



## Constance Slaughter-Harvey: breaking barriers and building a legacy of justice

By Edelia "Dr. Jay" Carthan  
Contributing Writer

During Women's History Month, the story of Constance Slaughter-Harvey stands as a powerful reminder of courage, intellect, and unwavering commitment to justice.

A native of Forest, Mississippi, Slaughter-Harvey's journey began in the heart of the segregated South, where opportunities for Black women were limited but her determination was not. At Tougaloo College, she quickly emerged as a leader, becoming the first woman elected president of the Student Government Association. Her leadership during the height of the Civil Rights Movement placed her at the center of student activism and social change.

In 1970, she made history again, becoming the first African American woman to earn a law degree from the University of Mississippi. This milestone not only broke racial and gender barriers but also opened doors for generations of women in the legal profession.

Slaughter-Harvey began her legal career with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, where she worked on landmark cases addressing segregation, police brutality, and voting rights. Her early work included major litigation tied to prison reform, desegregation, and civil rights violations, helping reshape Mississippi's legal landscape.

Her influence extended beyond the courtroom into public policy and government. She served as Director of Human



Constance Slaughter-Harvey sits in her office surrounded by legal texts, reflecting her decades-long career as a pioneering attorney and civil rights advocate PHOTO CREDIT: TOUGALOO COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Development under Governor William Winter and later as Assistant Secretary of State for Elections and Public Lands, where she helped lead efforts that expanded voter access, including mail-in voter registration and motor voter initiatives.

A trailblazer in election administration, she became a founder—and the first woman and first Black president—of the National Association of State Election Directors. Her work strengthened democratic participation across the state and nation.

In 1976, she again broke barriers, becoming the first African American appointed to serve as a judge in Mississippi when she

was selected as a Special Chancellor. She also helped establish legal service organizations that expanded access to justice for underserved communities.

Education remained central to her mission. For more than 35 years, she served as an adjunct professor at Tougaloo College, mentoring future leaders. In 1999, the Constance Slaughter-Harvey Endowed Chair in Political Science/Pre-Law was established in her honor, cementing her lasting influence in higher education.

Her list of honors is extensive, including national recognition from the American Bar Association and numerous awards celebrating her leadership, service,

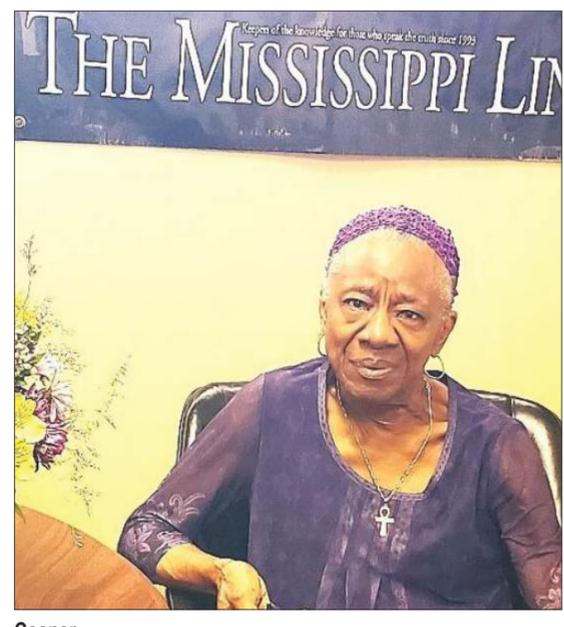
and commitment to justice.

Reflecting on this recognition, Slaughter-Harvey shared:

"I am humbled to be honored during Women's History Month. I thank God, my parents W. L. and Olivia Kelley Slaughter, my daughter Constance, grandson James 'Tre,' son-in-love James, Legacy Change Agents, BLSA students, pre-law students, mentees, and true friends who give me incentives and encouragement to continue to make this a better and more just world for our children. Mama and Daddy continue to remind me that 'to whom much is given, much more is required.'"

*Slaughter-Harvey Continued on page 3*

## A Women's History Month Profile: Annie L. Cooper



Cooper

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

So often in life we see it, and it catches our eye and then our heart – big things in small packages. Annie Cooper caught my eye at a Jackson City Branch NAACP meeting three years ago with her warm and welcoming smile and over time I've seen her heart and her indomitable spirit. Her journey has been marked by success, service, and perseverance. Cooper sat down with this writer at the offices of The Mississippi Link newspaper to share her story for Women's History Month.

She was born in Jackson to loving parents, her mother a school cafeteria worker, and her father a mechanic, truck driver, and Baptist preacher. She has four siblings, one sister and three brothers, and she came right smack in the middle. She attended what was then a segregated Brinkley Junior-Senior High School through her junior year, then transferred to Lanier Junior-Senior High School for her final year and graduation. In tenth grade, after participating in a guidance session on occupations, she decided to become a fashion designer - she had already been making some of her own clothes. But who would have imagined her next move.

The University of Wyoming was on a short list of schools offering a degree in fashion design and off she went. Fourteen hundred miles from home, only to discover when she arrived that they had just discontinued their fashion design program.

### COMMENTARY

She pivoted to a Bachelor of Science degree in Art. The first of many pivots. You give Annie Cooper lemons; she'll make lemonade every single time! In Laramie she was a member of the Black Student Alliance and interacted with many international students, foreshadowing future academic and occupational pursuits. When asked about the racial posture in Wyoming at the time, she indicated, "my attitude was to focus on myself and my goals. I wasn't concerned with the white students and got along well with the international students. Sometimes I would get taunted by some of the Black athletes from the big cities about being from Mississippi, but that was all." She was there at the University of Wyoming during the "Black 14" incident – protesting the religious practices of the Mormon Church toward Black people. "Getting away from the South was about more than race and restrictions. My family was very religious. There were limits placed on women that I couldn't tolerate. I felt stifled."

In 1973 she was accepted for a position as a senior technical secretary at none other than the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). She stayed for sixteen years, as an Administrative Assistant and then Program Coordinator, but did much more than that. She married and had two children: a son and a daughter. She enrolled

*Cooper Continued on page 3*

## A voice for justice: honoring Jaribu Hill during Women's History Month

By Edelia "Dr. Jay" Carthan  
Contributing Writer

For decades, Jaribu Hill has stood where justice is most contested, on the front lines. A civil and human rights attorney, author, and international spokesperson, Hill has built a career defined by courage, conviction, and an unwavering commitment to the people she serves.

As founder and executive director of the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights, she has provided legal representation and advocacy

for hundreds of workers across the state. Her work has helped drive the adoption of "zero tolerance against hate" policies in workplaces, while amplifying the voices of those too often ignored.

Hill's impact extends far beyond Mississippi. In support of human rights struggles, she has traveled across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean, bringing global attention to local injustices and connecting movements across borders.

For many in the community, her presence is constant. At marches, protests, and moments demanding accountability, she shows up, not occasionally, but consistently. She is not just a leader in title, but in action.

From courtrooms to communities: Hill's advocacy has shaped



Jaribu Hill speaks during a community event, continuing her decades-long advocacy for human rights and justice. PHOTO: COURTESY OF JARIBU HILL

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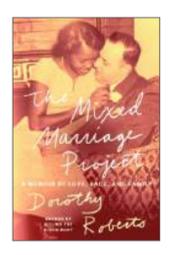
**Remembering Dr. John M. Perkins & the legacy he left behind**

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**Mixed Marriage Project**

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## HINDS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT WEEKLY UPDATE



Ranger Pride PTSO was very happy to receive donations from The Rotary Club of South Hinds County for their Hygiene Closet.

The Ranger Pride PTSO (Parent, Teacher, Student Organization) recently received donated items from The Rotary Club of South Hinds County for the Raymond High School Hygiene Closet of which they were very appreciative and extended heartfelt thanks by saying:

“Because of your support, we are able to continue meeting the needs of all students at Raymond High School by providing essential hygiene items with dignity, care, and compassion. Partnerships like this remind us that when community organizations and schools work

together, incredible things happen for our students.

Thank you for investing in the well-being and success of Raymond High School!”

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A healthy community begins with the health of its people — and when you thrive, we all do.

It's good to be blue.



MISSISSIPPI



## Cooper

Continued from page 1

in Cambridge College - taking many of her classes a couple of miles away at Harvard, and graduated with a master's degree in education, Human Resource Management. Her thesis was titled,

"Establishing a More Inclusive Student Environment at Private Schools". She also taught English as a Second Language, at night for a year, for the Cambridge Community Learning Center.

From Boston, she took a position as Director of Multi-cultural Affairs at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. For over twenty years she was at the critical intersection of programming designed to enhance cultural sensitivity, social awareness, and global education through mentoring and advocacy, and assisted international students with their educational visas. A couple of years before the end of her time there, a medical condition arose that required yet another pivot. Cranial cervical dystonia causes involuntary neck muscle contractions, with symptoms that are life-altering. A truck-load of lemons, yet once again, well, you already know.

