

The Valley Weekly

Volume 1, No. 31

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising in every time we fall."
- Confucius

FREE

Weekly

Friday, April 10, 2015

Huntsville Rounds Out Top 15 in Average STEM Pay

In its most recent report of "The Best Cities for Pay in STEM" disciplines, Huntsville rounded out the Top 15, with the average pay for a person working in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) field at around \$82,832.

Those numbers are bolstered no doubt by a strong high-tech and military sector, as well as by an array of higher educational



institutions, to include three historically black colleges and/or universities (HBCUs).

Heading the list, with an average STEM pay of \$100,787, is Bethesda-Rockville-Frederick, Md., and closing out the Top 5

are San Francisco, Calif.; Washington, D.C.; Oakland, Calif.; and San Jose, Calif.

Numbers 6-10 are: Edison-New Brunswick, N.J.; Orange County, Calif.; Newark, N.J.; Los Angeles, Calif.; and Boston, Mass., respectively.

Finally, Numbers 11-15 are: New York, N.Y.; Sacramento, Calif.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Boulder, Colo., and Huntsville, Ala.



VIGIL ON THE HILL: Hundreds of Alabama A&M University students and members of the Valley area attend a campus vigil to show support for three innocent students shot during Spring Break in Panama City Beach, Fla. (See story, page 2)

Second Diversity Leadership Colloquium Launched

The Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium launched Cohort 2 on Tuesday, April 7.

The dozen Tennessee Valley-area professional men and women making up Cohort 2 represent a variety of backgrounds. The dynamic members of Class 2 includes the following stellar individuals: Christopher J. Calhoun, Sr., Calhoun's Lawn & Yard Grooming, Inc.; Takeisha Cowan, Huntsville Utilities; Jessica R. Draper, Huntsville District Youth Department; William Hus-

ton, Sr., retired educational administrator; Demetric S. Mitchell, University of Alabama in Huntsville; Shaun D. Perryman, Computer Train Me, LLC; Printess R. Pickens, Royal Enterprises, LLC; Dr. Everett Roper, Joint Attack Munitions, AMRDEC; Tiffany Tickle, Union Chapel Christian Academy; Jeremy L. Tuck, Missile Defense Agency; Dr. Wyla Washington, Calhoun Community College; and Anita L. Weathers, Union Chapel Christian Academy.

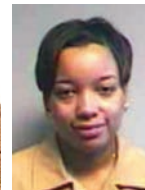
Throughout an eight-

week period, participants will engage in topics of local interest, including leadership success, politics and government, diversity in education, small business and entrepreneurship, community and civic engagement, law, equality and social justice, finance, investments and planning, along with networking and mentoring.

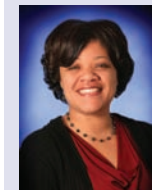
For information about the Diversity Leadership Colloquium or about future classes, please call (256) 536-9717.



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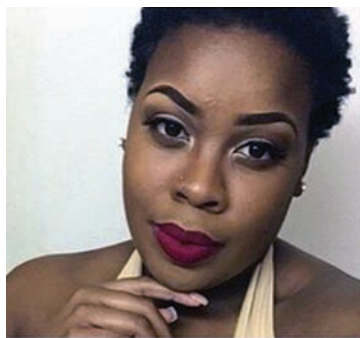
Conditions of AAMU Victims in Spring Break Shooting Improve

The Alabama A&M University staffer who ably assisted families and continues to monitor the status of three Alabama A&M

University students wounded by gunfire while on Spring Break in Panama City Beach,

Fla., noted on April 1 that the young women are showing steady signs of improvement.

"I have been keeping in contact with all three ladies," commented Rakesha Hines, AAMU's interim director of residential life and housing. "I have to say that God is truly showing himself to be faithful during this sad situation."



Kelli Curry (first photo) is resting at home in Mobile, awaiting a visit with doctors to begin the recovery process owing to her gunshot wound to the leg.

