

A&M Student Finds Fortune on 'Wheel' - p. 8

FREE



AAMU's Founder's Day Speaker, p. 6

Friday
April 14, 2023
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ValleyWeeklyllc.com



"I cannot hide my anger to spare you guilt, nor hurt feelings, not answering anger; for to do so insults and trivializes all our efforts." - Audre Lorde

AAMU's Panion Inducted into Alabama Music Hall of Fame

An Alabama A&M University alumnus and music educator recently received high honors for his contributions to the music industry and the state's recognition in the arena of music.

A composer, arranger, conductor and educator, Dr. Henry Panion, III has worked with stars like Lionel Richie and Stevie Wonder to Carrie Underwood and Ruben Studdard.

Alabama Music Hall of Fame 1993 member Randy

Owen of Alabama introduced Panion, who called the night "unbelievable."

Alabama Music Hall of Fame was a dream and goal of the Muscle Shoals Music Association, a Shoals area based professional organization of recording studio owners, producers, musicians, songwriters and other music



professionals.

Panion holds degrees in music education and music theory from Alabama A&M University and the Ohio State University, respectively, and serves as director

of the music technology program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He is most known for his work as conductor and arranger

for superstar Stevie Wonder, for whose performances and recordings he has led many of the world's most notable orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic, the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, the Birmingham (England) Symphony, the Orchestra of Paris, the Melbourne (Australia) Symphony, the Rio de Janeiro Philharmonic, the Ra'anana Philharmonic, the Nice Symphony, the Gothenburg Symphony, and the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing Event Scheduled

The Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., cordially invite you to Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing Event on April 29th, 2023, 11:00 AM at the Omega Center, 181 Import Circle NW, Huntsville, AL 35806. This event is open to the public. Please share the donation link, invite friends and family to support our campaign to provide more than 20,000 meals and help end hunger worldwide. Each volunteer is asked to donate at least \$20. Goal: \$8,000.

In a region of Zimbabwe called Gokwe North, extreme weather conditions left families without the resources to provide healthy meals for their children. Millions of Rise Against Hunger meals; served in schools throughout the region, ensured children received the nourishment they needed along with education. This is the impact you can be a part of. It starts with a meal. And it starts with you. Donation and volunteer [LINK](#) is now open.

Sign up and donate today!! Together, we'll package thousands of meals to provide essential nourishment for those facing hunger.

TVW Artist Among Southern Artists for Social Change Cohort



Local artist John "Jahni" Moore was

among eight recipients of a grant from the Surdna Foundation's Radical Imagination for Racial Justice initiative. The award provides \$25,000

grants to artists and culture bearers of color who are engaging in social change in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.

Three of the organiza-

tion's eight awardees are from Alabama. Over its three years, the program has awarded \$700,000 to support 28 projects.

State Extension/FCS Meeting Set for Huntsville

Prepare yourself for landing in the beautiful Rocket City-Huntsville, Alabama for the 74th Annual Meeting of the Alabama Affiliate of the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences April 12-14. This year's theme is Countdown

to Excellence: NEAFCS-Leading the Way.

Conference gatherings will take place at Alabama A&M University, Embassy Suites, the U.S. Space and Rocket Center and other locations.

On Friday, coordinators will conclude the meeting

by paying tribute to former members in a memorial service and welcoming new officers in the officer installation ceremony. In addition, the session will include another timely human science presentation and an invitation to the 2023 Annual National Ses-

sion and 2024 State Meeting (75th Anniversary).

For additional information about the meeting, contact locally Darlene Minniefield, Urban Regional Extension Agent, Lauderdale County, ACES, at minnida@aces.edu or (256) 766-6223.