Taking a slightly early retirement, Ms. Cooper returned to Mississippi, to her mother's house, to carry on. It's not fair to compare, but what she accomplishes and the example she sets for others is beyond remarkable.

She already completed her French language classes, so now she has moved on to Spanish. She practices Tai Chi, a Chinese martial art with focus on "moving meditation, deep breathing, and relaxation." She gets myofascial treatment every week. Yoga twice a week. Line dancing three times a week. She has illustrated two books authored by her son. She attends "History is Lunch," a weekly lecture series at The Two Museums. She attends Friday Forum at the Refill Jackson Initiative, and the Breakfast Club on Saturdays. She serves as Secretary for the community organization ZAPP (Zoo Area Progressive Partnership). She serves on the Education Committee for the NAACP Jackson City Branch. Of no surprise, she is working on her memoirs!

Touching base with Dr. Wilma Mosley Clopton is always a good idea. When asked about Annie Cooper her excitement could be felt through the phone line. "Oh, thank you so much for asking me about Annie. What is so special about her is her tenacity. She just doesn't give up. Her persistence and her clarity, the way she shares willingly with other people is amazing. She is just so full of love."

A petite woman from Jackson Mississippi who only understands one gear – forward. In a life filled with achievement and contribution, she was asked what rises to the top. "With gratitude, my children, of course." What counsel would she share with other women? "Women are so focused on others. Don't wait to develop yourselves." The Mississippi Link newspaper wants to be among the first to know when her memoirs are published and takes great pride in profiling Annie L. Cooper during 2026 Women's History Month.

## Slaughter-Harvey

Continued from page 1

Her daughter, Dr. Constance Harvey-Burwell, echoed that sentiment:

"I am grateful to God for allowing her to help others out of despair and remain positive while walking in her purpose of love, legality, and leadership."

Her grandson, J. Emmanuel Burwell, added:

"She is so deserving of appreciation, having remained on the battlefield for what is right."

Together, these reflections capture the essence of a woman whose life's work has been rooted not only in justice, but in faith,

resilience, and unwavering purpose.

As Women's History Month reminds us, the stories we tell shape the future we build. In honoring Constance Slaughter-Harvey, we honor a legacy that continues to inspire generations to stand, serve, and lead.

## Hill

Continued from page 1

some of the most critical justice movements in recent history. She played a role in the broader efforts that led to the removal of Mississippi's state flag bearing Confederate symbolism, a historic shift rooted in years of sustained activism.

Her work with workers at Nissan's Canton, Mississippi plant brought international attention to labor rights in the South. Standing alongside employees, she advocated for fair wages, safe working conditions, and the right to organize, challenging corporate practices and elevating worker voices on a global stage.

Her legal career also includes significant victories, including a judgment against the Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina, and advocacy for Mississippi Delta families fighting for educational equity.

Hill has served as a legal observer and cultural artist during the Women in War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo and is the author of Haunting Mirrors, a poem honoring victim of sexual slavery. Her writings and legal scholarship have appeared in prominent publications, including law reviews and academic journals.

Admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court, she has also served as a Special Master in Washington County's Chancery Court and as a municipal judge in Hollandale. In addition, she hosts "Talking Rights with Jaribu," a weekly radio program on WDSV 91.9 FM, continuing her mission to educate and empower.

In addition to her extensive legal work, Hill serves as a board member of the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance, where she continues to advocate for immigrant communities and equitable access to justice.

During Women's History Month, honoring Hill is a recognition of a life dedicated to justice in all its forms. Her work reflects resilience, leadership, and an unshakable commitment to truth. She is not only present in historic moments, she helps shape them.

Her impact can be seen in policies changed, cases fought, and communities strengthened. But perhaps most powerfully, it is felt in her unwavering presence, standing with the people, time and time again.

Hill herself reflects that legacy with humility and purpose: "I am so honored to be part of this special issue of The Mississippi Link, in honor of Women's History Month. I stand on the shoulders of courageous warrior women, who fought for the human rights and dignity of the most vulnerable. I am grateful for the lessons passed on by Fannie Lou Hamer, Ida B. Wells and so many others. Their lives and their work propel me forward."

Her work has also inspired others across movements. Danyelle Holmes, Senior National Social Justice Organizer for The Poor People's Campaign, said: "What Jaribu Hill represents deserves more than honor, it calls for us to tell the truth about the kind of courage it takes to stand in Mississippi and not bow. She is more than an attorney; she is a fierce advocate and a revolutionary, shaped by the pain of our people and committed to transforming that pain into power. Like those before us who refused to be turned around, she stands firm in the fight for dignity, justice, and liberation, reminding us that freedom is not given, it is fought for, every single day."

A song born from resistance, Hill's advocacy has also taken a creative form. In response to the treatment of Eddie Carthan during the early 1980s, when he served as the town's first Black mayor and faced intense political and legal opposition, she wrote a song to bring awareness to what many saw as efforts to undermine his leadership and dismantle progress.

By capturing this moment in history through music, Hill not only documented injustice but also underscored a decades-long commitment to standing with those targeted by systems of power.

"Tchula, Mississippi—Slavery in the Delta!"

by Jaribu Hill

Tchula Mississippi, plantation town  
Whole lot of slavery going down  
Tchula Mississippi, plantation town  
Whole lot of slavery going down  
Well they barricaded City Hall  
They tried to back the mayor against the wall  
You know the Governor and the Klan  
They took the land back by hand  
The mayor on trial  
cause they didn't like his style  
Ohhh Tchula Mississippi, plantation town  
Whole lot of slavery going down  
Tchula Mississippi, plantation town  
Whole lot of slavery going down



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## SNAP fraud investigation leads to plea agreement in Pearl River County

The Mississippi Link Newswire

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Office of Inspector General, Division of Investigation, announced a Pearl River County resident has entered into a plea agreement following an MDHS investigation into welfare fraud.

Betsy Johnson of Pearl River County entered a plea agreement with the District Attorney in Pearl River County Circuit Court on March 2, 2026, related to fraudulent receipt of public



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

assistance benefits. The investigation determined that Johnson improperly received \$22,111.00

in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits by failing to accurately report

her household composition and household income.

Johnson was sentenced to six years of probation and ordered to pay fines, fees, restitution, and investigative costs totaling \$23,439.20.

"This is a great example of collaboration between our investigations team, MDHS county offices, District Attorneys, and local law enforcement," said Sandra Griffith, MDHS Inspector General.

The investigation was con-

ducted by Agent Blake Edwards with the MDHS Office of Inspector General's Division of Investigation. Established in 2018, the Division is responsible for detecting, preventing, and deterring fraud, waste, and abuse and has recovered millions in SNAP overpayments since its inception.

"This investigation and plea agreement demonstrate, once again, the controls we have put in place to identify, investigate, and eliminate fraud in our programs; plainly, those controls are

working," said MDHS Executive Director Robert G. "Bob" Anderson.

Suspected fraud can be reported to MDHS at any time by submitting the Fraud Tip Form online at <http://www.mdhs.ms.gov/report-fraud/>, calling the Fraud Tip Line at 18002996905, or emailing [fraud@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:fraud@mdhs.ms.gov).

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) offers Mississippians, young and old, tangible help today to create lasting hope for tomorrow.

## Ser Boxley donates 'Forks of the Road' exhibition to Alcorn State University



Ser Seshsh Ab Heter-C. M. Boxley speaking PHOTO BY ROSCOE BARNES III

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Ser Seshsh Ab Heter-C. M. Boxley has donated his Forks of the Road exhibition to the Southwest Mississippi Center for Culture & Learning at Alcorn State University, Lorman Campus, announced the Center's director, Dr. Garry Lewis.

"I am honored to entrust this research to Alcorn State University," said Ser Boxley. "The Center's commitment to cultural preservation ensures that the stories connected to the Forks of the Road will continue to educate, challenge, and inspire."

Lewis emphasized the importance of Ser Boxley's work. "Ser Boxley's donation strengthens ongoing collaborations between Alcorn State

University and regional heritage organizations committed to documenting African American history, preserving sacred sites, and expanding public access to historically grounded scholarship," he said.

To recognize Ser Boxley's decades-long contributions as a preservationist and researcher, the Center will host a public lecture and presentation of the Forks of the Road exhibit from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, March 27, at the Claiborne County Welcome & Heritage Center, 210 Walnut St. in Port Gibson. The event is free and open to the public.

Dr. Roscoe Barnes III, cultural heritage tourism manager at Visit Natchez, will participate as a panelist and

share remarks during the program.

Lewis applauded Ser Boxley for donating "his extensive artifact research and documentation on the historic 'African/European Roots of the Underground Railroad and Forks of the Road'" to the Center. Lewis said the Forks of the Road slave market site is one of the most important locations tied to the domestic slave trade in the Deep Southwest.

