beautiful. There is not a day that goes by that I don't reflect on my love for my husband when I see my yellow truck on our kitchen island. I reflect on the love, patience, support, and the care that was put into this – although it was painted a couple of months post-Christmas. My former red truck helps me know that my marriage is worth fighting for everyday even on the challenging days! However, I do look forward to my husband getting me another red truck later this year for Christmas – more reflection! *Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (motivational, ministering, marriage counseling, marriage workshops, marriage seminars, marriage conferences, etc.) on Instagram: letsstay2gether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert Email: letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com or contact me at 601-596-2528.*

What Democrats in Congress should be doing

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



As the President continues to issue Executive Orders that exceed his authority both under the Constitution and laws already passed by Congress, its well past time for the Democratic Minority in the House of Representatives to do all it can do beyond just talking about the President's usurpation of powers not granted to him by either the Constitution of the Congress. Here is an initial list of actions that should have been taken, and still must be, by the Minority Democratic membership: First, for each executive order such as the tariffs which rest with the Congress and not the President, there should be legislation introduced in the House of Representatives to cancel each and every tar-




iff not approved by the Congress. Well the first response to this will be "the Republicans control the House with Republican Mike Johnson as speaker. The answer: Introduce the legislation, then seek a discharge petition under the House Rules, which will force the speaker to bring such legislation to the floor for an up or down vote. While there are only 213 Democrats compared to the 218 Republicans, such a vote would force Republicans to be on record either supporting the devastation tariffs or crossing over to join the Democrats. The American people must then take stock of every Republican voting in support of the tariffs. Then the "Hands Off" efforts must add voter registration and the finding of candidates to replace each Republican supporting the President's actions. The same must be done for DOGE. There is not legal authority for the actions of Elon Musk even though the Supreme Court just upheld the firing of probationary federal employees. What's being referred to as a coming recession is already a depression for many Americans, both those of color and small businesses. The ripple effect is already causing hardships comparable to the 1930's depression for many families and individuals. Democrats in Congress can make use of the Black Press as a noted "Trusted Messenger," to distribute both the suggested legislation and the votes which can be sure to reach the American public. To take the above prescribed courses of action without informing the public is useless. The Black Press must pay closer attention to the issues beyond our support of the current selective buying campaign against Target and others. We must talk to and find ways to help both the Congress and each other during these difficult times.

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Electronic RFP proposals for the above RFP will be received by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District, in the Business Office, 662 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi, until 10:00 A.M. (Local Prevailing Time) on the following dates and times associated with each RFP proposal which time and place they will be publicly opened and read aloud

A Pre-Bid Conference concerning all listed projects will be held at Via TEAMS (see below for link) Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. Attendance at the pre-bid conferences is non-mandatory but strongly encouraged. Please see the link below.

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Please email todom@jackson.k12.ms.us to ensure your spot in the pre-bid conference. It is imperative to have this information before the meeting to confirm your attendance.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject all RFPs, waive informalities, and withhold the acceptance of any RFP if approved forty-five calendar days from the date RFPs are opened.

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

All hand-delivered proposals must be delivered before the opening time (local prevailing time) and the date the bid is scheduled to open. These deliveries are to be made to the Business Services Office at 662 South President Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

- Performance Dates:
- 1st Advetise: 07 April 2025 (Clarion); 10 April 2025 (Jackson Advocate, MS Link)
 - 2nd Advetise: 14 April 2025 (Clarion); 17 April 2025 (Jackson Advocate, MS Link)
 - Pre-bid Conference: 16 April 2025 (TEAMS)
 - Final Date for Questions: 22 April 2025
 - Answers to Questions: 23 April 2025
 - Bid Opening Day: 28 April 2025 @ 10:00 A.M.
 - Vendors may be notified of Board Review and Potential Award after the Bid Date

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the City Clerk of Jackson, Mississippi, at 219 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 or at Post Office Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 PM, local time (CT), Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

The demolition and cleaning of parcels:

- 167-25 located at 1434 HIGHWAY 80

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

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full and equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a pre-condition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Plan, with the bid submission, in accordance with the provisions of the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's Ordinance shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact the Office of Economic Development at 601-960-1055. Copies of the ordinance, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the program are available at 200 South President Street, Room 223, Hood Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

Contract Documents may be obtained from and/or examined at the offices of the Community Improvement Division located at 200 S. President Street, Suite 331, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. Telephone 601.960.1054. Prospective bidders may obtain copies of all materials required for bidding purposes. There is NO charge for electronic or e-mail copies. Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.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.

Bid preparation will be in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any and all irregularities in respect to any bid submitted or to accept any bid which is deemed most favorable to the City of Jackson.

by:
Samantha Graves, Manager

Community Improvement Division of Planning and Development

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

LEGAL

Advertisement for:
RFP 2025-08 Jackson Public Schools Armed Security Bid Event

Bids will be received by an Electronic Reverse Auction Sealed Bidding Process administered by Southern Procurement Services at which time bidding will begin and run until Suppliers have completed entering all bids. Thereafter, bids will be taken under advisement and awarded or rejected accordingly.

A complete bid package which contains bid instructions and specification response sheets may be obtained by emailing vaughn@southernprocurement.com and requesting a complete bid package. The following must be placed in the Subject Line of the email:

JPSD Bids – Armed Security Bid Event

Vendors will then receive instructions as to how to register with Southern Procurement to receive a complete bid package.

Please include full contact information, including company name, email address, telephone numbers and contact person in your email request. Email requests will be filled within 24 hours of submission or registration. Registration with Southern Procurement and acceptance of the Southern Procurement Platform Agreement is not optional and is required in order to participate in this bidding event. No exceptions will be made.

Specification responses must be submitted for this bid event and are due no later than 26 April 2019 at 5:00 PM local time in order to be considered for this bidding opportunity. Bid responses should be delivered to:

Vaughn Blaylock
Southern Procurement
vaughn@southernprocurement.com

DO NOT INCLUDE PRICING INFORMATION WITH YOUR SPECIFICATION RESPONSE. BIDS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN ONLINE AT THE APPOINTED TIME AND DATE.

Questions regarding these specifications should be directed to Vaughn Blaylock, Southern Procurement.

No bid shall be withdrawn after the scheduled date and time of the beginning of the bidding event without the written consent of the Purchasing Entity. Within the limitations of Mississippi State Purchasing Law, the Purchasing Entity reserves the right to reject any or all bids received, to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids received, or to accept any bid which is deemed most favorable.

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

LEGAL

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
City of Jackson
Jackson, Mississippi

Request for sealed, signed RFPS' is being accepted and you are invited to participate, they will be received by the City of Jackson, Mississippi, until 3:30 P.M. in the City Clerk's Office of Jackson, the RFP must be stamped in by 3:30 P.M. Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at which time said RFPS' will be publicly opened at the City Hall located at 219 South President Street (City Council Chambers) in City Hall for the following:

RFP NO. 91800-042225 -Northwest Industrial Park Entergy Site Certification

"Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic bids and/or reverse auction bids can be submitted www.centralbidding.com. For any question relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814."