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The Valley Weekly

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**The Valley Weekly
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Eighth Page	2.5x5 inches	\$150
Sixteenth Page	2.5x2.5	\$75
Classified	1 col.x1 inch	\$100/Flat Fee

Washington in One Minute



Here are the happenings in Washington, D.C., this week:

1. CONGRESS. The House and Senate are in recess this week.

2. THE WHITE HOUSE. The President and First Lady hosted the annual Easter Egg Roll at the White House. On Tuesday, the President started a 5-day visit to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to mark the 25th anniversary of the U.S.-brokered Good Friday Peace Accord, which will include a major speech in Ballina (home of the President's ancestral family, the Blewitts) and an address to the Irish legislature, known as the Oireachtas. Last Friday, Vice President Harris made a surprise trip to Tennessee to meet the 2 Democratic state legislators, Reps. Justin Jones and Justin Pearson, who were expelled on Thursday night for mounting a demonstration in favor of gun control from the State House floor. Last Thursday, the President vetoed H.J.Res. 27, a disapproval resolution that Congress passed to strike the Biden Administration's March 2023 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rulemaking that sets the bounds for which bodies of water are protected under the Clean Water Act.

3. MARCH JOBS REPORT. On Friday, the Labor Department announced that employers added 236,000 jobs in March (down from 311,000 in February), while the unemployment rate decreased to 3.5% from 3.6% in February.

4. APPEAL ON ABORTION PILL RULING. On Friday, Washington state Federal District Judge Thomas Rice ruled in a separate case that mifepristone is safe and effective and ordered the FDA to maintain access to the drug in the 17 states and the District of Columbia that brought the suit.

5. TRANSGENDER ATHLETES RULE. Last Thursday, after 2 years of outreach to stakeholders, the Department of Education released a proposed rule to establish transgender students as protected under Title IX, the 1972 law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded schools. The rule would allow public K-12 schools and colleges in limited cases to block transgender athletes from competing, including to prevent sports-related injuries and to ensure fairness in competition, but would prohibit outright bans. It would also give the Department of Education the ability to investigate and potentially withhold federal funds from schools that violate the rule once it becomes finalized. To read a summary of the rule, click here: transgender rule fact sheet.

6. EDUCATION & WORKFORCE. On April 5, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released a Funding Opportunity Announcement(FOA) for the Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program, which "will invest in public-private partnerships to develop, implement, and

scale worker-centered sector strategy training programs in H-1B industries and occupations critical to meeting the goals of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)." The program's funding source is not from the BIL itself, but rather from the pool of money that results each year from the fees paid by businesses to hire international workers with H-1B visas. The grants will focus on jobs in "advanced manufacturing; information technology; and professional, scientific, and technical occupations supporting renewable

energy, transportation, and broadband infrastructure sectors." Education and training providers, including community colleges, may serve as lead grant applicants. Others include state and local governments, trade associations, unions, and more. Required partners include employers, education and training providers, workforce system entities (e.g., workforce development boards), unions or labor-management organizations, and the State Apprenticeship Agency for applications that utilize registered apprentice-

ships from states with an SAA. The FOA includes two funding rounds, one this year and one next. The first round will award \$80 million in grants and the two rounds combined will total \$200 million. Applications for the first round are due by July 7, 2023.

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HUNTSVILLE UTILITIES' BUSINESS MATCHMAKER EVENT

May 17, 2023
Von Braun Center



Small, Minority, Women & Veteran-Owned Business Expo

Huntsville Utilities is proud to host its second Business Matchmaker event, May 17 at the Von Braun Center.

This unique expo matches large companies with local minority, women, veteran-owned, and small businesses in north Alabama looking to expand their opportunities.

Companies who want to be part of this opportunity to create jobs, relationships, savings, and community growth, should click the Business Matchmaker link at www.hsvutil.org to receive additional information and fill out the registration form.

You can register as a:

Corporate Partner (large organization looking to diversify its supplier base, routinely purchases goods or services from other, smaller businesses), or,

Vendor (small, minority, veteran, or female-owned business looking to provide goods/services to Corporate Partners).

The event is free to Corporate Partners and Vendors. Participating Corporate Partners will receive 10x10 booth space with a table and two chairs at no cost.



THE VALLEY WEEKLY
VALLEY DEATHS



NELMS MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME

2501 Carmichael Avenue NW
Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-8189

Funeral service for **MS. DIANA HOUSTON** (b. 1958) was held Saturday, April 8, at the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home.