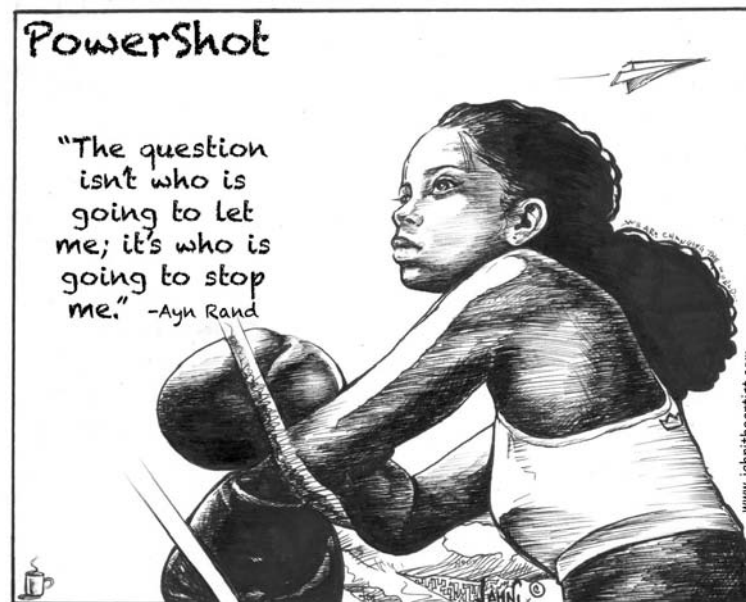
Annesia Powell (second photo) also appears to be performing well with her



physical therapy, remains upbeat, and is hopeful of going home soon.

Kearria Freed (third photo) is stable but still critical. Physical therapy has offered some improvement, said Hines, marked

by the ability to sit up with assistance, give soft hugs and to do "thumbs up" and "thumbs down." Her mother asks for continued prayers, because she has witnessed their daily positive effects on Kearria.



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The Valley Weekly

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From the Editor



We had the opportunity to attend the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Huntsville Madison County Veterans Memorial on Saturday. The theme was "Continue the Healing." The memorial program was presented by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Huntsville Chapter 1067. Prelude and special music was provided by the Army Materiel Command, the Buckhorn High School Army JROTC posted the Colors, and BG (R) Joseph S. Stringham was the keynote speaker. More than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives and more than 300,000 were wounded in Vietnam. In addition, almost 2,000 remain missing today. Anytime we have the opportunity to participate in a local that honors our men and women who serve, its a good day. My brother Roosevelt is a Vietnam veteran who was honorably discharged after being injured in Vietnam. God Bless the men and women who have served, who currently serve and those who plan to serve in the future. We are truly grateful for your service.



State Representative Howard Sanderford with Vietnam Veteran Charlie Miller, Bernard Goodley, and Bill Huston.

The Seven Last Words of Jesus from the cross were presented at Church Street Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America on Good Friday at noon. The service was about an hour long with several guest preachers presenting what is referred to as the seven last words of Jesus from the cross. The 5 to 7 minute sermonettes were delivered by Reverend Frances Willie-Chunn, Pastor of Christ Church Non-Traditional Baptist Church; Reverend Will Culver, Assistant Pastor and Youth Pastor of Calvary Church of the Nazarene; Reverend Dr. Edward Anderson, Pastor of Union Hill Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America; Reverend Christie Ashton, Pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church; Reverend Dr. John Clay, President of Huntsville Bible College; Reverend Dr. Michael Clark, Pastor of the Winchester (Tennessee) Cumberland Presbyterian Church; and, Reverend Earla Sue Lockhart, Staff Minister at First Missionary Baptist Church. Reverend Dr. Janette Kotey, Minister of Music at First Missionary Baptist Church



provided special music. Sister Monica Brooks welcomed the diverse crowd of worshippers, gave the Call to Worship and lead the Prayer of Invocation. Pastor Mitchell Walker thanked everyone for attending this annual Good Friday service. Dr. Mitchell Walker, Sr., is the Pastor-Teacher at Church Street. Dr. Henry Bradford, Jr., is Pastor Emeritus.