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 RFP 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)960-1851. 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 RFPS. The City also reserves the right to waive any and all informalities in respect to any RFP submitted. RFP awards will be made to the lowest and best company submitting 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 RFP 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 RFP review.

Monica Oliver Purchasing Manager
Purchasing Division
(601) 960-1025

4/3/2025, 4/10/2025

LEGAL

CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

STATE STREET
Resurfacing State Street from Town Creek Bridge to 625 Feet North of Rankin Street
Federal Aid Project Number: STP-6928-00(020) LPA / 109284-701000

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the City Clerk, 219 South President Street, P. O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. (Local Time), Tuesday, May 13, 2025, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for construction of STATE STREET Resurfacing State Street, Federal Aid Project No. STP-6928-00(020) LPA / 109284-701000, at which time said bids shall be opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

Pavement repairs, milling, leveling, overlay, striping, and sidewalk improvements on a 0.21± mile five lane section of State Street from Town Creek Bridge to 625 feet North of Rankin Street, and 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.

The contract time shall be 80 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 ensure 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 City 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 one hundred twenty (120) days after the date of the actual bid opening, without the City of Jackson's consent. The successful bidder shall furnish a performance and payment bond in the amount of 100% of the bid. The 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.centralbidding.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 at the office of the Engineer, Southern Consultants, Inc., 5740 County Cork Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39206, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Local Time, Monday through Friday, upon payment of \$100.00 for each set, which will not be refunded. Checks are to be made payable to the Engineer.

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/or all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Louis Wright, Acting Public Works
Director, Department of Public
Works, City of Jackson

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

Cooperative Energy

Cooperative Energy is currently identifying vendors for the following services during an emergency:

*Lodging Facilities

*Catering Services

*Laundry Services

*Debris Services

*Transmission Line Construction

Please contact akeene@coopertiveenergy.com by no later than May 9, 2025, if you wish to be considered as a potential vendor.

4/10/2025

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS

Notice is hereby given that the Jackson Public School District will receive unpriced technical proposals to prequalify vendors for:

Serving Lines and Refrigeration Equipment for Various Locations
Reverse Auction RFP # 2025-06

The deadline for receipt of unpriced technical proposals is April 29, 2025, at 10:00 AM, local time. Unpriced proposals, including the Specification Response Form and all other documents, shall be submitted electronically at www.jpdsprojects.com. Specifications and detailed instructions regarding the bid process may be obtained by visiting the website www.jpdsprojects.com

This commodity will be procured through a multi-step procurement process, including a Reverse Auction. In Phase One, Unpriced technical proposals are evaluated for potential acceptability based on pre-determined criteria. In Phase Two, only those bidders whose technical proposals are determined acceptable shall be invited to provide priced bids for consideration. There will be a mandatory virtual pre-bid meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 10:00 AM. The link to the pre-bid meeting is: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MzRh-MzE3ZGYtNWVlZmNiO0ZmRlThkOGMtNGJlMjM4ODE0N2Vl%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22b0d7dadf-39df-4e2c-8ff6-f5256d542f94%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2286627f22-2fef-4b6f-8dd6-4c8b69bbf1de%22%7d

There will also be mandatory site visits for each school associated with this bid. All interested vendors must attend the pre-bid meeting and walk-through to be eligible to participate in the reverse auction. Mandatory site visits of each location will be conducted and shall be attended by all interested bidders on April 23, 2025, beginning at 8:00 A.M. The site visits will begin at Spann beginning at Spann Elementary School, located at 1615 Brecon Dr, Jackson, MS 39211, followed by Bailey APAC Middle School, located at 1900 N. State Street, Jackson, MS 39202, proceeding to Powell Middle School, located at 3655 Livingston Rd, Jackson, MS 39213, then finishing at Forest Hill High School, located at 2607 Raymond Rd, Jackson, MS 39212.

Specification response forms, along with all other required information detailed in the bid instructions should be submitted no later than 10:00 AM CST on April 29, 2025, per the detailed bid instructions. Unpriced Specification Response submissions will be evaluated, and vendors meeting the required specifications will be invited to participate in the Electronic Reverse Auction process on May 2, 2025, at 10:00 AM CST. Approved vendors will be given detailed instructions regarding the reverse auction. The Jackson Public School District reserves the right to extend the auction date, if necessary, to complete the pre-qualification process. For any questions relating to the electronic submittal or reverse auction process, please call PH Bidding Group at 662-407-0195.

The Jackson Public School District is an equal opportunity employer and hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that, in any contract entered unto under this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, disability or national origin in consideration for an award. The Jackson Public School District reserves the right to reject any and or all bids, waive technicalities, informalities or irregularities in the bids received, solicit new bids or choose that bid which is deemed to be in the best interest of the Jackson Public School District.

Michele Mays
Purchasing Supervisor

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
City of Jackson, Mississippi
Section 901
Hinds County, MISSISSIPPI
Federal Aid Project No. STP-8288-00(004) LPA/109285/701000

The City of Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, will receive bids for the Resurfacing of McDowell Road Extension from Highway 18 to Raymond Road for a total project length of 0.8070 miles, Federal Aid Project No. STP-8288-00(004)LPA/109285/701000 no later than 3:30 P.M., Local Time, 5/13/2025, at the City Clerk's Office located at 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. All bids so received will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:
The work to be accomplished using the pay items and corresponding specifications set forth in the contract is to resurfacing McDowell Road Extension from Highway 18 to Raymond Road with milling, overlay, and striping of lanes. 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.

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 of Hinds County 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.

The contract Documents are on file and may be examined at the following locations:
1. City of Jackson Engineering Division, 200 S President Street, Suite 424, Jackson, Mississippi 39201.
2. Myriad Engineering Solutions, LLC, 4780 I-55 N, Suite 100, Jackson, Mississippi 39211.

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. 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 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 Chancery Clerk, 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi prior to the hour and date above designated.

Bidders choosing to submit electronically are required to contact Central Bidding at 225-810-4814 for information regarding electronic bidding requirements. Contract time shall be 46 working days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed.

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.

Copies of the Contract Documents, Contract Drawings and Contract Specifications may be procured through the following:
1. All documents required for bidding purposes may be obtained from Myriad Engineering Solutions, LLC, 4780 I-55 N, Suite 100, Jackson, Mississippi 39211 upon payment of \$150.00 for each set, which will not be refunded.
2. All documents required for bidding purposes may be obtained through Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com, upon payment for each set, which will not be refunded. 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.

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.