Funeral service for **MRS. DEBRA ANN BAILEY HOBSON-HOWARD** (b. 1963) will be Saturday, April 8, at 2 p.m. at Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church with The Reverend Janice Mitchell Eason officiating.

Memorial service for **MRS. HADASSAH ALYNE LEE** (b. 1981) was held Thursday, April 6, at the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Minister Robert Clark officiating.

Funeral service for **MR. JAMES EARL JEFFERSON** was Sunday, April 2, in the Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with The Reverend Larry Petty officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME

4315 Oakwood Avenue NW
Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481

Funeral service for **MRS. CAROLYN "SIS SHARP" WADE HAMMONDS** (b. 1931) will be announced at a later date.

Funeral service for **MRS. JANICE MITCHELL ISBELL** (b. 1956) will be 2 p.m., Saturday, April 15, at the Fellowship of Faith Church (3703 Memorial Pkwy NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Reverend Dr. Laurie McCaulley officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. ROSETTA COATS WILLIAMS** (b. 1950) was held Saturday, April 8, at the New Beginning Christian Church (604 Jordan Ln NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Errol Davis officiating.

Memorial service for **MR. MICHAEL AINSLEY SPRINGER** (b. 1955) will be held at 12 p.m., Saturday, April 8, at the Royal Chapel of Memories (4315 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Reverend Endia J. Scruggs officiating.

Funeral service for **MRS. CAROL BROOKS** (b. 1942) was held Friday, April 7, at the Mt. Calvary Seventh-Day Adventist Church (1201 Meadow Dr NW, Huntsville, Ala.)

Funeral service for **MRS. SUEDELLA CARTER** (b. 1944) was held Friday, April 7, at the Pine Grove Missionary Baptist Church (759 Pine Grove Rd, Harvest, Ala.) with Dr. C. Jermaine Turner officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME

2505 University Drive NW
Huntsville, AL 35816 (256) 539-9693

Funeral service for **MR. KAUHRYN "DOUGHBABY" MCCAULLEY** (b. 2007) was held, 133 Maple Street, Madison, Ala.

THE VALLEY WEEKLY
CHAMPION GAME PLAN

PRESTON BROWN

"THY WILL BE DONE"

Matthew 26: 39 says, "Going a little further, He fell with His face to the ground and prayed, my Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Have you ever been caught between what you want and what

God wants for your life? And, it was such a difficult decision that you wanted God to show you another way? You know, God gives us all certain assignments that He wants us to complete. Just like we find with Jesus. This was a very difficult decision, but aren't you glad that Jesus chose to complete His assignment, because

where would we be if He had not become the savior of the whole world? Now, some assignments are easier to handle, like getting a new job or deciding to be a coach for your son's football team. However, some assignments are more difficult, like planting a church or going into ministry or like being a

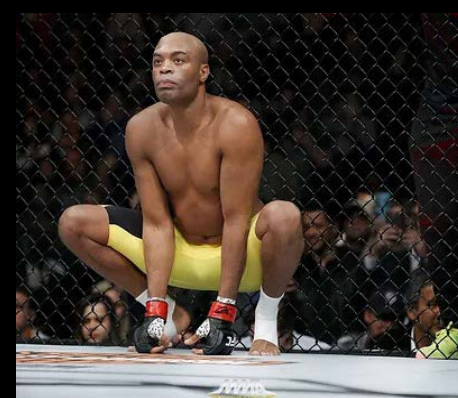


"caregiver" for an elderly person. So, whatever assignment God has given to you, I pray that you complete your assignment. I also pray that His will be done for your life. So even if we have to struggle, I pray that God gives you the strength to struggle. And,

even if you have to endure some pain, I pray that God gives you the strength to endure the pain. And even if we have our doubts, like Jesus did, God give us the strength to overcome our doubts ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters!