April is loaded with activities, from Panoply to the hundreds of events tied to the last weeks of school. Pace yourself, but do try to enjoy what the Valley has to offer. Until next week ...

When you can't find a printed copy of The Valley Weekly around town, follow us on-line at www.valleyweeklyllc.com.

Dorothy

Famous African Americans Born in April

www.blackintime.info

- 1 Gil Scott-Heron, poet
- 2 Marvin Gaye, R&B legend
- 3 Eddie Murphy, comedian
- 4 Maya Angelou, author
- 5 Booker T. Washington
- 6 Billy Dee Williams, actor
- 7 Billie Holiday, jazz icon
- 8 Kofi Annan, former UN head
- 9 Paul Robeson, actor
- 10 "Babyface" Edmonds, singer, producer
- 11 Jane M. Bolin, 1st black judge
- 12 Herbie Hancock, musician
- 13 Al Green, R&B singer
- 14 Eugene Ammons, sax player
- 15 A. Phillip Randolph, activist
- 16 Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, NBA legend
- 17 Mifflin Gibbs, judge
- 18 James M. Smith, physician
- 19 Ethridge Knight, poet
- 20 Luther Vandross, R&B singer
- 21 Clara Ward, Gospel singer
- 22 Charles Mingus, jazz bassist
- 23 Granville T. Woods, Inventor
- 24 Cedric Kyles, "Cedric The Entertainer," actor/comedian
- 25 Meadowlark Lemon, Harlem Globetrotter
- 26 Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, blues singer
- 27 Hubert Harrison, activist
- 28 Jessie Fauset, poet/novelist
- 29 Duke Ellington, composer
- 30 Isiah Thomas, NBA star

Huntsville Happenings

Huntsville's own Oakwood University recently celebrated its 37th Annual North Alabama UNCF Gala. On Thursday, April 2nd, the VBC North Hall was transformed into a Latin oasis to display the theme in honor of Oakwood's Latino student population. This star-studded gala featured the rich harmonies of the first "vocal play" group, "Naturally 7."

Since Huntsville is a community with over 100 different cultures represented, the local UNCF committee did not have to look far to select the keynote speaker. Mr. Rey Almodovar, CEO of Intuitive Research and Technology Corporation, served as the speaker and gave his personal educational testimony. Alabama Board of Education member, Mary Scott Hunter, introduced her boss, Mr. Almodovar, as she serves as chief counsel at Intuitive. Mr. Almodovar is a native of Puerto Rico and has recently been named Chairman of the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce.

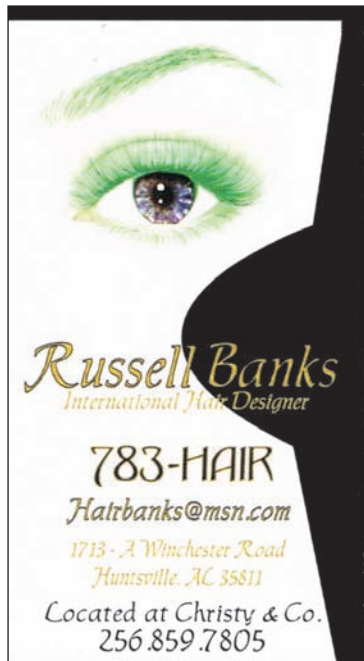
With the support of the greater Huntsville community, Oakwood University brought out Huntsville's top philanthropists and officials. Mayor Tommy Battle of Huntsville was present along with council members - Dr. Richard Showers and President Mark Russell. Mayor Troy Trulock from Madison was also at the gala to support the annual giving campaign. Thanks to the generous

contributions from SAIC, BB&T, ERC, COLSA, Bridgeforth Farms, First Missionary Baptist Church, Maynard Cooper & Gayle, St. Luke Christian Church, Good Samaritan Hospice, Nelms Memorial Funeral Home, Redstone Federal Credit Union, Rosetta James Foundation, TMT Group, and others, Oakwood University students will be eligible for additional financial assistance to complete their undergraduate education.