BY
Henry Chia, Project Director
The City of Jackson, Hinds County

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

LEGAL

SECTION 1
ADVERTISEMENT

CITY OF JACKSON

SMALLWOOD STREET
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The City Clerk of the City of Jackson will receive bids for the replacement of bridge located on Smallwood Street, no later than 3:30 P.M., Local Prevailing Time, **May 13, 2025** in the Municipal Clerk's Office located at 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. All bids so received will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

1) Removal/Replacement of the Smallwood Street Bridge in its entirety plus related approach work.

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

The City of Jackson is committed to the principle of non-discrimination in public contracting. It is the policy of the City of Jackson to promote full an equal business opportunity for all persons doing business with the City. As a precondition to selection, each contractor, bidder or offeror shall submit a completed and signed Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) ordinance. Failure to comply with the City's ordinance shall disqualify a contractor, bidder or offeror from being awarded an eligible contract. For more information on the City of Jackson's Equal Business Opportunity Program, please contact Ms. Yika Hoover (Manager) in the office of Economic Development at (601) 960-1856. Copies of the ordinance, EBO Plan Applications and a copy of the Program are available at 200 South President Street, Warren Hood Building, Second Floor, Jackson, Mississippi.

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

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

Bids shall be made out on the bid proposal form to be provided, sealed in an envelope and plainly marked on the outside of the envelope: "Bid for CITY OF JACKSON SMALLWOOD STREET BRIDGE REPLACEMENT". Each bidder shall write his Certificate of Responsibility Number on the outside of the sealed envelope containing his proposal. Bids and EBO Plans shall be submitted in triplicate, sealed and deposited with the City Clerk Office, City Hall – 219 South President Street, Jackson, Mississippi prior to the hour and date hereinbefore designated. No bidder may withdraw his bid within 90 days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

A pre-bid conference will be held on **May 6th at 10 am.** in the Public Works Department 5th floor conference room of the Warren Hood Building, 200 South President Street, Jackson, MS 39201. All potential contractors, subcontractors, and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

The Contract Documents are on file and may be examined at the following locations:
1. City of Jackson - Public Works - Warren Hood Bldg. 4th Floor; Engineering Manager Office, 200 South President St., Jackson, Mississippi 39201.
2. CIVILTech, Inc., 5420 Executive Place, Jackson, Mississippi, 39206

Copies of the Contract Documents, Contract Drawings and Contract Specifications maybe procured through the following:

1. All documents required for bidding purposes may be obtained from CIVILTech, Inc., located at 5420 Executive Place Jackson, MS 39206 (Mailing address: P.O. Box 12852 Jackson, MS 39236-2852) upon payment of \$100.00 for each set, which will not be refunded.
2. All documents required for bidding purposes may be obtained through Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com, upon payment for each set, which will not be refunded. Electronic Bids may be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions related to electronic bidding, please call Central Bidding at 225-810-4814.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a 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 surety. Bidders shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the City. The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Payment Bond and Performance Bond each in the amount of 100% of the contract amount.

Work to be performed shall be in accordance with the "Mississippi Road and Bridge Construction, 2017 ed.", 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 City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any and all informalities.

Henry Chia
Henry Chia
Department of Public Works

4/10/2025, 4/17/2025

PICK UP
THE MISSISSIPPI LINK
AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

JACKSON

BULLY'S RESTAURANT

3118 Livingston Road

CASH & CARRY

Capitol Street and Monument Street

CITY HALL

219 S President St

GARRETT OFFICE COMPLEX

2659 Livingston Road

DOLLAR GENERAL

3957 Northview Dr (North Jackson)

DOLLAR GENERAL

2030 N Siwell Rd

DOLLAR GENERAL

4331 Highway 80W

DOLLAR GENERAL

5990 Medgar Evers Blvd

DOLLAR GENERAL

1214 Capitol St (Downtown Jackson)

DOLLAR GENERAL

304 Briarwood Dr

DOLLAR GENERAL

2855 McDowell Rd

DOLLAR GENERAL

104 Terry Rd

J & A FUEL STORES

3249 Medgar Evers Blvd.

LIBERTY BANK AND TRUST

2325 Livingston Rd.

MCDADE'S MARKET

Northside Drive

MCDADE'S MARKET #2

653 Duling Avenue

PICADILLY CAFETERIA

Jackson Medical Mall

350 W Woodrow Wilson Avenue

SHELL FOOD MART

5492 Watkins Drive

SPORTS MEDICINE

Fortification and I-55

MURPHY USA

6394 Ridgewood Rd (North Jackson)

REVELL ACE HARDWARE

Terry Rd (South Jackson)

WALGREENS

380 W. Woodrow Wilson Ave

CANTON

A & I

716 Roby Street - Canton, MS

B & B

702 West North Street - Canton, MS

BOUTIQUE STORE

3355 North Liberty - Canton, MS

BULLY'S STORE

Church Street - Canton, MS

COMMUNITY MART

743 Ruby Street - Canton, MS

FRYER LANE GROCERY

Martin Luther King Drive - Canton, MS

HAMLIN FLORAL DESIGN

285 Peace Street - Canton, MS

JOE'S SANDWICH & GROCERY

507 Church Street - Canton, MS

K & K ONE STOP

110 West Fulton Street - Canton, MS

LACY'S INSURANCE

421 Peace Street - Canton, MS

SOUL SET BARBER SHOP

257 Peace Street - Canton, MS

TRAILER PARK GROCERY

22 Westside Drive - Canton, MS

BYRAM

DOLLAR GENERAL

125 Swinging Bridge Dr.

HAVIOR'S AUTO CARE

5495 I-55 South Frontage Road

VOWELL'S MARKET PLACE

5777 Terry Road

CITY HALL

Terry Road

CLINTON

DOLLAR GENERAL

807 Berkshire St - Clinton, MS

TERRY

SERVICE STATION

at Exit 78

CITY HALL

West Cunningham Avenue

RAYMOND

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WELCOME CENTER

505 E. Main Street

SUNFLOWER GROCERY

122 Old Port Gibson Street,

Raymond, MS

LOVE FOOD MART

120 E. Main Street,

Raymond, MS

RAYMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY

126 W. Court Street, Raymond, MS

RAYMOND CITY HALL

110 Courtyard Square, Raymond

RAYMOND COURTHOUSE

UTICA

HUBBARD'S TRUCK STOP

Mississippi Hwy 18

PITT STOP

101 Hwy 18 & 27

BOLTON

BOLTON LIBRARY

BOLTON CITY HALL

MCAN

Mississippi Classified Advertising Network

To place your statewide classified ad order, call MS Press Services at 601-981-3060

For Sale

PREPARE FOR POWER OUTAGES

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ADVERTISE STATEWIDE in Mississippi Newspapers through Mississippi Press Services. 601-981-3060

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BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 1-877-312-6806

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OLSHAN FOUNDATION SOLUTIONS. Your trusted foundation repair experts since 1933. Foundation repair. Crawl space recovery. Basement waterproofing. Water management and more. Free evaluation. Limited time up to \$250 off foundation repair. Call Olshan 1-866-264-5115

SAFE STEP North America is #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-855-532-0066

Home Improvement

SunSetter. America's Number One Awning! Instant shade at the touch of a button. Transform your deck or patio into an outdoor oasis. Up to 10-year limited warranty. Call now and SAVE \$350 today! 1-888-495-6071

Insurance

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 350 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1 - 8 5 5 - 3 9 7 - 7 0 4 5 [#6258](http://www.dental50plus.com/mspress)

Medical Supplies

VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! 50 Pills SPECIAL \$99.00! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW! 1-833-641-4206

Miscellaneous

DONATE your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-866-428-0305 today!