For several years, the Forks of the Road exhibition was displayed at the Natchez Visitor Center on Canal Street until 2022, when the facility closed for renovation. The exhibition will have a new home with the Southwest Mississippi Center, according to Lewis.

In addition to his research, the do-

nation includes Ser Boxley's interpretive materials, historical analyses, and cultural documentation that illuminate the lived experiences of enslaved people trafficked through Natchez and the broader Mississippi region, Lewis said. He noted: "Ser Boxley's work has been instrumental in shaping public understanding of the Forks of the Road as a site of memory, resilience, and truth-telling."

In Lewis' view, Ser Boxley's contribution is more than a collection of research. "It is a gift of truth, legacy, and cultural responsibility. His dedication ensures that future generations can study, honor, and learn from the stories that shaped Southwest Mississippi and the nation."

## Ask Tim a Question? Business, Finances, Money, or Taxes

By Tim C. Lee  
CEO & Founder of TCL Financial & Tax Services



Question: Tim, can you explain the Child Tax Credit, Credit for Other Dependents (Other Dependents Credit), and the Additional Child Tax Credit, and how much is each one valued at?

Answer: When it pertains to an individual income tax return, there are two types of credits:

1) Nonrefundable Credits: The sole purpose of these credits is to reduce a taxpayer's tax liability.

2) Refundable Credits: These credits are considered payments on a tax return, and their sole purpose is to increase a taxpayer's refund or minimize their balance due.

Two of the most attractive nonrefundable credits is the Child Tax Credit and the Credit for Other Dependents (Other Dependents Credit), and one of the most attractive refundable credits is the Additional Child Tax Credit.

Child Tax Credit: For Tax Year 2025, the Child Tax Credit is valued at \$2,200 for each qualifying child under the age of 17 that can be claimed as a dependent on a taxpayer's tax return. There are eight relationships that pertains to a qualifying child for this particular credit: Son, Daughter, Niece, Nephew, Brother, Sister, Grandchild, and a Foster Child who is placed with you by an authorized placement agency. This specific credit phases out for individual taxpayers with income of \$200,000 or more, and for married filing jointly taxpayers with income of \$400,000 or more.

Credit for Other Dependents (Other Dependents Credit): For Tax Year 2025, the Credit for Other Dependents (Other Dependents Credit) is valued at \$500

for each qualifying person claimed as a dependent on a taxpayer's tax return. If a taxpayer's dependent does not qualify for the Child Tax Credit, then that particular dependent automatically qualifies for the Credit for Other Dependents (Other Dependents Credit). This specific credit phases out for individual taxpayers with income of \$200,000 or more, and for married filing jointly taxpayers with income of \$400,000 or more.

Additional Child Tax Credit: For Tax Year 2025, the Additional Child Tax Credit is valued at \$1,700 for each qualifying child under the age of 17 that can be claimed as a dependent on a taxpayer's tax return. There are eight relationships that pertains to a qualifying child for this particular credit: Son, Daughter, Niece, Nephew, Brother, Sister, Grandchild, and a Foster Child who is placed with you by an authorized placement agency. Taxpayers must also have earned income of at least \$2,500 on their tax return to qualify for the Additional Child Tax Credit.

As stated earlier, all three of these credits are very attractive, and have great value. As you can tell, a taxpayer can not afford to miss out on either one of these three credits when filing their individual income tax return.

In addition to Tax Year 2025, these three credits will also be available with the same eligibility rules and value for Tax Years 2026, 2027, and 2028.

Tim C. Lee is the CEO & Founder of TCL Financial & Tax Services, and the host of "The TCL Show" that airs every Monday from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST on WMPR 90.1 FM in Jackson, MS. This is the show that is about "You, Life, and Money." Got an article idea or a question you would like answered, e-mail Tim at [timclee@TCLFinancialTaxServices.com](mailto:timclee@TCLFinancialTaxServices.com)



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## Diaspora politics in the era of Trump

*In partnership with American Community Media – National Briefing Series*

By Christopher Young  
Contributing Writer

Across the United States, diaspora communities are playing an increasingly visible role in debates about foreign policy, democracy, sanctions, and geopolitical conflict. Cuban, Venezuelan, Iranian, and Chinese American communities, among others, are engaging politically both in relation to developments in their countries of origin and to U.S. domestic politics.

On Friday, March 20, 2026, Pilar Marrero served as moderator for the National Briefing Series, on a call with seventy media outlets and three panelists to explore how diaspora communities shape policy debates in Washington, how global tensions affect immigrant communities in the United States, and how divisions within diasporas themselves influence public discourse.

She turned first to Eduardo Gamarra, Professor of Politics and International Relations at Florida International University. “When you look at the Cuban population in particular, most of which arrived following the Cuban revolution and really didn’t become significant in terms of American politics until the mid-nineteen eighties when this population began to nationalize because they became U.S. citizens, and the Republican party did a very good job of pushing their agenda, knowing they rejected the Democratic party stemming back to President Kennedy’s not providing air support during the Bay of Pigs invasion...so Republicans capitalized on that...yet there was a belief that Cuban Americans would gravitate naturally toward the Democratic Party of social issues. They have gravitated to-



Dr. Eduardo Gamarra.  
PHOTO: WWW.SIPA.FIU.EDU.

ward more progressive issues like defense of social security, Medicare, and Medicaid, yet some of the zip codes here with the highest Cuban populations are also the highest consumers of the Affordable Care Act and voted for Donald Trump.”

The next panelist, Dr. William O Beeman, Professor Emeritus in Anthropology at the University of Minnesota, was asked to describe the political dynamics within the Iranian diaspora in the U.S. right now. “In order to understand what’s going on with the Iranian diaspora, we have to go back for more than forty years to the Iranian revolution of 1979-1980. During the revolution, there were actually three factions that hoped to replace the Shah when he was exiled. First, secular nationalists who governed the country for about six months until the U.S. hostage crisis. The second was more religious, and the third group was what we might call Islamic Marxists. Over time the



Dr. William O. Beeman.  
PHOTO: WWW.CRIUISESHIPENRICHMENT.NET.

last is the group that remained in power. Many people left Iran because they were allied with the Shah and some of those groups have received money from the United States. There is a huge concentration in California, and media has been an important outlet for this group, Iranian media outlets in California, who broadcast things like popular music and popular theater which is pretty much restricted by the Islamic population in Iran. So the Royalist/Secular Nationalists and the Islamic Marxist groups, they’re both firmly opposed to the current regime in Iran.”

He continues, “these groups are supportive of the Republican party because they think that that President Trump or the Republicans are going to eliminate the Islamic regime in Iran. That’s their principal hope. They are championing the Republican hostilities toward the current regime in Iran, because they think that the religious regime is going to be ousted. I think



Professor Helen Zia.  
PHOTO: WWW.ASIA.ND.EDU.

what’s important about the Iranian diaspora community is that they are deeply committed to Persian culture. And their belonging and home sickness for Iran and for their homeland and for Iranian culture, is palpable. They maintain Iranian cultural traditions wherever they are to the greatest extent.”

The final panelist, Helen Zia, a renowned journalist and Asian American Civil Rights Activist. She shared, “it’s really amazing to see different diaspora groups and how they’ve been affected at different times by U.S. foreign policy and so forth. I was thinking about all of the hundreds of thousands of Chinese and Indian immigrants, indentured workers who were in Cuba in the 1800’s. And many of whom ended up in the US as a secondary or tertiary migration with the current invasions in the Middle East that it is largely Asian migrants who are taking the brunt of the killings of civilians as well. When we speak of

diasporas in relationship to foreign policy the experience of Asians in America - 150-200 years - different generations, I think the overall lesson is really how the diaspora community can become pawns of and used in a larger scheme of international interventions.

For Asians in America that really began as part of the imperialistic and colonial efforts of western nations, like the US, Britain, France, and Spain that really plundered Asia and destroyed the local economies there. The work forces became labor and expendable labor throughout South America, the Caribbean, and the US...the Chinese and Asian diaspora were the first to be excluded - the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Page Act of 1875 prevented Chinese and then later all Asian migrants from becoming citizens and political participants in the US system. For example, they couldn’t even testify in court if their family member was murdered and they witnessed it. They couldn’t vote, couldn’t run for office, could not buy property, they were an entirely disenfranchised community. When we look today at the political system, that only ended in 1952. The US is a diaspora nation except for indigenous people and enslaved people from Africa, the rest came here, whether as refugees or were economic refugees or whatever.”

This full national briefing can be viewed at <https://americancommunitymedia.org/media-briefings/diaspora-politics-in-the-era-of-trump>. In addition to the panelist’s remarks, you can hear questions and responses from all over the globe.