Oakwood University honored local supporters for their commitment to higher education and to Oakwood. Huntsville Defense contractor, ERC Inc., received the business award alongside the Office of Regional Conference Ministries at Oakwood who were presented as the religious award recipients. Mrs. Juanita Phillips, Director of HR at Intuitive, was honored for her service as an alumna of Oakwood University and record of helping Oakwood students. Also honored was Mrs. Brenda Martin, retired Director of Multicultural Affairs for the City of Huntsville, who is known as a trailblazer with many local community and civic organizations. Mrs. Martin is an Oakwood alumna, but was honored for her many years of service to the local UNCF gala planning committee and campaign support.

Although the gala has ended, "A mind is still a terrible thing to waste," so please feel free to give if you missed the event and plan to support in 2016. Every dollar invested into a UNCF student at Oakwood or other member schools yields a priceless dividend because "only the educated are free."

by Gary T. Whitley, Jr.



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Mindgear Media Arts Lab at Lowe Mills Gathering Steam

The MindGear Media Arts Lab at Lowe Mill is gathering steam for their Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics-based (STEAM) Summer Camps and Workshops beginning in May and running throughout the summer. Located in their new double studio (#2022) on the second floor at Lowe Mill, students can choose from a wide-range of camp options.

The MindGear Media Arts Lab offers 20 classes Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. MindGear Labs has combined their STEM curriculum including classes on 3D printing, robotics, and game design, with the Media Arts Institute of Alabama's (MAIA) Arts-related activities like video production and graphic design, to provide fun but educational summer camp programs for school-aged kids.

Students can choose between

4-hour morning and afternoon camps, or attend both. Costs start at \$150 per week. No summer-long contracts required and parents can customize a camp program based on their summer schedule.

Many of the camp's instructors attended MAIA's Huntsville 2 Hollywood video documentary for the Tournament of Roses this past January. With that project still in post-production, camp students will be able to watch and learn how to edit a TV documentary as part of the video production camp.

"Our goal is to use visual art, advanced manufacturing, entertainment technology, and video production, to motivate students to pursue educational and career options," says MAIA founder and CEO Leon Burnette. "With MindGear Labs offering classes on the STEM side, and MAIA providing guidance on the Arts side, we have created the perfect

STEAM-based partnership where local youth have an opportunity to explore how the arts can unlock the engineering potential of STEM-related fields."

The MindGear Media Arts Lab at Lowe Mill is also home to numerous afterschool programs and the Media Arts Mentoring Academy (MAMA), where students from all over Huntsville and Madison County come to learn graphic design and video production.

For more information about the STEAM Camps at MindGear Media Arts Lab at Lowe Mill this summer, contact Leon Burnette at (256) 525-1203.

Parents can print out a complete Summer Camp schedule on our website at www.mindgear-labs.com or come by our studio at #2022 at Lowe Mill Wednesday through Saturday to register, and even watch our students at work.

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President Andrew Hugine, Jr., the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and the College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (AAMU) invite you to participate in the 125th Anniversary Celebration of the Second Morrill Act that established 1890 Land-Grant Universities.

An observance of this historical occasion will be the 1890 Day Wellness Walk-Run on April 23 from 12:00-4:00 p.m. Registration and t-shirt pick up will be held between 9:00-11:00 a.m.

The national goal of the 1890 Day Wellness Walk-Run is for each 1890 University to solicit at least 1,890 participants who will register for \$1.89 (students only), \$18.90 (general registration fee), \$189.00, \$1,890.00, or more. Registration fees will go toward establishing the Justin Smith

Morrill Scholarship fund. Those persons or groups who choose to support at the \$189.00 level or



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above will be recognized.