Real Estate

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P R E S E R V E D

Spring cleaning

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



“Hi! My name is Shewanda. And I’m a pack rat.” I felt like I should be saying these words as I continued on my number one priority a few years ago at the beginning of the month of March: Spring Cleaning. What I thought would take me a few hours ended up taking me almost 9 hours. With careful consideration, I went through the piles of paper and folders, sheets of paper I didn’t realize I had and some I didn’t remember why I kept. In those cases, I threw them away. I figured if I hadn’t touched it in a year, I didn’t need it.

I even told myself before I

started cleaning that I would not talk myself out of throwing stuff away (like I usually did). I started in my bedroom and even brought just a few garbage bags upstairs because I didn’t have as much there (or so I thought).

One by one, the four bags were filled within minutes. One bag was so full that it nearly burst when I tried to pick it up. The crazy part was that it wasn’t anything terribly important that I was throwing away just a few old notes, left over brochures from conferences and other miscellaneous projects.

Even though I watched many talk shows with self-professed hoarders and pack rats, I never saw myself as one of “those” people. Sure, I like to hold onto stuff for sentimental reasons (like all

of my report cards starting at kindergarten or my Girl Scout sash and beret). I just figured since I had good reasons for keeping these things, it didn’t matter how much it was.

But I had to admit one thing after I’d bagged all of the trash up and taken it outside: I felt so relieved without the clutter. I was amazed at how I’d allowed myself to get used to the clutter. Of course, I noticed it building over time but I was always able to excuse it away.

Why did I hold onto those things that I said I needed, but didn’t ever use? And why was I afraid to throw them away? The more I thought about it, I had to admit my fear was that I didn’t want to be unprepared. Keeping those items gave me a false

sense that I’d be ready...for what I wasn’t sure.

John 15:2 says, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” Throwing away the clutter felt like I was being pruned. I now try to look at it this way: throwing away what I didn’t need now leaves room for God to give me what he wants me to have so I can do what he wants me to do.

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

Walk in wisdom: Seize the moment

Matthew 28: 18-19

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



Jesus, in Matthew 28:18-19, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples.” In other words, the people of God are an evangelizing, persuading, recruiting, missionary people because God is God Almighty and Jesus is the absolute authority in the universe.

From time to time in the life of the church there needs to be a wake-up call to some simple, central and basic things. One of these is Christianity, a converting religion. It is evangelistic, persuasive, expansive and missionary. It is not coercive. It does not use swords, manipulation or brainwashing; but it does proclaim, persuade, plead and pray.

Where there is no belief and practice, Christianity ceases to be Christianity and starts to become another religion with another king who no longer says, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply.” When we lose a passion to see people won over to Jesus, we lose Jesus.

Christianity is a soul-winning, outreaching, mind-persuading, heart-entreat, rescuing, missionary faith or it is not true Christianity. We need to be reminded of this because it is almost incredible how listless we can become while call-

ing ourselves Christians. Little by little our whole orientation can become inward. We can go months and years and not think about those who perish. We become so dull and spiritually callus that we don’t even ask if we believe in hell or lostness or the preciousness of Christ and the power of the cross and the freeness of the gospel and the command of Jesus. We just go about our in-house religious business like a medical clinic that sees fewer and fewer patients and has more staff meetings, until there is nothing left but a smooth-running program for the doctors, nurse and their families. That is what happens to many churches.

As we read from Colossians 4:2-6, “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way that I ought to proclaim it. Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Your speech must always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

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



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The weight of financial news: Reducing its impact on your stress level

By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Financial bad news ranging from plunging stock markets, escalating inflation and mass layoffs to overwhelming debt crises has become an inescapable part of our life. With the rise of digital media, such news spreads at an unprecedented speed, touching our lives across the globe in real time. The constant barrage of negative financial updates can deeply affect you, causing worry about personal economic stability and the uncertainty of your future.

Financial bad news is a potent trigger for stress, primarily because it directly correlates with your sense of security and control. When you're confronted with information about economic instability weather it's impending recessions or skyrocketing prices you often experience a heightened stress response. Your physiological reaction is characterized by an increased cortisol levels, manifests as anxiety, fatigue and even insomnia. Uncertainty surrounding your job security, retirement plans or your debt repayment further exacerbates your stressors.

This modern era of constant connectivity amplifies the psychological toll of financial bad news. With 24-hour news channels, social media platforms and notifications constantly buzzing on our devices, financial updates



are no longer limited to newspaper headlines or evening broadcasts. This unrelenting stream of information ensures that financial worries linger, making it difficult to mentally unplug. Over time, this prolonged exposure contributes to chronic stress, creating a vicious cycle that becomes increasingly challenging to escape.

The impact of financial stress reaches far beyond the individual, it affects our health, relationships and society as a whole.

On a personal level, the link between financial stress and physical health is well documented.

Chronic stress has been associated with conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease and weakened immunity.

Mental health also takes a toll, as prolonged financial worry often leads to anxiety, depression and burnout. Studies reveal that individuals under severe financial stress are more likely to experience diminished cognitive function, impairing their ability to make sound decisions.

Your interpersonal relationships are not immune to financial stress either. Couples frequently cite money problems as

a leading cause of conflict and even divorce. Financial difficulties can strain friendships and parent-child relationships, creating tensions that erode trust and intimacy.

On a broader scale, the effects of your financial stress ripple through society, decreasing productivity in the workplace, increasing reliance on healthcare services and sometimes fostering harmful coping mechanisms like substance abuse. Understanding these consequences is vital to tackling the issue head-on.

Despite your challenges, financial stress can be managed through practical coping mechanisms. The first step is establishing a personal financial plan. Creating a detailed budget, building an emergency savings fund and setting realistic financial goals provide a sense of control and stability. Modern technology offers several tools, such as budgeting apps and investment platforms that simplify financial management and help you stay on track. Seeking professional advice from financial planners or counselors can also yield valuable insights into managing your debt and making smart investments.

Another key strategy is limiting your exposure to financial news. While staying informed is important, it is equally vital to set boundaries. This could

involve designating specific times to check financial updates, choosing reliable news sources over sensational ones and muting notifications that trigger stress. Regular disconnects from your devices can be especially beneficial in fostering your mental clarity and emotional balance.