## NNPA Fund hosts Black Press Day 2026 at Howard University, celebrating the past and looking ahead to the future

By D. Kevin McNeir  
The Afro

Nearly 100 members of the Black Press, some still honing their skills as journalists in college classrooms along with seasoned veterans representing Black publications from across the U.S.; and both friends of and corporate sponsors of the Black Press, gathered on the campus of Howard University (HU) on March, 18 for this year’s Black Press Week Reception.

The program, hosted by the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) Fund, now in its 50th year and led by Executive Director Kelly Hodges, was held in the HU Blackburn Center. Highlights from the reception included a State of the Black Press address delivered by NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin Chavis Jr., musical selections from the Howard University Community Choir, an AI-themed fireside chat, and remarks from various speakers who updated the audience on recent initiatives related to the survival and growth of the Black Press.

As in years past, the most sacred part of the reception was the enshrinement presentation and plaque acceptance led by Karen Carter Richards, NNPA Fund chair, which celebrated the life of Bernal E. Smith II, who, prior to his death in 2017 at the age of 45, had been instrumental in restoring local ownership of The New Tri-State Defender in Memphis,



NNPA Fund members stand with family members of the late Bernal E. Smith II, who was honored during this year’s enshrinement ceremony. From left to right: Kelly Hodges, executive director; John Warren, board member; and Karen Carter Richards, chair; Smith’s wife, Tawonda Peete-Smith; daughter, Brianna Smith-Herman; and sister, Cher D. Smith. Pictured at the far right is Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., president and CEO of NNPA. CREDIT: AFRO PHOTO/D. KEVIN MCNEIR

Tenn., as its president and publisher.

Hodges described Smith as a visionary, a dynamic leader, and one of the NNPA’s most widely regarded voices representing the next generation of Black Press publishers.

“He was known for his commitment to community empowerment, social justice, and innovative media leadership,” Hodges said. “We chose to enshrine him into the NNPA Fund of Distinguished Black Publishers this year at Howard University where he will forever be recognized for his lasting contributions to African American journalism and the legacy of the Black Press.”

The Black Press Week 2026 reception opened with a welcome address from Karen Carter Richards, NNPA Fund chair and publisher of the Houston Forward Times, who invited the audience to join her in “celebrating the excellent legacy of those who have powered the Black Press over the past 199 years.”

John Warren, NNPA Fund board member, publisher of The San Diego Voice & Viewpoint and chair of the NNPA, delivered opening remarks that emphasized his decades-long connection and commitment to Howard University.

“I’m a two-time graduate and of Howard who completed law

school 42 years ago and I am excited to be back on this campus,” Warren said. “We have weathered some tough times but always survived because of powerful presidents who shepherded us through the storms. Howard University represents a vast and impressive history – stories that without the Black Press may have never been documented and would have been lost to future generations.”

Chavis, who chose as the theme for his address, “Legacy, Struggle, Innovation, and the Road Ahead,” said while the nation prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, Blacks must remember that our history did

not begin in 1776 but rather thousands of years earlier on the African continent.

“Even in the face of unprecedented inhumanity, torture, rape, violence, lynchings, and the racist discrimination and enslavement of African people in America before and after 1776, we not only survived but held on to our sense of dignity, purpose, struggle, mission, and vision,” Chavis said. “Now, as we prepare for the 200th anniversary of the Black Press, we must consider what truths are we passing on to the next generation?”

“What truths are we holding onto that shatter the sinful and hateful stereotypes that work to

sustain our oppression rather than to ensure our liberation? We represent a sacred tradition of truth telling as members of the Black Press. However, it has never just been about the news – it has always been about freedom, justice, dignity, and self-determination,” said Chavis who added that the Black Press must continue to serve as a prophetic voice in the wilderness of American democracy as it challenges various forms of injustice.

As the Black Press continues its commitment to digitizing photographs and publications dating back to its founding in the early 19th century, Howard University serves as the home for archives that continue to grow and are housed on Howard’s campus under the auspices of the Moorland Spingarn Research Center (MSRC).

Chavis challenged his colleagues to prepare themselves for the digital transformation which is sweeping across America and the world and to recognize that the shift from print to digital publishing is far from optional but is instead essential for those who wish to survive.

“The role of the Black Press is more vital today than ever before,” he continued. “As we honor the legacy of those like Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells, we must accept as our task the preparation of a new generation who will be called upon to carry the torch.”

## What is the cost of war for people in The United States Of America?

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



There have been several positions taken regarding war. Obviously, it depends upon the perspective that you have. If you are a senior citizen, you have observed a lot of them. Some have served this country with honor, and we thank them for their service.

When I was coming of age and maturity, I didn't really understand war and the effect that it had on the country. However, I did hear men and women talking about it, so I did know that it was an important topic.

We have had family and friends who have served in the war efforts over the years. We know families whose members have paid the ultimate price for battles that have made us safer. We know that freedom is not free.

America is now at war. The opponent is the country of Iran. Israel is a co-partner with us against Iran. This engagement is almost a month old, and the number of casualties is staggering.

Reports say there have been over 3,230 deaths in total. Lives have been lost and families are in mourning. Currently, there is no end date to this conflict.

While the lives lost is the most important factor, there is

also some collateral damage that has occurred.

Prior to this war, the prices for goods and services were high. Now they are higher. Going to stores with these higher prices brings on a new shopping experience. We must be more cautious about what to buy and how much to spend.

The war is also affecting the price of gasoline. The national cost for a gallon of gas has reached \$3.94. If you live in California, you are paying over \$5.00 a gallon. Plainly stated, there are pitfalls and problems associated with being in a war. We must accept them as a condition for our freedom.

However, the American people are also troubled by this

war. First off, Congress didn't formally declare war yet that is another matter. According to a recent Reuters poll conducted this month only 27% of Americans are in support of this war.

The war with Iran is a political challenge for those in elective office. Now, 77% of Republicans support the war effort while only 6% of Democrats support it. Politicians on both sides are wondering about the fallouts of it.

The U.S. President has ordered thousands of troops deployed to the Middle East. We will have to see where they are going and how long they will stay. Boots on the ground, once talked about is now being actualized.

The Strait of Hormuz is the central area where oil ships come and go. At this time, the area is not functioning as it should because of this war. The U.S. President has made threats to deactivate this body of water. We will see if his threats turn into action.

What is happening now in the Middle East will affect this country for months after the war is over. For example, gas prices will not immediately drop to pre-war prices. The stock market will also suffer some losses as well.

This is what some Americans don't realize. The aftermath of this encounter will be with us for the foreseeable future. There will not be much that we

can do about it except just take a wait and see posture.

What we purchase will remain at a high cost. Interest rates will continue to be problematic. The economy will be stagnant for working Americans. Unemployment will remain between 4% and 5% according to some reports. Healthcare costs will be comprised. Seniors will feel the pinch in their prescription medications. The Democrats and the Republicans will continue to tussle with one another, and the American people will be the victims.

It is abundantly clear that all these circumstances both at home and abroad will be deleterious to Americans.

## From Reconstruction to the SAVE Act

By Julianne Malveaux  
NNPA News Wire Columnist



Frederick Douglass did not know the day he was born.

Like many enslaved people, he was denied even the dignity of documentation. Birth dates were approximations. Family lines were severed. Identity existed in property ledgers, not in public record.

His mother, Harriet Bailey, called him her "little Valentine," and Douglass later chose February 14 as his birthday — an act of self-definition in a country that refused to define him as fully human.

That act matters.

Douglass understood something fundamental: identity is not granted by paperwork. It is asserted through presence, voice and participation. He claimed authorship over his own life in a nation structured to deny it.

Today, we are debating whether documentation should determine access to democracy.

The SAVE Act would require documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote in federal elections. Passports. Birth certificates. Paper trails. Supporters frame it as administrative protection. But the history of American democracy teaches us

that administrative mechanisms are rarely neutral.

Paperwork has always been political.

After Reconstruction, when Black political participation expanded, new rules narrowed the electorate. Literacy tests. Poll taxes. Grandfather clauses. Each was presented as procedural. Each functioned as a barrier.

The methods change. The objective — control over who counts — does not.

Documentation requirements would fall hardest on those least likely to have ready access to formal records: seniors born at home in the Jim Crow South, low-income Americans without passports, married women whose legal names no longer match their birth certificates. Even producing paperwork can become a test of belonging.

Documented cases of noncitizen voting are exceedingly rare. The question is not fraud prevention; it is access.

Reconstruction was not only about emancipation. It was about participation. Black men voted. Black officials were elected. Black institutions were built. And when those gains threatened entrenched power, backlash followed.

In 1898, in Wilmington, North

Carolina, a legitimately elected multiracial government was overthrown. Black political power was dismantled. The ballot was replaced by the bullet. It was not disorder; it was organized suppression.

The lesson is sobering. When participation expands, resistance emerges.

Today's debates unfold in legislative chambers rather than in armed mobs. But the question remains: who has the authority to define citizenship?