Make sure you purchase a copy of my book, "A CHAMPION GAME PLAN FOR LIFE," at amazon.com

APRIL 14 - ANDERSON SILVA - A Brazilian professional mixed martial artist currently signed with the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). He is a former UFC Middleweight Champion and had the longest title reign in UFC history at 2,457 days. This started in 2006 and ended in 2013 and included a UFC record 16 consecutive victories in that span. UFC president Dana White, UFC commentator Joe Rogan, and numerous mixed martial arts (MMA) analysts have named Silva the greatest mixed martial artist of all-time. Silva has said on numerous occasions that he believes long-time friend and former UFC Lightweight Champion and UFC Welterweight Champion B.J. Penn to be the greatest pound-for-pound fighter in the history of the sport. - BlackCelebrityBirthdays.com



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A New Generation Of Service

Junior's Academic Success Stellar

Jihad El-Amin, a motivated high school junior attending New Century Technology High School has achieved remarkable success in academics and leadership.

Jihad is currently the president of the Huntsville Kappa League and the vice president of the Student Government Association. He boasts an impressive unweighted GPA of 3.95 and a weighted GPA of 4.2.

Moreover, Jihad has been accepted to prestigious Ivy League programs, such as the Cornell Summer Program.

With a passion for STEM, Jihad plans to major in computer science, neuroscience or engineering. He has designed multiple projects, including

a self-sufficient water filter, showcasing his exceptional skills and innovative thinking.



Additionally, he is an accomplished bodybuilder, painter, videographer, and musician, displaying his versatility and creativity.

Despite his focus on STEM, Jihad is also interested in politics and aims to pursue a career in this field. His outstanding achievements and leadership skills make him a role model for young students aspiring to excel in their academic and personal pursuits.

Jihad possesses unwavering dedication, perseverance, and remarkable achievements.

His success story is not only a testament to his talent but also to his character and work ethic. TVW and the Valley community wish him all the best in his future endeavors and are confident that he will continue to make a positive impact on society with his skills and leadership abilities.

THE VALLEY WEEKLY

VALLEY EVENTS

HAPPENINGS, ACTIVITIES & MORE!

April 15
Campin' with K.D.
First Annual Youth Football Camp
Hazel Green Athletic Association
Billy Hunt Park
168 Carriger Road
Hazel Green, Ala.
7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

6th Annual Mustang
Mud Run 5K/Obstacle
Run
325 Slaughter Road
Madison, Ala. - 8:30 a.m.

April 22
Huntsville Music+ Comedy Jam
Lowe Mill Arts & Entertainment
2211 Seminole Drive SW
Huntsville, Ala.-7:30 a.m.

Crawfish Festival
The Camp
5909 University Drive
Huntsville, Ala. - 12 noon

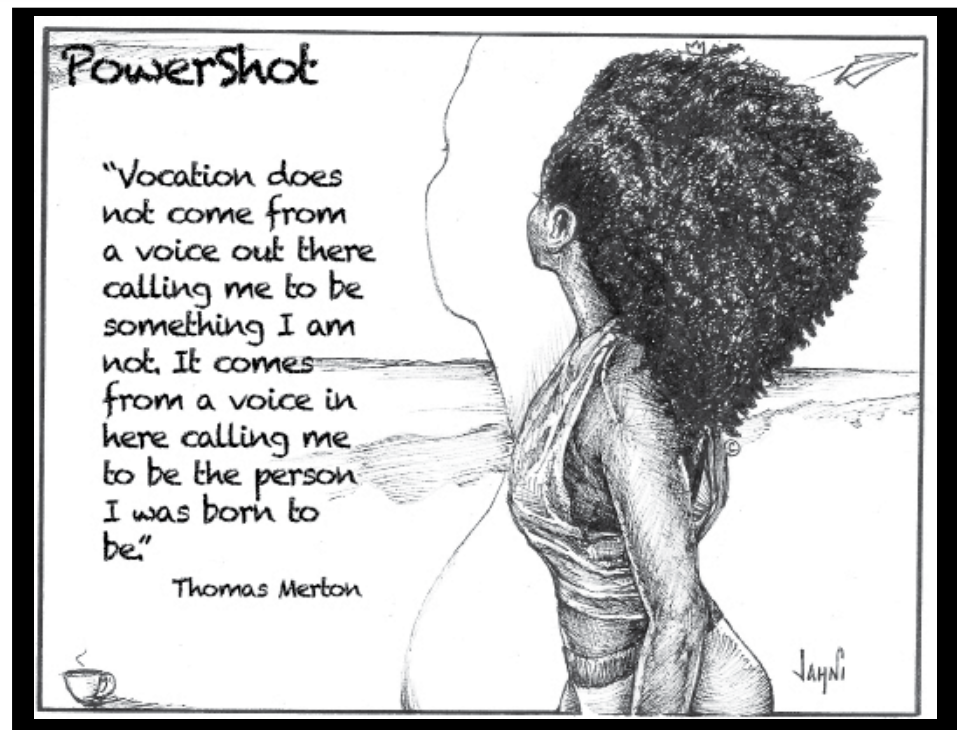
April 24-May 20
"The Bias Inside Us"
Host: City of Huntsville
HudsonAlpha Institute