Building resilience is crucial in mitigating your impact of financial bad news. Techniques such as mindfulness, meditation and regular physical activity are proven to reduce stress and improve your overall well being. Therapy or counseling can help you process your anxieties and develop better coping mechanisms tailored to your circumstances.

Seeking support from trusted family members, friends and community networks can make a significant difference. Sharing financial burdens and discussing concerns with others alleviates feelings of isolation and creates opportunities for shared problem solving. Professional financial counseling services offer additional resources for those in need, providing tailored advice and actionable solutions.

History offers numerous examples of individuals and communities who have turned financial challenges into opportunities. During the Great Depression, countless families adapted by practicing thrift, innovating solutions to everyday

problems and strengthening community bonds. In recent times, individuals who faced job losses during recessions have started successful businesses or pursued fulfilling career changes. Stories like these remind us that while financial adversity is difficult, it can also be a catalyst for growth and innovation. Cultivating optimism and a positive outlook helps reframe financial difficulties as temporary setbacks rather than insurmountable obstacles and encouraging proactive responses rather than paralysis.

The pervasive nature of financial bad news in today's world undeniably elevates stress levels, creating significant challenges for individuals and society. However, by adopting proactive strategies such as mindful financial planning, limiting media exposure, building resilience and seeking support, you can reduce its psychological toll and regain control over your life. While we may not always have power over economic circumstances, we can choose how we respond to them, safeguarding our mental and emotional well being in the process.

Ultimately, resilience and adaptability are our greatest assets in navigating the ever-shifting tides of financial news.

If you have a fitness question or concern you would like addressed tipstobefit@gmail.com

5 ways to get more out of every step you take on the road to better health

By Laura Williamson
American Heart Association News

Walking is one of the most popular forms of exercise in the world. It costs nothing, can be done almost anywhere and provides numerous health benefits. It decreases the risk and severity of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and dementia and improves mental health, sleep, longevity and healthy aging.

What's more, there are benefits to walking no matter your level, said Dr. Amanda Paluch, an assistant professor of kinesiology at the University of Massachusetts School of Public Health and Health Sciences in Amherst. That's because any type of physical activity is better than none, she said.

Walking accrues benefits even at its most basic level – just putting one foot in front of the other and taking a turn around the block, through a park or down a trail.

Research suggests the more steps a person takes each day, the more they reduce their risk of dying. But that benefit maxes out between 6,000 and 8,000 steps per day for people 60 and older and between 8,000 and 10,000 steps per day for people younger than 60.

For those who are willing and able, there are ways to boost the benefits of walking to reap even more rewards. Here are five simple ways to put more pep in your steps.

1. Nordic walk your way to even greater fitness

Nordic walking, created to



SOLSTOCK/E+ VIA GETTY IMAGES

help cross-country skiers train during the summer, involves using a set of specially designed poles that work the muscles in the upper body. It has been shown to improve resting heart rate and blood pressure and to increase exercise capacity and oxygen consumption. It's increasingly being suggested as a form of physical activity for older adults.

"The science behind it is really compelling," said Dr. Keith Diaz, an associate professor at Columbia University's department of medicine in New York City. "You're engaging more muscles and using your upper body more, so you burn more calories than you do with regular walking."

The added intensity is what benefits cardiovascular health,

Paluch said. "You're getting your heart rate up and also improving your fitness level, which is a major contributor to good health."

And, she said, "It can be fun just to have a different way of walking."

2. Add lunges
Research suggests adding lunges can also add health benefits to a walk.

"As we age, physical function can decline," Diaz said. "Lunge-walking is a means to maintain, if not improve, muscular function."

Lunges can be incorporated into all or even just some of the steps on a walk or can be done in intervals along the way, Paluch said.

Other simple exercises, such as calf lifts, can be added as



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well as other muscle-strengthening or resistance training activities. These can be done before, during or after the walk.

"Work some muscles that are different from the ones you use walking," Paluch said. "Including even 10 minutes of resistance either before or after a walk can maximize the health benefits of walking. These can be simple activities that don't take a lot of time, such as situps or modified pushups."

Lifting light weights can also add benefits, but Paluch does not recommend carrying weights while walking because it can increase the risk of injury. "Using weights right after a walk would be best, because the body is already warmed up," she said.

Federal physical activity

guidelines recommend adults, especially those 65 and older who are able, incorporate muscle-strengthening activities into their physical activity regimen at least two days a week. This is in addition to at least 150 minutes per week of moderately intense physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity.

3. Pick up the pace
While walking at any pace is better than not walking at all, studies show a faster, more intense pace incurs greater cardiorespiratory fitness and bigger reductions in the risk for chronic illness.

"Your pace is a big determinant of how much health benefit you get from walking," Diaz said. "Increasing pace is the easiest thing to do."

Picking up speed can be done in intervals of any duration, Paluch said. "Even doing it for just 20 seconds can have a benefit. It really depends on where you're starting from."

4. Put the phone away
"Don't be on a screen while you're walking," Diaz said. "That may sound obvious, but in this day and age, that's what a lot of people do."

Taking a break from digital devices allows people to de-stress more fully, he said. "Walking itself is a mood booster, but is the mood boost because you're walking or because you took a screen break?"

Whether walking alone in silence or talking with a friend, there are mental health gains to taking a break from screens and other work activities, Paluch said. "Taking time for ourselves can be incredibly beneficial."

5. Bring a friend
Research shows group outdoor health walks can mitigate social isolation and improve social well-being, which has been linked to better health and longevity. Studies have also found strong social connections help people get and stay active.

"Walking can be a social activity as well as a physical activity," Diaz said.

And while there's no evidence that talking while walking burns extra calories, he said, there is research suggesting that genuine laughter increases energy expenditure by up to 20%.

You may not see the pounds falling off, Diaz said, but you'll have a good time trying.

Mary Church Terrell celebrates 21st annual luncheon

By Jackie Hampton
Publisher

Mary Church Terrell Literary Club, Inc., (MCTLC) held its 21st annual Literary Luncheon at the Jackson Hilton, 1001 East County Road, Ridgeland, MS, at 12 noon on April 5, 2025. The event, which was held one day prior to the start of National Library Week (April 6-12, 2025), is named for Mary Terrell, (born Mary Church) an African-American civil rights activist, journalist, teacher and one of the first African-American women to earn a college degree. She was a founding member of the National Association of Colored Women.

The motto for MCTLC is "Lifting as We Climb" and the theme for National Library Week is "Drawn to the Library."

Past MCTLC president, Chris Tanner-Watkins, served as presider. After grace by Dr. Barbara Richardson, worship committee chair, the occasion was given by Lenora Bishop, membership and social committee chair. Greetings were extended by Mary Collier, president of MS State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. and Dr. Candace Love Jackson, president of MCTLC.

The guest speaker for the occasion was Jackson native, Dr. Nina Nelson-Garrett. She was introduced by Attorney Ronda Cooper, 1st vice chair of MCTLC and co-chair of the literary luncheon committee. Cooper and Garrett were classmates at St. Joseph High School in Jackson and she was elated that her friend and former classmate consented to speak for the occasion.