Douglass claimed his identity in a system that denied him documentation. He did not wait for official recognition to assert his humanity. He understood that democracy depends not on perfect records, but on inclusive participation.

When paperwork becomes a prerequisite for political voice, we should ask whether we are strengthening democracy — or narrowing it.

The struggle over the ballot has never been merely procedural. It has always been about power.

Douglass defined himself when the state would not.

The question now is whether we will let the state decide who counts.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is a Washington, D.C.-based economist and author.

## I need a good recipe for Jalapeno Cornbread

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



You have read all month my plea in encouraging couples to pray for each other, pray for their union, and together but please understand it requires more than prayer to have a happy, healthy, and loving marriage. Yes, prayer is the main foundation for sustaining happiness in a marriage, but it requires so much more.

One of my mother's favorite type of Greens to consume are Mustards preferably her mother's Mustards, who unfortunately passed away almost twenty years ago. We both have tried to emulate Granny's Mustards but neither of us have achieved this yet. Therefore, we go the next best alternative which is Cock of the Walk Restaurant. My mother recently asked me to get her some Mustards and my husband requested for me get him some of their Jalapeno Cornbread too.. So, when my mother discovered Big Daddy's love for their Jalapeno Cornbread, she advised me to learn how to make it.

Of course, an Elder Mother's wisdom excels one who is still learning. She informed me that learning how to bake what he loves would be even more special and an investment in our marriage and if it didn't turn out right — let him know that I tried and then present the restaurant's Jalapeno Cornbread to him. Therefore, I decided to take her advice, but I quickly realized if I am going to attempt this task, I need a good recipe for Jalapeno Cornbread. I like many of you, I desire a good marriage therefore, I have often wondered what the best recipe is for having a healthy, happy, and loving marriage.

What is the best recipe for having a good, healthy, happy, and loving marriage?

I am still working on this recipe, but I have the following ingredients so far based on twenty years of marriage— I don't have specific measurements either, but you certainly need more than a pinch of each one:

- Pray for each other, your marriage, and pray together
- Be intentional in creating the home and family you want
- Consistently reflect on your Marriage Vows
- Exchange hearts — do unto your spouse what you want done unto you!
- Communicate about everything!
- Listening matters too!
- Spend quality time with each other
- Eliminate distractions like technology, social media, etc.
- If God acknowledges that He real-

izes we are made of dust — you must realize you are not perfect and your spouse isn't perfect either — errors will occur

• Don't give your spouse away  
• Apologize — take responsibility for your actions and express a sincere apology

• Forgive — you can't change it so you may as well let it go

• Don't be an enabler — hold each other accountable

• Practice Patience  
• Create a safe, judging free environment

• Compromise  
• If you break trust — go out of your way to restore it

• Think before you speak  
• Learn each other triggers and try to avoid them

• Help heal whatever offense hurt you caused

• Give each other TIME to heal from any offense, hurt, etc.

• Validate your spouse

• Work in unity as it relates to your finances

• Whoever cooks — the other person cleans and/or both can rotate cooking, paying for dinner, pick up carryout, etc.— Read this twice!

• Do not deprive each other from affection and intimacy — yet enact foreplay daily as described above so that this can happen much easier — remember, where there is no touch, the marriage will perish!

• Show each other appreciation  
• As Megan Trainor sings — Love each other like you gonna lose each other — please listen to this song.

What are the benefits of following this recipe for marriage?

- Builds trust
- Increase bonding
- Enhances intimacy
- Promotes empathy
- Grow as ONE

In conclusion, because I love my Big Daddy, I found the best recipe for Jalapeno Cornbread. We bought the ingredients this past weekend and I plan to make his Jalapeno Cornbread early this week. It's simple, if you want a good marriage — follow a good recipe!

Contact Dr. LaShunda Calvert for speaking engagements (Motivational, Ministering, Marriage Counseling, Marriage Workshops, Marriage Seminars, Marriage Conferences, etc.) Marriage Ministry: The Restoration Church, Suite H, Jackson, MS. 39206, on: Instagram: letsstay2gether4ever (Dr. LaShunda Calvert) Facebook: Dr. LaShunda Calvert Email:letsstaytogether4eva@gmail.com Contact # 601-596-2528

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**APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**I. NEW BUSINESS**  
CASE NO. HPNC-26-9  
LOCATION: 137 W COHEA ST (PARCEL 73-22)  
HISTORIC DISTRICT: FARISH STREET APPLICANT: HOUSING MISSISSIPPI, INC  
AMENDED REQUEST: DEMOLISH REMAINDER OF A DELAPIDATED STRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPE THE LOT AS AN ADDITION TO THE LENOARD COURT PROJECT.

CASE NO. HPNC-26-10  
LOCATION: 139 W COHEA ST (PARCEL 73-23)  
HISTORIC DISTRICT: FARISH STREET APPLICANT: HOUSING MISSISSIPPI, INC  
AMENDED REQUEST: DEMOLISH REMAINDER OF A DELAPIDATED STRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPE THE LOT AS AN ADDITION TO THE LENOARD COURT PROJECT.

CASE NO. HPNC-26-11  
LOCATION: 948 BLAIR ST (PARCEL 74-25-1)  
HISTORIC DISTRICT: FARISH STREET APPLICANT: WE WILL GO MINISTRIES  
REQUEST: REPLACE IDENTIFIED WINDOWS, REPLACE SIDING, & CONSTRUCT AN ADDITION TO THE NORTH ELEVATION OF THE HOME.

**II. OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**  
OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

3/19/2026, 3/26/2026

# U-RENTAL

## Van Company

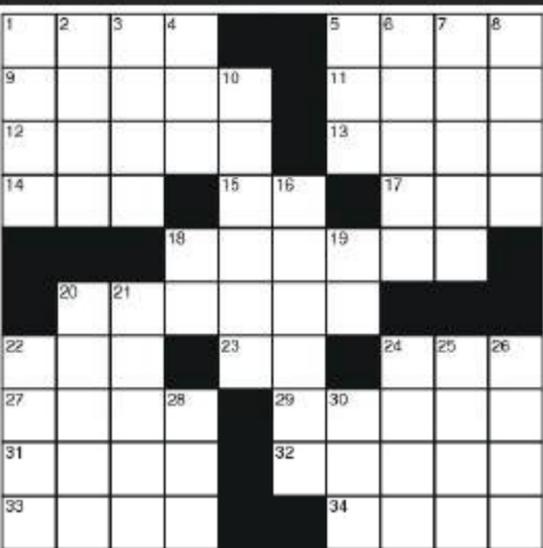


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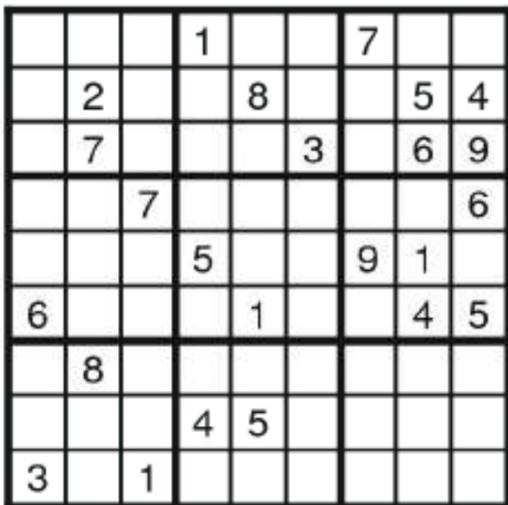


- ACROSS**  
 1. Advise  
 5. Excuse me!  
 9. Elite intellectuals' society  
 11. Thin  
 12. Wines  
 13. \_\_\_ skin cap  
 14. Often pastically  
 15. Large (abbr.)  
 17. Farm credit administration (abbr.)  
 18. Discuss again  
 20. Cowboy shows  
 22. Pale  
 23. Letter afterward  
 24. Brain  
 27. Self-esteem  
 29. Cut of beef  
 31. European monetary unit  
 32. From that time  
 33. Not as much  
 34. Acidity
- DOWN**  
 1. Coarsely  
 2. Shallow men  
 3. Tiny insect  
 4. Eastern Standard Time  
 5. First basic  
 6. Horses feet  
 7. Cain's eldest son  
 8. Asian standing  
 10. Mapping  
 16. Hunting beings  
 18. Road (abbr.)  
 19. Like  
 20. Knows  
 21. Bad smells  
 22. Spin  
 24. Solitary  
 25. Ancient Indian  
 26. Kind  
 28. Distress call  
 32. Laundry detergent brand

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**Sudoku**

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



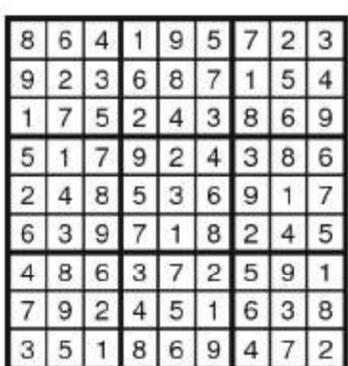
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P R E S E R V E D

## The Battlefield of unanswered prayers

By Shewanda Riley  
Columnist



"I tithe, pray for others and am active in church but why does it seem like no matter how hard I try, I still don't seem to be making progress?" This was part of a conversation I had with a friend a number of years ago. She continued that she felt like she was stuck and spinning her wheels. I listened intently as my good friend shared her growing frustration with feeling like she was stuck.