May 4-7
The Golden Class of 1973
Alabama A&M University
Check-In: Embassy-May 4
3-7 p.m.

May 5
Spring Commencement 1
(Graduate Students)
Speaker: Mac McCutcheon
Madison County Commission
The Event Center - 9 a.m.

148th Founder's Day Luncheon
Ernest Knight Reception
Center - 1:30-3 p.m.

Spring Commencement 2
(Undergraduates)
Speaker: Rep. Laura Hall
State of Alabama
District 19
The Event Center
5 p.m.



***Neither love nor terror makes one blind:
indifference makes one blind."***

- James Baldwin

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HPAC Gala Set June 3

The Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter (HPAC) of the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association, Inc., will hold its 19th Annual Leadership Awards Gala on Saturday, June 3, at 6 p.m. in the Ernest L. Knight Reception Center on the AAMU campus.

The chapter honors major contributions to the chapter, community by awarding 11 distinct categories: **Community/Civic Award** – Ms. Leslie Ecklund, CEO, Burritt Museum; **Corporate Award** – Dr. Elizabeth (Beth) Richardson, President, Progress Bank Madison Market; **Education Award** – Dr. Barbara Cady, Retired Professor, Alabama A&M University; **Government/Industry Award** – Mr. Ronald Simon, Federal Government Employee; **Governmental Relations Award** – Mr. Curtis Summerville, Retired, Alabama State Trooper; **Outstanding Service Award** – Reverend Dr. Julius R. Scruggs, Pastor Emeritus, First Missionary Baptist Church; **Religion Award** – Reverend Tramaine Snodgrass, Pastor, Blackburn Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America; **Small Business Award** – Ms. Lillian Henderson, Financial Advisor, Merrill Lynch; **William Hooper Council Alumnus of the Year Award** – Mr. Michael Ford, Corporate Vice President, Global Workplace Services, Microsoft Corporation; **Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter, Inc., Alumna of the Year Award** – Ms. Vanessa Williams, Retired, Accountant, Redstone Arsenal; **Huntsville Progressive Alumni Chapter, Inc., Alumnus of the Year Award** – Mr. Gregory Boyd, Feeder Driver, United Parcel Service (UPS).

For more information, call (256) 651-9329.



Lessons from Defendant Trump: Grow Up to Be Like Children

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” -Proverbs 22:6.

Former President Donald Trump remains one of the 21st century's most influential persons.

His fingerprints still remain on so many major news events that we encounter - with the possible exception of severe storms and the threat of tornados.

Russia's war with Ukraine, the nationwide epidemic of mass shootings, abortion rights battles, and climate change regulations, for example, all bear his fingerprints.



However, Trump's April 4th arraignment is a prime example of a problem that should've been addressed and corrected in his childhood.

As children, most of us were taught two very basic overlapping rules of competition and courtesy: Work hard and play hard to win, and Should you lose, accept it graciously

and move on.

Trump's charges in Fulton County, Georgia, Washington DC, and the January 6 insurrection all result from the simple childhood lesson that either his parents did not teach him well, or he just defiantly refused to listen and comply: lose graciously and move on.

This Trump arraignment carries three important lessons:

- 1) “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor” Exodus 20:16. It's common knowledge that Trump's attorneys will refrain from letting him testify in court due to his reputation for dishonesty!
- 2) Leadership magnifies defects. For all of us, the brighter the spotlight, the more glaring will be our imperfections. Correct now all that you can before it becomes too late.
- 3) “For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” Galatians 6:7. For most of his adult life, Trump has shown a disregard for African Americans, women, and the rule of law; his 2016 campaign battle cry “Lock her up” targeted opponent Hillary Clinton.