Although the pre-registration deadline for the 1890 Day Wellness Walk-Run is April 22, participants will have a chance to register in-person on April 23. To register online, visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/aau/> or click

on the "Give Now" button on the www.aamu.edu website.

If you plan to register or to make a donation by check, please make your check payable to AAMU Foundation, write 1890 Scholarship Fund in the memo line, and mail your tax deductible contribution to: AAMU Marketing and Advancement, 311 Patton Building, P.O. Box 294, Normal, AL 35762.

Visit <http://1890universities.org/> for more information about 1890 Land-Grant Universities and to view the celebratory YouTube video.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to this effort. You may contact K. Renée Johnson at 256.372.4827 if you have any questions or need additional information.

- Wendi Williams

U.S. Stamp Honoree Has Strong Alabama Ties

The 38th individual honored with a stamp in the U.S. Postal Service's Black Heritage Series has strong and clear ties to Alabama.

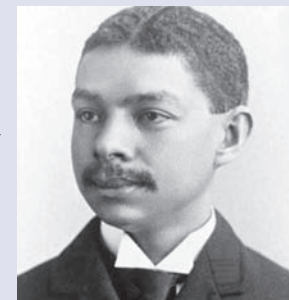
Robert Robinson Taylor (1868-1942) was the first black graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was a noted architect and was also the great-grandfather of key Presidential advisor Valerie Jarrett.

After he graduated from MIT in 1892, the Wilmington, N.C., native accepted an offer from renowned educator and activist Booker T. Washington to teach at Tuskegee Institute (now "University"). He immediately began working on the school's stately layout. Throughout some four decades, Taylor was responsible for the designing at Tuskegee of numerous essential buildings, libraries, dormitories, lecture halls, industrial workshops and the original campus chapel, later redesigned in 1969 by noted architect Paul Rudolph after the first building was destroyed by fire.

His phenomenal biography suggests that Taylor and Washington not only helped prepare African-American carpenters and builders, but also the architects who could plan and design the buildings. They formed a duo that was an example of African-American nation building at its zenith.

Taylor's 1911 speech sums up the two men's noble aims: "the love of doing things correctly, of putting logical ways of thinking into the humblest task ... increasing the power and grandeur of the nation."

- Submitted by J. Saintjones



Calendar at a Glance

April 15
"Night of a Thousand Flowers"
Grisham Pavilion (\$45/person; Garden members only)
Huntsville Botanical Garden, 5 p.m.

April 16
Confucius Institute Ceremony
VBC-North Hall, 6 p.m. (Free)

April 17-19
Spring Plant Sale
(Open to the Public)
Grisham Pavilion
Huntsville Botanical Garden

April 24
AAMU Annual Black Tie
Scholarship Gala
Von Braun Center North Hall
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AAMU Alum Promoted at Nuclear Regulatory Commission

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission engineer, Ms. LaDonna B. Suggs, has been selected as the Chief, Reactor Projects Branch 3, DRP.

Suggs joined the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 2006 as a reactor inspector through the Nuclear Safety and Professional Development Program. While in this capacity, she was primarily responsible for the direct inspection and effectiveness evaluation of a variety of engineering programs, performance, and support activities for reactor facilities, with particular emphasis on electrical systems and components, circuit analysis and fire protection.

In 2012, Ms. Suggs was promoted to senior construction projects inspector in the Division of Construction Projects where she supported the development, revision and management of the construction inspection program for new reactors, with the lead responsibility for developing and managing the AP1000 Initial Test Program for preoperational and startup testing inspection efforts. She also served in temporary



Suggs

rotational assignments as a digital instrumentation and controls technical reviewer in the Office of New Reactor, acting resident inspector at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, and acting branch chief in the Division of Construction Inspection.

Suggs graduated summa cum laude in 2006 from Alabama A&M University, earning a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering with a concentration in computer engineering.