Members of Mary Church Terrell Literary Club, Inc.

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



Valerie Blue, MCTLC Woman of the Year



Student awardees with Candace Love Jackson (C)



(L-R) Barbara Richardson, Guest Speaker Nina Nelson-Garrett and Candace Love Jackson

Dr. Garrett, who is committed to civil rights issues, has practiced medicine in Little Rock, AR, Jackson, MS and Baltimore MD. She is currently the managing partner at Capital City Gastroenterology in Montgomery, AL. She published her first book, "Grace Will Lead You Home" in 2018. Her book was awarded finalist at The American Book Fest on August 2, 2019, in four categories namely, African-American Fiction, Best Cover Design Adult Fiction, Christian Inspiration and Inspirational.

After lunch book stipends were presented to three graduating Jim Hill High School graduating seniors. They were presented by MCTLC awards committee member Dr. Preselfannie McDaniels. The recipients of the awards were Kennedy Gabrielle Howard, McKorie Andrea Taylor and Alicia Tolliver. Each student received book stipends in the amount of \$1,000.

The annual MCTLC Woman of the Year award was presented to Valerie Blue. It was presented by the 2024 Woman of the Year,

Jacquelyn Staffney.

This year's luncheon seems to have been an inspirational and motivational event for all that attended.

Alberta Smith has been a member of the organization since 2008 and has served on many committees. She said, "The luncheon was wonderful. The speaker was on time with current issues that are going on in America, including federal cutbacks, in particular those affecting African Americans." She said the speaker is deeply

committed to civil rights issues and programs that lift others. She ended by quoting their motto, "Lifting as We Climb."

First Vice Chair Cooper told *The Mississippi Link* that the event was wonderful and that they had gotten a lot of positive comments from attendees. "Everyone, 'just everyone' was so impressed with our speaker, Dr. Garrett. It was an honor to have extended the invitation to her and she was humbled by the invitation to speak."

Cooper said the speaker not

only talked about her medical career, especially during the COVID crisis, but also her service to the community and non-profits.

She said Dr. Garrett donated all the proceeds from her book to a non-profit in Jacksonville, FL called Don't Miss A Beat, Inc., which is an organization that serves over 20,000 kids and young adults whose mission is designed to enlighten kids through musical theatre production and community engagement.





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Powell Middle School principal honored as 2025 TRIO Achiever



Terrance Hill, principal, Powell Middle School

The Mississippi Link Newswire

The Jackson Public School District proudly congratulates Terrance Hill, principal of Powell Middle School, on being named a 2025 TRIO Achiever by the Mississippi Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (MAEOPP). This prestigious award recognizes outstanding alumni of TRIO programs who have made significant strides in their professional careers while continuing to uplift and inspire the next generation.

Hill’s journey with TRIO began in 2002 as a participant in the Educational Talent Search Program. Over more than two decades, the program played a pivotal role in shaping his personal and academic trajectory.

“As part of TRIO, I was able to attend enrichment programs in reading, math and science, while also developing life-changing skills like business etiquette, self-confidence and resilience,” Hill said. “The summer trips to cities like New Orleans, Dallas and Atlanta opened my eyes to new possibilities and helped me understand the importance of education beyond the classroom.”

Today, Hill leads Powell Middle School with the same values TRIO instilled in him – mentorship, empowerment and purpose. He credits the program as a driving force behind his decision to enter the field of education and his ongoing commitment to serve.

“I often reflect on the lessons I learned through TRIO and share them with my students and staff,” he added. “It’s my way of paying it forward – ensuring that the cycle of growth and mentorship continues.”

Hill will be formally recognized at the 2025 TRIO Achievers’ Recognition Ceremony Monday, April 14, 2025, at Le Meridien Dania Beach in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

The Jackson Public School District celebrates this remarkable honor and extends its deepest congratulations to Hill on this well-deserved recognition.

JSU doctoral student wins global award for nuclear waste management research

By L.A. Warren
Director of Research Communications,
Jackson State University

Jackson State University (JSU) doctoral student Oketola Oluwaseun, from the Department of Chemistry, Physics and Atmospheric Sciences, has been awarded the prestigious Roy G. Post Foundation Award for his outstanding research, leadership and community impact in nuclear waste management and environmental sustainability. The international recognition comes with a \$7,000 cash prize.

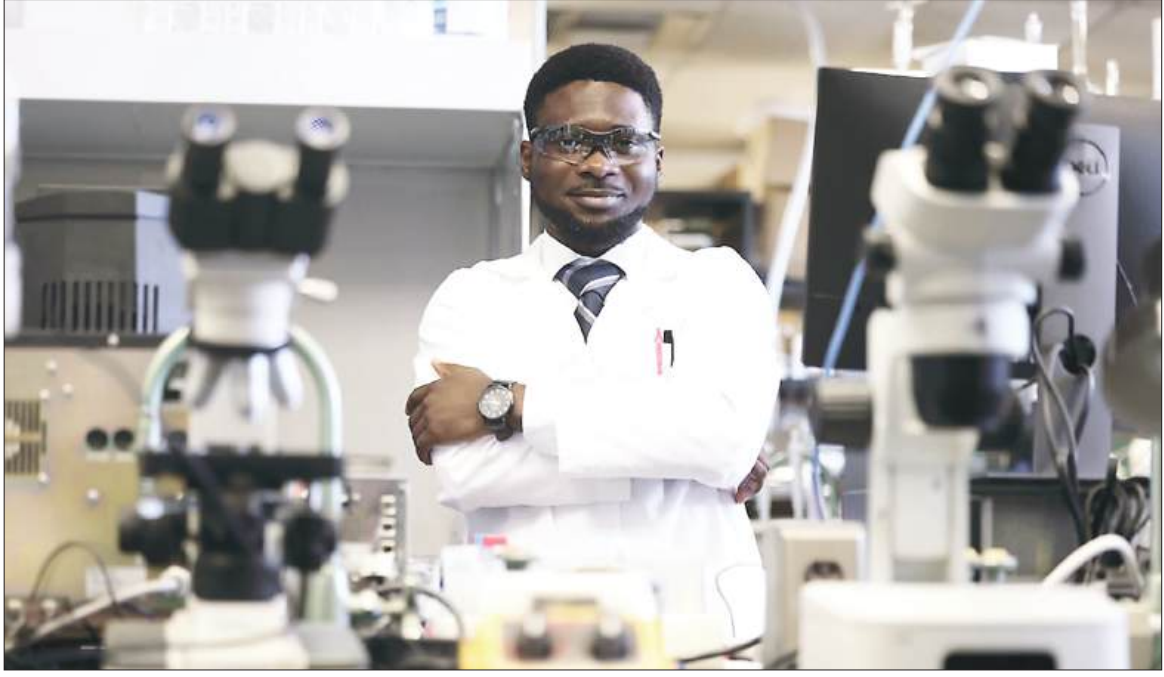
Oluwaseun’s research focuses on developing innovative materials to clean up nuclear waste using chalcogels. Chalcogenide-based aerogels are a distinctive class of porous nano-aggregated semiconducting materials with promising applications in clean energy and environment remediation. These materials trap and efficiently remove harmful radioactive elements in wastewater and nuclear waste that can cause severe effects on humans, animals and the environment.