Now it appears as though Fulton County and Manhattan District Attorneys Fani Willis and Alvin Bragg, Special Prosecutor Jack Smith, and adult movie (porn, y'all) star Stormy Daniels could each or together indirectly engineer his downfall.

You and I will not lead perfect lives but with Donald Trump as a poster child, we should learn every day these three earlier rules of life:

Don't get Trumped.



Tim Allston
Leadership Coach & Three-time
Amazon Best-Selling Author
Leading from the Middle
leadingfromthemiddle@gmail.com

Governor's Official Checks out A&M ELO Program

The Experiential Learning Opportunity (ELO) Office in the College of Business and Public Affairs (COBPA) received a special visit from an official from the Office of the Governor on Monday, March 20.

Stacia Robinson, director of the Alabama Office of Minority Affairs, visited the ELO Office to witness the successful internship program between COBPA students and Business Strategies & Solutions and Boss Kidz Inc., both owned by Vanessa Hardiman. Hardiman has partnered with the ELO Program in placing interns with virtual experiential learning opportunities with her organization since 2021.

“She has done a phenomenal job mentoring and providing professional development with COBPA



learners,” commented Sonya S. Merritt, coordinator for the ELO Program at AAMU. “Ms. Hardiman has been in communication with the Alabama Office of Minority Affairs in the Governor's Office, regarding her business and has applauded her involvement with the ELO Program.”

Robinson was eager to visit the AAMU College of Business and Public Affairs students that have served as

an intern with Ms. Hardiman.

Caption: *Pictured above (l-r): Sonya S. Merritt, ELO program coordinator; Stacie Robinson, Alabama Office of Minority Affairs; Dr. Charles Robinson, COBPA dean; Vanessa Hardiman, owner, Business Strategies & Solutions and Boss Kidz Inc.; and Dr. Aretha Hill, associate dean, COBPA. (Photo by J. Saintjones)*

Organizations Join Forces to Host STEAMposium

The 100 Black Men of Greater Huntsville Inc., in partnership with the Greater Huntsville Chapter of The Links Inc., the National Society of Black Engineers Professionals North Alabama Chapter, and National Coalition of 100 Black Women (Huntsville) are hosting the 2023

STEAMposium, April 29.

The theme is “ESTEAM, Empowering Youth through Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.” It is a platform to educate and expose participants to the various opportunities within the STEAM career fields. Exciting programs are

planned for the teens and important information to share with their parents. Sponsorship to assist in funding STEAM-related activities and programming needs is urged. For more information, call James Matthewson Jr, at (256) 714-8921 or email vp.programs@100bmogh.com.

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AAMU Announces Founder's Day Speaker

Alabama A&M University alumna ShaVonne Cammack will be the 2023 Founder's Day speaker on Friday, May 5, in the Bradford Auditorium of Buchanan Hall at 12 noon.

Cammack is a Deloitte Senior Consultant, specializing in IT Modernization for Federal Government clients. She is a Certified Computing Technology Industry Association Security + professional (CompTIA Security+) and a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP), as well as ITIL and LSS certified. She has 13-plus years' experience in IT Strategy, IT Service Management and Solution Design/Architecture.

Cammack helps her clients rationalize their IT portfolio to determine cost savings, design and deliver IT services to meet mission demands more effectively and improve their overall IT operations. With customer service delivery as the focal point, Cammack works with stakeholders to define the best strategy and roadmap to modernize their enterprise IT posture.

Cammack actively serves on several boards, both professional and per-

sonal, and she is affiliated with several organizations and activities, including J.F. Drake State Community and Technical College Foundation Board member; Deloitte Black & Allies Community President; Zeta Phi Beta Sorority



Inc., member; Leadership Greater Huntsville (spark), planning committee member; Leadership Greater Huntsville, Graduate, Focus 43 Class; Featured in Voyage ATL magazine; 2023 Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering Women in STEM panelist; and 2022 HBCU Technology Panel Discussion moderator.