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Gas Person of the Year Award Winner Announced

This year's recipient of Alabama's Natural Gas Association (ANGA) Gas Person of the Year award is Huntsville Utilities Gas & Water Operations Manager, Jimmie Butler.

The 1997 President of ANGA, Steve Carter, of Athens, began the Gas Person of the Year award as an opportunity to recognize fellow members' exemplary service to the gas industry, as well as the community.

A native of the Mobile area, he graduated from Vigor High School and received his B.S. in mechanical engineering from the University of South Alabama. Butler began his professional career working for an investor owned utility, Mobile Gas Service, in Mobile, Ala., in 1976 where he held various positions within the Gas Operations Department. He is an active member of the Alabama Natural Gas Association where he served on the Board of directors from 2004



Huntsville Utilities presents GPOTY award to Jimmie Butler (left).

to 2013 and completed a term as President of the Association in 2011. He has also served on the American Public Gas Association (APGA) Board of Directors since 2007. Butler's additional honors

include the 2011 APGA Personal Achievement Award, the 2012 ANGA Outstanding Service Award and also the 2012 APGA Safety Management Excellence Award.

DLC

Tennessee Valley

Diversity Leadership Colloquium



*Accepting Applications
for Cohort 3!*

Vision:

The Diversity Leadership Colloquium (DLC) advances leadership excellence by advocating and progressing the affirmation and inclusion of diversity in strategic markets and communities of interest for competitive intelligence.

Mission:

DLC's mission is to become a premier provider of diversity training for inspiring and experienced leaders throughout the lifecycle.

Values:

Our values are: Collaboration for Excellence; Appreciation with Insight; Respect for Understanding; and Empathy for all ... C.A.R.E.

DLC offers inspiring and experienced leaders with opportunities to benefit from qualified and seasoned trainers, scholars, and business professionals who share and discuss research and best practices regarding obtaining excellence through diversity.

DLC is designed for individuals interested in gaining access to networks, mentors, and sponsors that have traditionally not been available to diverse members of the broader community. Enrollees will be exposed to topics such as: Understanding and Embracing Diversity, Organizational Culture and Structural Reform, Racial and Gender Intelligence, Social Justice and Equality, Networking and Mentoring, Politics, Heroes and Holidays, Critical Thinking and Self-Affirmation and Living the CARE Values.

Individuals and companies are making sincere efforts in verbalizing a commitment to diversity excellence. However, we must be trained to build the next generation of leaders who have the skill sets, tools and commitment to execute.

Training Schedule

DLC will run four quarterly, eight-week colloquia. The sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 9 p.m. Participant cannot miss more than 2 sessions.

Location: 415-A Church Street - Downtown Huntsville
Enrollment limited to: 16 - **Tuition:** \$795

2015 Schedule

Summer July 7 – August 25 - Deadline to register (June 7, 2015)
Fall Oct 6 – Nov 24 - Deadline to register (September 6, 2015)

To Apply

- Application Form
- 3 References
- Resume
- Photo

Tuition Payable Upon Acceptance

DLC

Tennessee Valley Diversity Leadership Colloquium APPLICATION FORM

Requirements: Application Form - 3 References - Resume -
Photo and Tuition (Both Required upon Acceptance)

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Apt. Unit # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (mobile) _____ Business/Home _____ E-mail _____

Company/Organization _____

Title _____

U.S. Citizen? Yes No Enrolling Quarter _____

Education

High School Attended _____ Graduated: Yes No

College(s) Attended _____

Highest Degree _____ Career Field _____

References

Name _____ Association _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

Name _____ Association _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

Name _____ Association _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please mail this Application Form, 3 Letters of Reference, and Resume to: 415A Church Street-Ste. 100, Huntsville, AL 35801 - (256) 651-9028; visit us at www.diversityleadershipcolloquium.com; or e-mail info@diversityleadershipcolloquium.com. Tuition and photo will be required only if accepted to participate.