A rise in global energy demand and nuclear waste disposal challenges inspired Oluwaseun’s work, which also explores the broad application of these materials for next-generation batteries for electric vehicles (EVs) and other uses.

The Roy G. Post Foundation Award, presented by the Waste Management Symposium – one of the world’s largest global conferences on nuclear waste – recognizes “next-generation workforce students” making significant contributions to the field. In addition to receiving a cash prize, Oluwaseun was awarded an all-expenses-paid trip to present his research at the annual conference in Arizona last month.

“This award validates my dedication to nuclear waste management and environmental sustainability, reinforcing my passion for developing innovative materials to address real-world challenges,” said Oluwaseun, a 29-year-old native of Ijebu North, Ogun State, Nigeria.

“Professionally, this recogni-



Oluwaseun’s award included a \$7,000 cash prize and an all-expenses-paid trip to present his research at this year’s annual conference, March 9-13, at the Phoenix Convention Center in Arizona. PHOTO CHARLES A. SMITH/JSU

tion enhances my credibility and visibility in the field, opening doors for collaborations, research funding and career opportunities in nuclear waste management and materials chemistry both in the U.S. and globally.”

Oluwaseun began his academic journey at Olabisi Onabanjo University in Ogun State, earning a Bachelor of Science degree that fueled his commitment to nuclear waste management and sustainable energy. A decade ago, he witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of water pollution in his home state. During his internships as a quality control chemist at Ogun State Water Corporation, his team detected dangerously high levels of heavy metal. He saw how poor sanitation and untreated wastewater contamination led to severe health issues.

Oluwaseun’s award included a \$7,000 cash prize and an all-expenses-paid trip to present his research at this year’s annual conference, March 9-13, at the Phoenix Convention Center in Arizona. (Charles A. Smith/JSU)

“This experience sparked my interest in developing advanced materials for wastewater treatment,” he explained. “In 2018, I collaborated on research evaluating heavy metals and radionuclides in selected rivers around

Sagamu, Ogun State. This realization led me to pursue graduate studies at JSU, where I could explore the intersection of materials science and environmental chemistry to tackle environmental contamination through scientific innovation.”

Now a Ph.D. student in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology (CSET), Oluwaseun designs crystalline and amorphous inorganic materials using advanced techniques to study their synthesis, morphology and structure.

His work aims to develop eco-friendly materials for electrochemical applications, including removing hazardous radionuclides such as technetium from wastewater and enhancing lithium/sodium-ion batteries for EVs, for example. He also co-authored studies on chalcogels, which serve as high-capacity electrodes for conversion-based Li-ion batteries to improve performance, energy storage and renewable energy integration.

Beyond research, Oluwaseun is dedicated to mentorship and teaching. While studying in Nigeria, he won the Best Tutor Award in chemistry and the Leadership Award. In the U.S., he participates in STEM outreach programs, inspiring young stu-

dents to explore environmental science and pursue careers in research.

For aspiring researchers in nuclear waste management and environmental sciences, Oluwaseun offers this advice: “Seek mentorship from experienced researchers, communicate your scientific findings effectively, and take advantage of opportunities such as conferences and networking events to build a strong professional network.”

Oluwaseun credits JSU and his advisor, Dr. Saiful M. Islam, an assistant professor in CSET, for their roles in his success.

“Dr. Islam’s guidance has been invaluable in refining my research approach and expanding my technical expertise. The resources and collaborative opportunities at JSU have significantly contributed to my growth as a scientist.”

Looking ahead, Oluwaseun aims to expand his research on chalcogel-based materials, exploring their applications in nuclear waste treatment, energy storage and environmental sustainability.

He envisions collaborating with national laboratories, government agencies and industry partners to enhance nuclear safety and environmental protection worldwide.

Elementary Network II Math coach selected to present at 2025 Metro-Math Conference

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Jackson Public Schools proudly congratulates Benardytte-Robinson-Stokes, Elementary Network II Math coach, on her selection as a presenter at the prestigious 2025 Metro-Math Conference: Home is

Where Math Is.

The conference, set to take place June 24-25 at Northwest Rankin High School in Flowood, Mississippi, will bring together mathematics professionals from across the region.

With over 20 engaging sessions, the event is designed to support secondary math educators, special education teachers, and instructional leaders in advancing effective teaching practices.

Stokes’ selection as a pre-

senter highlights her expertise and commitment to mathematics education. Her session, “Put It in Writing: Incorporating Writing in Math,” will offer valuable insights on integrating writing into math instruction, enhancing stu-

dent comprehension and engagement.

We encourage all math professionals to take advantage of this exciting opportunity to learn, collaborate and explore innovative teaching strategies.



Benardytte-Robinson-Stokes
Elementary Network II Math coach



BOOK REVIEW:

POETRY BOOKS

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By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

A, B, B, A. That’s not only how you spell the name of a popular music group, that’s also how a poem might be structured, if it rhymes, or it might be created in other ways. That’s the thing about poetry: it’s all how you perceive it when creating it and reading it. So why not think about putting these great poetry books on your shelf this month...? When you spend time with poetry, you expect a certain kind of relationship between


author and reader. That’s only part of what you get in “The Space Between Men” by Mia S. Willis (Penguin Poets, \$20). It might also change the way you feel. Here, Willis – a poet, historian and educator – explores culture, Black History, and what it’s like to be Black, Southern, and queer. When those various experiences come together in poetry here, it invites readers to consider the width and depth of the spaces, and their mere existence. If short but image-fueled po-

etry appeals to you, this book is worth a good look. Poetry can take your thoughts in many directions, including thoughts about yourself. If you’re hungry for soul-searching, then try “Is This My Final Form?” by Amy Gerstler (Penguin Poets, \$20). Life doesn’t follow a straight line. Some things are two things at once and situations can change, which are two points that seem to be everywhere inside this book. Is this a series of biographical poems with a twist of imagination, or are the


poems in here a collection of new perceptions and ways to embrace what could be? Read, and think about it because it’s up for a reader’s interpretation. However you perceive these poems, you may chuckle sometimes. For sure, you’ll want to read them again and think anew. And finally, if your child loves the beauty of poetry and wonders how to create poems, then “The One and Only Rumi” by Rabiah York, illustrated by Maneli Manouchehri (Penguin, \$18.99) is a book to bring to the

table. Here, children will learn the story of Muhammad, a wise young boy whose life changed when Genghis Khan came to his village. Muhammad was only allowed to fill a bag with possessions and he knew he’d miss the birds and the friends he’d made at home. His father said it was unlikely that they’d ever return. Yes, there were other birds and other friends in his lifetime, but Muhammad never forgot the first ones and “he never stopped listening” to the wind

or the sound of the leaves or the laughter of others. He grew to become a man, a teacher, and a poet, as your 8-to-12-year-old will see in this beautifully illustrated, beautifully told book. If these collections about poetry and life don’t quite fit what you need, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for more. They can help you find poetry, silly rhymes, great biographies, and collections of verse that are perfect volumes with which to spend hours. In the meantime, give these poetry books an “A.”