"Girl, I felt the same way yesterday" was all I could muster when she finished talking. In fact, the previous night, I'd spent time in prayer sharing similar thoughts, concerns to God. I didn't have an answer that night about what to do and I didn't have an answer for my friend. After listening to her

for about 15 minutes share some of her more challenging moments, I felt like I was listening to a recording of the prayer I had prayed to God the night before.

"How could our lives be so different and yet our prayer concerns be the exact same thing? I thought. In the past, I'd shared with her how I thought that maybe God was punishing me for something I'd done and hadn't repented for. There had been many times that I apologized to God for things that I'd knowingly done that had hurt myself or others. I thought by doing so, whatever the "thing" that was keeping God from answering my prayers would be removed from my life.

But like my friend, after many days, nights, weeks, and years of praying the same prayer, I felt like nothing I was doing was working. Sometimes it just felt like God was not listening

and if he was listening, he'd somehow chosen to not answer "that" prayer. There were other prayers that he'd answered but I was still waiting on "that" prayer to be answered.

Waiting on prayers to be answered sometimes seems like a spiritual battle. Many of us are taught that spiritual warfare happens when accidents, health crises and financial problems come into our lives. It's not just limited to those things.... I also think that spiritual warfare comes in things like waiting for a prayer to be answered.

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms," says the familiar passage of Ephesians 6:12. We should recognize and

know that the battle will come and know who the bat-

tle is against. It's not against people...but against the attitudes, spiritual behaviors and strongholds that control their behavior. Yes, God is in control of everything but sometimes the behavior of others can impact our prayers being answered.

Ephesians 6:11 reminds us that we should be strong in the Lord and that we should put on his whole armor. It also reminds us to "stand" when we are in the battle. We can "stand" and put on God's armor because it will protect us in our battles...even if that "battle" is waiting for a prayer to be answered.

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

## Vernon AME Church absorbed the terror of the Tulsa Race Massacre. Now it will 'teach truth.'



Kristi Williams, Rev. Keith Mayes Sr. and Bishop Silvester Scott Beaman during The Vernon Witness interpretive center ground-breaking at Vernon AME on Feb. 12, 2026. CREDIT: TIM LANDES/ TULSA FLYER

By Shaunicy Muhammad  
The Oklahoma Eagle

More than a century after the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, members of Greenwood's Vernon AME Church are determined to tell their own stories.

Archivists, archeologists and elected officials lined the pews of the church Thursday for the unveiling of The Vernon Witness, a multi-year project to preserve the church's basement and turn it into a museum and cultural center.

Survivors found refuge by hiding in the basement as the upper floors of the church were destroyed.

Church officials say Vernon is the last remaining Black-owned structure still standing in the area after it was rebuilt in 1925.

"Vernon absorbed the trauma, the terror, the smoke and the fear and stood as a witness. Now, the church that absorbed trauma will teach truth," Kristi Williams, a member and massacre descendant, said Thursday.

Williams, who founded community education program Black History Saturdays, spearheaded the preservation initiative. She sees the space as "not just history but inheritance."

The initial phase of the preservation project is expected to take about 18 months. It is made possible, in part, due to \$1.5 million in funding from The Mellon Foundation.

Alicia Odewale, a Tulsa native and one of the archeologists working on the project, said at its completion, visitors will see over 5,000 artifacts from the church and Greenwood.

"Everything our ancestors left behind to tell that story will be

restored," Odewale continued.

Odewale was teaching college courses in Texas when she first got the call from Williams to work on the project. She told The Eagle she believes it was God's divine timing to bring her back home to join the team.

She sees the preservation of the church as a call "to bring our artifacts home and bring our people home." Odewale and others on the team of preservationists said one of their primary concerns is ensuring artifacts are properly preserved — something they say has not always happened in the past.

"I was angry about how some artifacts were, frankly, thrown away," Odewale told The Eagle following the ceremony. "It's crazy how our history keeps being literally thrown away because we don't have a place to store our artifacts, we don't have a place to display them and keep them from being thrown away. These are the things that our ancestors left behind for us."

The museum space will also illustrate the church's founding, highlight members of the congregation and tell the story of how they rebuilt.

Williams envisions an exhibit where visitors will hear some of the sounds people heard during the massacre as they hid from the violence. "I want people to really feel it," she said.

Ultimately, Williams wants Tulsans young and old to embrace where they come from.

"Our history is being taken from us. It's being deleted as we speak," Williams said. "Knowing your history, there's a power in that. It helps with identity and knowing who you are."

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# With Colorectal Cancer Screenings, 45 is the new 50

By FMOL Health  
St. Dominic

The older you get, the more necessary screenings are for certain health conditions. In 2018, the American Cancer Society lowered recommendations for colorectal cancer screenings from 50 years old to 45 — meaning the work of prevention starts a little earlier.

The reason for the age change is that data was starting to show an increase in colorectal cancer rates among younger and middle-aged demographics. While for people over fifty, colorectal cancer rates have decreased, increases in diagnosis for these younger age groups have climbed 51% since 1994, according to the American Cancer Society's findings.

The good news, though, is that colorectal cancer is considered one of the most preventable cancers because of the efficacy of screening. Colonoscopies can detect polyps in the colon or rectum so that they can be removed before they become more serious and sometimes before you even notice signs and symptoms.

Doctors Say Screenings Are a Lifesaver

We talked to colorectal specialists throughout our health system about screening guidelines. Here is what some of them had to say:

Charles Morgan, MD, inter-



nal medicine specialist at St. Francis Health: "Average-risk patients should observe the screening guidelines of 45 years of age. Patients with a family history or high-risk factor such as inflammatory bowel disease should begin screening likely at 40 but should consult with their primary care provider or gastroenterologist for specific recommendations."

Greg A. Bizette, MD, hematology oncologist at Our Lady of the Lake Health and Our Lady of the Lake Cancer Insti-

tute: "If you're over the age of 45 and have never had a screening colonoscopy, it may save your life. We often find premalignant polyps at the time of endoscopy that can be removed non-surgically and prevent cancer from ever occurring."

Matthew Boudreaux, MD, colon and rectal surgeon at Our Lady of Lourdes Health: "Nothing compares to the efficacy of getting a colonoscopy. It is absolutely the first line of defense in the treatment of colon cancer."

What to Know About the Guidelines

Here are the basics from the American Cancer Society recommendations:

Adults forty-five and older with an average risk of colorectal cancer should undergo regular screening with either a high-sensitivity stool-based test or a structural (visual) exam, depending on patient preference and test availability.

The change in starting age is designated as a "qualified recommendation," because there

is less direct evidence of the balance of benefits and harms in adults 45-49 since most studies have only included adults fifty and older. The recommendation for adults fifty and older is designated as a "strong recommendation," based on the greater strength of evidence and the overall benefit.

As a part of the screening process, all positive results on non-colonoscopy screening tests should be followed up with timely colonoscopy.

Average-risk adults in good

health should continue colorectal cancer screening through age 75. For individuals seventy-six and older, decisions for screening should be based on patient preferences, life expectancy, health status, and prior screening history in consultation with their primary care provider.

Other Health Risks to Know

There are certain lifestyle factors associated with increased risk for colorectal cancer, and many of them can be changed or adjusted to improve your health, such as:

Being overweight

Not getting enough exercise

Alcohol use and smoking

Diets high in red meats and processed meats

Other factors that can contribute to increased risk are being older, inflammatory bowel disease and a family history with colorectal conditions.

Your primary care provider can speak with you about those risk factors and any steps you should take.

Your Next Steps

Talk with your primary care provider if you are forty-five and older or have a family history of colorectal cancer. Your primary care provider can advise you about screenings and walk you through any questions you might have about a colonoscopy or other alternatives.

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# Black Women trailblazers, leaders across the globe

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

The idea of honoring women touched ears, minds, and hearts when Former President Jimmy Carter designated March 2-8, 1980, as Women's History Week. The national matter led Carter to voice that the "achievements, leadership, courage, strength, and love of the women who built America were as vital as those of the men whose names we know so well." Seven years later (1987), one week moved to a month when the United States Congress officially designated March as Women's History Month.

Black women have swept through dark clouds and high winds with their eyes focused on the setting sun. Enduring hardships and setbacks, they made dreams realities by demonstrating for themselves and others that their goals could be accomplished. Featured here are just a few who have flourished in their endeavors and have made America and the world better places to be. What comes to mind is the question: Who could match their pearls?