Cammack earned the BA degree in communications from Alabama A&M Uni-

versity, is a 2020 Cornell University graduate and holds several additional professional certifications. Along with serving her community in several capacities, Cammack serves as the Deloitte/AAMU liaison, where she worked alongside Deloitte Global COO and team to successfully set up the Deloitte Technology Pathway pilot program at AAMU. The Technology Pathway program extended internship opportunities and mentorship to 22 qualified AAMU students.

Cammack is passionate about HBCU students and devotes a significant amount of time working to ensure the next generation of HBCU graduates are prepared to enter corporate America.

In her spare time, she enjoys watching football, hiking, and preparing delicious meals for her family and friends. She is also a published author and lifestyle brand CEO (www.letseatbook.com).

She is happily married to Mr. Erroll Cammack II, who is also a graduate of Alabama A&M University, and they have two children, Shaniah (17) and Trey (10).



WWII Veteran Honored at 105th Birthday Celebration

by Carol Drake-Harris and Robert Drake
(Photos by Anthony Gibson)

Representatives from the office of Senator Tommy Tuberville and the North Alabama Veterans Coalition were on hand to present tokens of appreciation to John Drake, Sr. of Harvest, Alabama on Saturday, March 25, 2023 at the Indian Creek P.B. Church Fellowship Hall. Prayer was given by Elder Timothy Rainey, Pastor of the Indian Creek P.B. Church. Approximately two hundred people consisting of family, friends, neighbors and special guests attended the "drop-in" celebration.

The military-themed celebration was chosen because of Mr. Drake's distinguished service in the United States Army during World War II. Mr. Drake entered the United States Army at Ft. Benning, Georgia August 2, 1942. He served in Central Europe (Rhineland) where he received the American Service Medal with two Bronze Stars. The tour of duty at the European Theatre was November 20,

1943 through October 24, 1945. His military occupational specialty was Parts Clerk Automotive 348. Mr. Drake was honorably discharged on October 30, 1945 at the rank of Tech/4.

Brian Naugher, Senior Defense Liaison for Senator Tuberville, presented a flag that had flown over the Capitol and a birthday letter from the Senator. Mrs. KC Bertling, President of the North Alabama Veterans Coalition, gave words of commendation and recognition, while Mr. Marty Kent presented a quilt of valor, a "Defenders of Freedom" coin, a book by Mrs. Bertling and an umbrella from Korea. Mr. George Baker, Chaplain of the North Alabama Veterans Coalition, presented Mr. Drake with a pin. Following the presentations, second son, Calvin Drake, sang a medley of patriotic songs. Representatives from the Buffalo Soldiers and the Tuskegee Airmen were also in attendance.

All nine children along with the foster son of Mr.

Drake and his late wife, Mrs. Mary Johnson Drake, were in attendance: Hatie Drake James, John A. Drake, Jr., Carol Drake Harris, Eulasteen Drake Abernathy (Larry), Marcia Drake, Joyce Drake, Calvin Drake (Charian), Steven Drake (Sheila), Robert Drake and foster son Eddie Horace Johnson. Eight of the ten grandchildren and eight of the ten great-grandchildren were present. Relatives from out of town included two nieces, their children and a nephew from Chattanooga, Tenn., and a niece from Jacksonville, Ala.

Guests enjoyed warm fellowship and delicious food prepared by caterer Teresa Wilson. Mr. Drake was born on March 24, 1918 in Madison County, Ala.. He resides with third daughter and primary caregiver, Eulasteen Drake Abernathy and Son-in-Love Larry Abernathy in Harvest. He enjoys watching CNN, the Game Show Network and major league baseball.

**"My soul
has grown
deep like
the rivers."**

- Langston Hughes

NAAACC Meetings

The North Alabama African American Chamber of Commerce (Huntsville) meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday at 12 noon.

The meeting location varies. Call (256) 564-7574.

ON THIS DAY

On April 14, 1865, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth at the Ford Theatre in Washington, D.C.