ZACK WALLACE
Hinds County Circuit Clerk



Services of the Clerk:

- Civil/Criminal Filings of Circuit and County Court
- Marriage License
- Medical License
- Voter Registration/Absentee Voting

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Circuit Clerk's Office
P.O. BOX 327
Jackson, MS 39205
Phone: (601) 968-6628
Fax: (601) 973-5547

Jury Duty Recording:

First Judicial District
(601) 969-0052

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Circuit Clerk's Office
P.O. Box 999
Raymond, MS 39154
Phone: (601) 857-8038
Fax: (601) 857-0535

Jury Duty Recording:

Second Judicial District
(601) 857-8869

Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday
(Except on legal holiday)

VOTER INFORMATION

Verify/Update your Registration Today

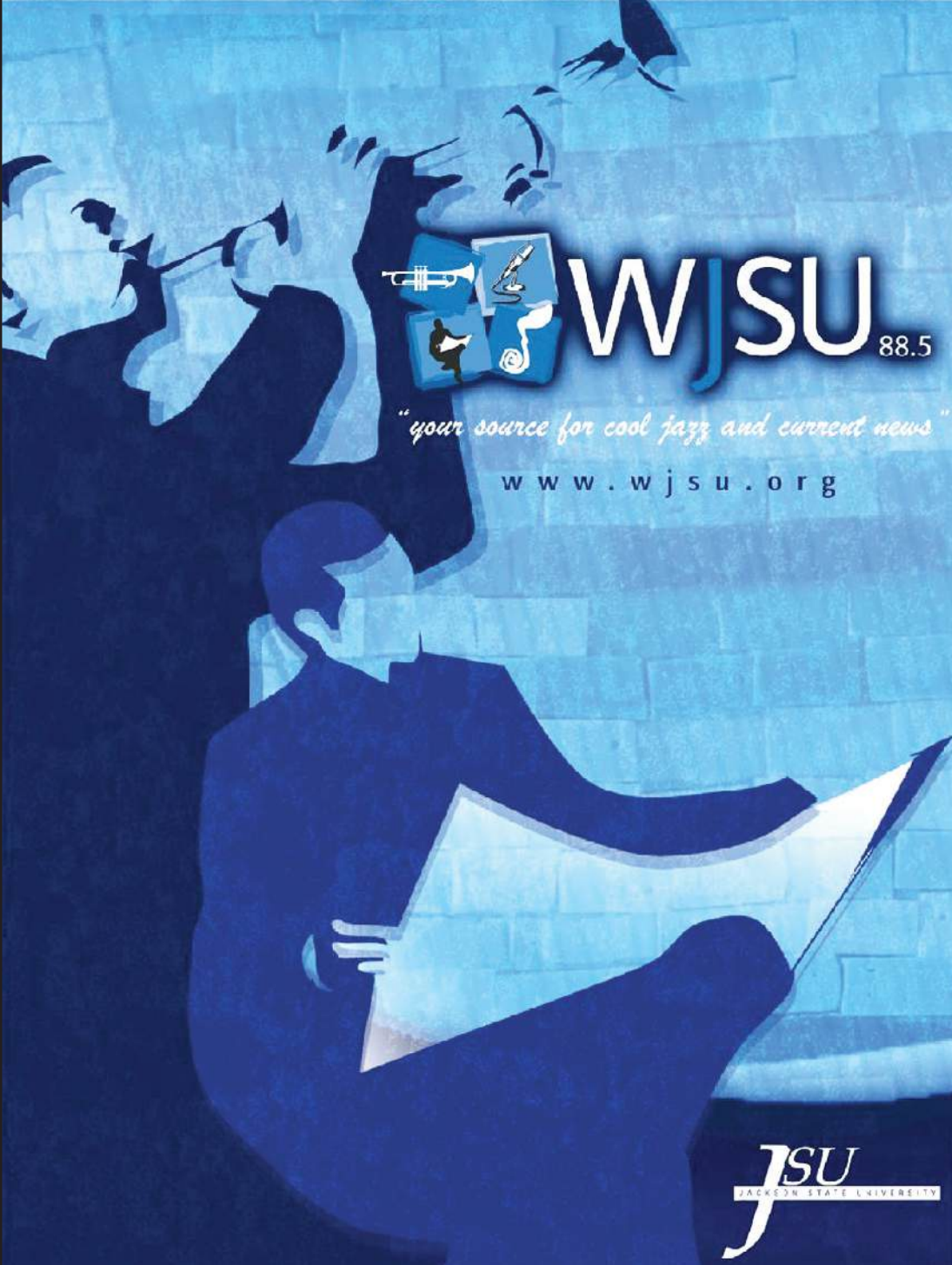
- You must be registered 30 days before the Election.
- Absentee Voting begins 45 days before the Election


MARRIAGE INFORMATION

- Marriage License: \$36.00
 - Both applicants must come to the Circuit Clerk's office together to apply
 - Proof of age must be provided in the form of Driver's License, Birth Certificate or other legal document which contains name and date of birth.

Website: www.hindscountymys.com
Paid for by friends of Zack Wallace

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★★★★★

HORHN FOR MAYOR 2025

After 30 years serving in the State Senate, John Horhn is ready to bring his experience into the mayor's office. John plans to bring city, county, state, and federal leaders together to secure resources and rebuild every part of Jackson.



JACKSON IS READY!

In the Primary Election, John Horhn won each ward, demonstrating that all of Jackson is ready for new leadership. We need your support again in the Runoff Election!



John Horhn



Chokwe Antar Lumumba

RUNOFF ELECTION APRIL 22nd
VOTE JOHN HORHN FOR MAYOR
horhnformayor2025.com | [@horhnformayor2025](https://twitter.com/horhnformayor2025)

PAID FOR BY HORHN FOR MAYOR 2025 CAMPAIGN

Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

READ ACROSS AMERICA WEEK

The students at GRE had a fantastic time celebrating Read Across America. With the support of district staff and community volunteers, students engaged in exciting reading activities that fostered a love for books and literacy. Volunteers joined classrooms to read aloud, share stories, and encourage students to explore the joy of reading. The event created a fun and inspiring atmosphere, highlighting the importance of literacy and bringing the community together in support of education