Educators among educators were Mary McCleod Bethune and Marva Collins. Bethune started a private school for African-American students which later became Bethune-Cookman University. She paved the way for women fighting for civil rights by founding the National Council of Negro Women, Inc. She became the first Black woman to lead a federal agency when former President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed her as the Director of the National Youth Administration's Office of Minority Affairs in 1935.

Collins - a Clark Atlanta University graduate - had a dream for children to venture to great heights. As a result, she created Westside Preparatory School, a widely acclaimed private elementary school in the impoverished Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago, Ill. The school opened in 1975 and paved the way for many.

Marian Wright Edelman became the first Black woman to be admitted to the Mississippi state bar. She is an American activist for civil rights and children's rights. Founder and president emerita of the Children's Defense Fund, Wright influenced Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Hillary Clinton.

The first Black woman to work as an Ambassador for the United States was Patricia Roberts Harris. She became the first Black woman to serve in a Presidential cabinet under President Jimmy Carter. Harris was former United States Secretary of Health and Human Services when she championed access and equity in national health and social programs while breaking barriers and expanding opportunities for underserved communities within federal health policy and social welfare. Further, Harris was the first ever Black woman to serve on a fortune 500 Board.

Claudette Colvin was one of the first Black women (a teen prior to the Montgomery Bus Boycott) to refuse to give up her seat for a white passenger, months before Rosa Parks who famously became a leader in the 1950s Civil Rights Movement when she refused to give up her seat on the bus for a white passenger. Her bravery sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and was a major factor that ended legal segregation.



Former First Lady Michelle Obama



Former Vice President Kamala Harris



Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson



Amanda Gorman



Aretha Franklin



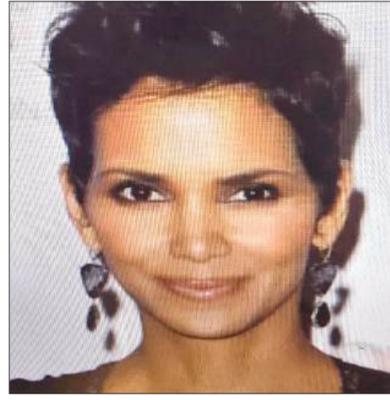
Claudette Colvin



Dorothy D. Porter



Dr. Dorothy Lavinia Brown



Halle Berry



Kaysha Love



Marian Anderson



Marian Wright Edelman



Mary McCleod Bethune



Serena Williams



Sheila Johnson



Viola Davis

A talented actor and fashion icon, Halle Berry has left a special mark on Hollywood. In 2002, she became the first Black woman to win the Best Actress Oscar for *Monster's Ball*. In 2023, Berry presented the same award to Michelle Yeoh, the second woman of color to ever win the award.

Nicknamed "The Queen of Soul," Aretha Franklin was an accomplished soul singer whose work led to 18 Grammy Awards and a Presidential Medal of Freedom. One of the most angelic voices in world history, Franklin popularized Otis Redding's song "Respect" with her

version. In 1987, she became the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Her version of "Respect" has become a universal rallying cry for the civil rights and feminist movements.

Serena Williams was the face of tennis for decades. Alongside her sister - Venus Williams - she inspired young female athletes around the globe. One of the best players to ever set foot on a court, Serena retired in September 2022 with 23 Grand Slam singles and four Olympic gold medals.

Mae Jemison astronaut, joined NASA's astronaut corps in 1987 and was selected to serve for the STS-47 mission. She became the first African-American woman to travel into space on the Space Shuttle Endeavor.

In 2017, Amanda Gorman was named the first National Youth Poet Laureate of the United States. When she was 22, she read her poem, "The Hill We Climb" in 2021 at Former President Joe Biden's inauguration. The award-winning poet, activist, and model conveys a message of hope and possibility in her writing which explores themes of race, gender, oppression, feminism, marginaliza-

tion, and the African diaspora. One of the wealthiest Black women is Sheila Johnson. She co-founded BET (Black Entertainment Television) in 1979. Johnson is the CEO of Salamander Hotels and Resorts. She is labeled the first Black woman billionaire in the United States.

The United States owes Kaysha Love gratitude for her help in winning the first World Cup gold of the season in Women's Monobob in 2025. In her endeavor, she set a start record and track record. Love also represented the United States at the 2022 and 2026 Winter Olympics.

Viola Davis - an American actress and producer - is renowned for her powerful performances across stage, film, and television. An EGOT and Triple Crown of Acting winner, Davis earned acclaim in works such as *Doubt*, *The Help*, *Fences*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *How to Get Away with Murder*. CO-founder of JuVee Productions, she is also a human rights advocate and memoirist whose *Finding Me* audiobook earned her a Grammy.

Dorothy B. Porter's career helped revamp the Dewey Decimal classification system away from simply categorizing books by Black authors or on Black topics as solely based on slavery or colonization. The first African American to receive a library science degree from the Columbia University School of Library Service, Porter was a librarian, bibliographer and curator, who built the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University into a world-class research collection.

Dr. Dorothy Lavinia Brown hailed from New York and spent her childhood in an orphanage. She became the first Black woman surgeon in the South. The first further became chief of surgery at Nashville's Riverside Hospital. Additionally, she was the first African American woman fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

Marian Anderson was a world-renowned African American contralto who broke racial barriers in classical music, most notably performing at the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 after being denied use of Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution. She was the first Black singer to perform at the Metropolitan Opera. Anderson sang at the March on Washington in 1963 and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom that same year.

No beat is skipped with Ketanji Brown Jackson - the first Black woman to serve as judge on the United States Supreme Court. President Joe Biden nominated her to the Supreme Court on February 25, 2022, the U.S. Senate confirmed that nomination, and she was sworn into office that same year. Jackson is the first former federal public defender.

Michelle Obama is the first and only Black first lady of the United States. She served during the presidency of her husband, President Barack Obama from 2009-2017. She focused on healthy living and education. The popular icon works with the Obama Foundation, developing the Obama Center, and promoting initiatives through her production company, Higher Ground.

Vice President Kamala Harris became the first woman to serve as Vice President of the United States. From 2021 to 2025, she was second in command to President Joe Biden. In 2024, she ran for president and earned the Democratic nomination, becoming the first Black woman and first Asian American woman to become a major party's presidential nominee.

The majesty within these Black women has inspired many to strive for greater heights. Second to none in importance, those who have moved to the Great Beyond and those who yet live, made a mark that cannot be erased. They saw, they focused, they achieved.



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## Honoring Alyce Clarke: A Women's History Month Tribute



Clarke

JPS Newswire

During the month of March, as we celebrate Women's History Month, Jackson Public Schools proudly honors Alyce Clarke, a trailblazer whose legacy of leadership and service has made a lasting impact on our city and state.

Representative Clarke made history as the first African American woman elected to the Mississippi Legislature, breaking barriers and opening doors for future generations of women in public service. Throughout her distinguished tenure in the Mississippi House of Representatives, she was a tireless advocate for education, healthcare, and civil rights.

Her most significant accomplishments include:

- Championing legislation that expanded opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses

- Advocating for improved access to healthcare and support services for families

- Promoting equity in education and resources for public schools

- Contributing to the establishment of the Mississippi Lottery Corporation, supporting efforts to generate revenue for infrastructure and education

- Serving as a consistent voice for underserved communities across Mississippi

- Inspiring civic engagement and leadership among young people, especially young women

Representative Clarke's courage, commitment, and groundbreaking achievements embody the spirit of Women's History Month. Her legacy reminds our scholars that leadership has no limits and that their voices can shape the future.

Thank you, Representative Alyce Clarke, for paving the way and for your enduring service to Mississippi.

# Nissan sponsors ThinkFast - safe driving course for teens

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Nissan supports ThinkFast® Interactive, a nationally recognized teen driving game show program that teaches critical skills such as avoiding distractions, understanding reaction time, and making safe choices behind the wheel, for students in central Mississippi.

By backing programs that educate and empower teens, Nissan continues its commitment to safety—on the road and in our communities aiming to reduce teen driving accidents through high-energy sessions.

Participating high schools during February and March of 2026 included Canton High School, NW Rankin, Callaway, Germantown, Murrah, Lake, Pelahatchie, Richland, Morton, and Jim Hill High School.

Several schools expressed their appreciation for being included in the course designed for teens.

Cassandra Brown, Freshman Counselor at Germantown High School expressed her appreciation to Nissan North America in a letter of appreciation for bringing the Student Safety Initiative to their school. She stated,



“The presentation was not only highly informative but also an exhilarating performance that truly resonated with our students.” She went on to say, “the energy interactive elements, and engaging format captured their attention from start to finish.”

Canton High School Asst. Principal, Yotunga Grand, Ed.S. stated, “The presenters were far from average, they

were relatable, extremely engaging, and connected with our students in a way that made the message meaningful and memorable. Our students genuinely loved the experience from start to finish.”

Also, expressing her appreciation in writing to Nissan was Angela Reynolds, Senior Administrator at Northwest Rankin High School. “The ThinkFast



Interactive presentation was clear and engaging and the presenters did a great job connecting the safety message to real-life situations which students could relate to. Our students were engaged, interactive, and receptive to the safety message.” She concluded by saying, “We appreciate Nissan North America's investment in student safety and the opportunity to partner in this experience.”



Alexander

## Margaret Walker Alexander: A Women's History Month Tribute

Jackson Public School Newswire

In celebration of Women's History Month, Jackson Public School honors the legacy of Margaret Walker Alexander—a groundbreaking author, educator, and cultural leader with deep roots in Mississippi.

Margaret Walker Alexander made history as one of the most influential African American writers of the 20th century. She is best known for her acclaimed novel Jubilee, a powerful portrayal of slavery and freedom inspired by her own family's history. Her work gave voice to untold stories and preserved an essential part of American history.

Beyond her writing, she dedicated her life to education at Jackson State University, where she founded the Institute for the Study of the History, Life, and Culture of Black People—now known as the Margaret Walker Center. Through her leadership, she helped ensure that future generations would understand and appreciate the richness of Black culture and history.

Her words, her work, and her commitment to truth continue to inspire. Today, we celebrate Margaret Walker Alexander—a literary pioneer whose impact still resonates in Mississippi and beyond.



Winfrey

## Oprah Winfrey: A Women's History Month Tribute

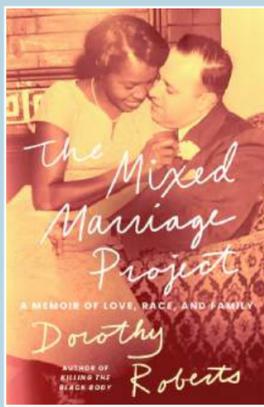
Jackson Public School Newswire

During Women's History Month, Jackson Public Schools proudly salutes Oprah Winfrey — a global media leader whose journey began right here in Mississippi.

Born in Kosciusko, Mississippi, Oprah's story is one of

perseverance, determination, and the transformative power of education. From humble beginnings to becoming one of the most influential voices in the world, she has used her platform to uplift others, promote literacy, and champion opportunities for young

people. Her journey reminds our scholars that greatness can rise from anywhere — including right here in Mississippi. Through hard work, courage, and a commitment to learning, dreams can become reality.



# BOOK REVIEW: THE MIXED MARRIAGE PROJECT: A MEMOIR OF LOVE, RACE, AND FAMILY

BY DOROTHY ROBERTS  
C.2026, ATRIA / ONE SIGNAL PUBLISHERS  
\$30.00 • 320 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
Columnist

The first thing you noticed was that smile.

It was so genuine, so appealing that you couldn't help but smile back. You were drawn to that grin, that face, the whole package. When you fell in love, did you notice your beloved's skin color? Maybe – but as in the new book, "The Mixed Marriage Project" by Dorothy Roberts, the heart doesn't always care what the eyes see.

The pile of boxes had been kicked down the road for years. Newly-landed in Philadel-

phia, Dorothy Roberts knew it was past time to deal with them. Her father, the creator of the boxes' contents, was long gone, as was his wife. And so, steeling herself one afternoon, Roberts opened the first cardboard container.

She found paper - piles of fragile, yellowing, crisp-edged paper filled with words from an old-school typewriter. Each scrap represented her father's life's work.

In 1937, when he was a young man, Robert "Bob" Roberts began studying interracial marriage in the Chicago area,

hoping to write a book. He knocked on doors, conducted interviews, and asked for referrals of similarly-paired friends. He met families and learned their stories in a project that his daughter believed was an "obsession" that sprang from his love of his wife, a Black Jamaican woman. The truth was, though, that his study had started long before Bob met Iris, long before they had three bi-racial daughters.

"Awestruck" by the volume of the work and the implications, Roberts kept reading.

She wasn't surprised by the

segregation most of the couples endured, but by the unique barriers they experienced. There were couples of all ages and "all walks of life," each having crossed considerable "social boundaries." Still, most had a community of support and many had memberships to clubs of like-minded people.

Roberts was astounded by the backgrounds of the people in her father's work, she says. She was pleased to see the friendships he cultivated through it.

She was shocked and delighted to learn that her mother had also worked on the project...

Word to the wise: there are times when a book's perceived subject can be a little misleading, even confusing. That goes doubly here.

Though "The Mixed Marriage Project" contains a detailed overview of a lifetime of work, it's just as much a memoir, which can be too much in two possible ways. Author Dorothy Roberts offers many personal stories and family history going back generations, mixed with thoughts on her father's "project," and the switching comes fast. So fast and frequent, in fact, that it can

feel jarring in its unexpectedness. Yes, you can subject-switch easy enough, but the overview seems repetitive and it sometimes bogs before you need to switch your mind back. Maintaining your attention can be challenging.

Still, as the child of a mixed-race marriage, Roberts has a lot to say and her thoughts are particularly meaningful in today's world. Because of its bumps, this might be a hard book for you to read. In spite of them, "The Mixed Marriage Project" may make you smile.




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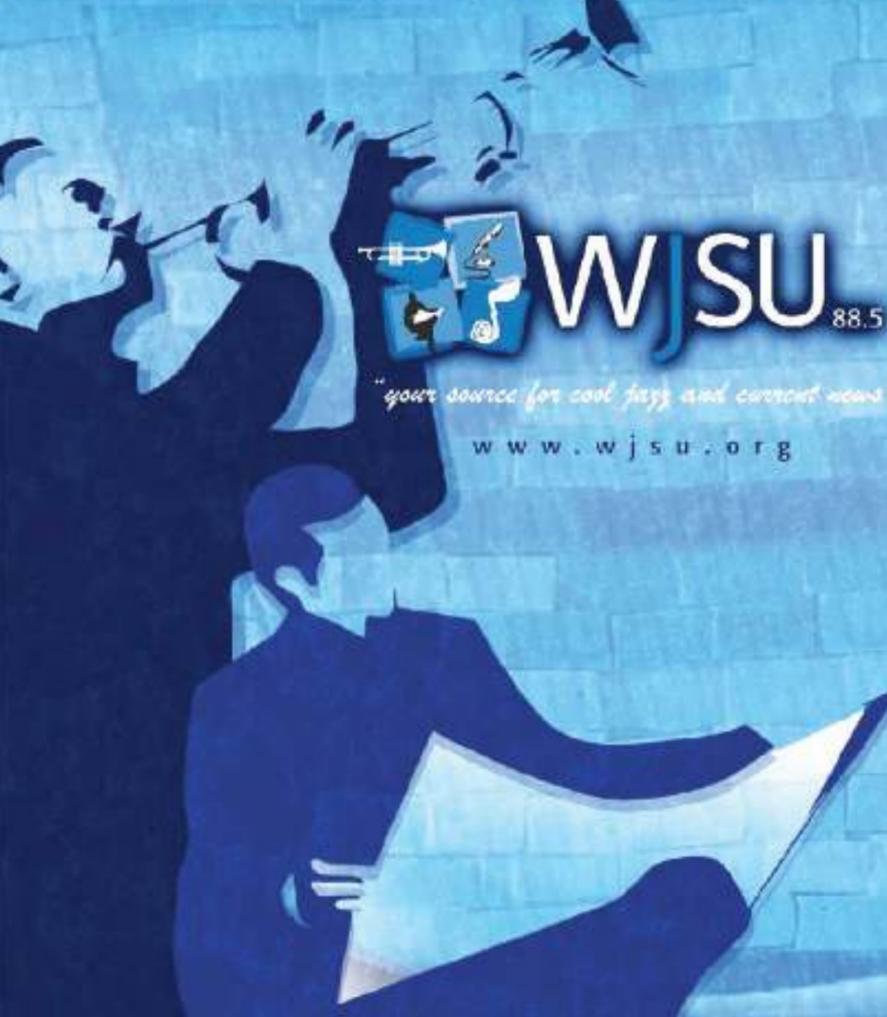
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# REMEMBERING DR. JOHN M. PERKINS & THE LEGACY HE LEFT BEHIND

His body lay in state at Jackson City Hall Friday, March 20, 2026.

**Homegoing Celebration: Saturday, March 21, 2026, 11:00 A.M. – New Horizon Church International – 1750 Bobby Rush Blvd. – Jackson, MS.**

PHOTOS BY JAY JOHNSON



# HOPE Celebrates WOMEN'S *History* MONTH

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(601) 991-3336  
M - F 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

### **Terry, MS Branch**

109 W Cunningham Avenue  
Terry, MS 39170  
(601) 878-0773  
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