Rosetta James Foundation "Spotlight on Our Elders" ... Featuring

Mrs. Ruby Dickson



Mrs. Ruby Jones Dickson was born in Texarkana, Texas, on March 31, 1943, to the Reverend Elmer and Mrs. Nellie Jones. She attended New Town Elementary School and graduated from Paul Laurence Dunbar High School of Texarkana, Texas. After relocating to the New Town community, she became a member of the New Town Baptist Church. She married the late Edward Ford in 1963, and to this union four children were born: Bridgette Ford May, Edward (Jerry) Ford Jr., Stephanie Ford Shanks, and Byron Ford.

From 1968-1972, she traveled as a military wife. During her travels, she sang with the K-Town (Kaiserslautern) Gospel Singers, which led her twice to (NATO) Belgium, a vast part of Germany, and one appearance on German television. In 1972, she relocated from Oakland, Calif., (via Texarkana, Texas) to Colorado Springs, Colo. There she became a member of the New Jerusalem Baptist Church and worked with the Mission, Sunday School, choir and sang with a gospel group (The Jubilets). She was employed and retired at Hewlett-Packard.

Dickson was inspired to write a meaningful and memorable poem for her mother's retirement. This would be the beginning of her pursuit to become a God-given gift as a Christian poet. In 1988, it

was in the divine plan of God that she would return to her home in Texarkana, Texas.

She became an active member of Macedonia Baptist Church. She worked with the B.M. & E. State Convention of Texas Women's Auxiliary. It was in Texarkana that she wrote and self-published her first three books: "The Holy Spirit Speaks," "O Taste And See," and "Think On These Things." She attended a Christian workshop at the Mount Orange Baptist Church in Texarkana. The facilitator was from the Sunday School Publishing Board in Nashville Tenn. She asked him to look at the three books. He was impressed and asked her to send them to Nashville as soon as possible. In December 1998 at the Winter Board in Nashville, her first book signing was held.

In 1994, she married the late Reverend Russell

Dickson, pastor of the Unity Baptist Church, where she taught Sunday School and the Mission. Two years later, she published her last book "The Suffering Servant." In 2000, she relocated to Huntsville, Ala., and united with the St. Luke Christian Church, under the leadership of Reverend T.C. Johnson. At St. Luke, she taught the new members class on church membership, facilitated women's ministries and programs, and served as ward leader for 20 families in the congregation.

She worked in Exodus, Inc., as an administrative assistant and teacher assistant in the computer lab. She attended Calhoun Community College, earning an AA in general education. She was inducted into the National Honor Society, was on the Dean's list, was noted in "Who's Who in Junior Colleges of America," was nominated among the top 10 students of Calhoun and graduated magna cum laude. She attended Athens State University to pursue a bachelor's degree in religious studies and a minor in Christian education.

She is an author published by Townsend Press with four completed works of poetry: "The Holy Spirit Speaks," "O Taste and See," "Think on These Things" and "The Suffering Servant."

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About Local Nonprofits and City Funding

The City of Huntsville supports dozens of non-profit agencies working to provide services for residents of all ages, from helping the homeless to offering programs for teens, seniors and those with disabilities.

In the current budget year, the City has appropriated more than \$30 million to external agencies. Those funds are not only used toward agency programming, but also for operational expenses like salaries, rent and utilities.

To better assess the appropriation process and increase transparency, several groups recently delivered presentations at City Council meetings to explain how they use their allocated funds and the ways in which benefit residents. The process began in late February and will run through the end of May.

The Process

City Director of Finance Penny Smith said the presentations are part of an added examination of the appropriation process to ensure taxpayers are getting the most for their money. She said it's also a great opportunity for agen-

cies to explain what they're about, including their mission and goals.

"An agency's ability to apply or be funded is not



The Legacy Center

contingent upon their presentation," Smith said. "It simply helps us know the organization and their leadership better."

Groups that have already appeared before Council include Alabama Constitution Hall Village/EarlyWorks, Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama, Family Services Center, Community Action Agency Partnership, Partnership for a Drug Free Community and The Legacy Center Inc. (Alabama Aging Resources).

Other scheduled presentations are:
April 13: Girls Inc. Huntsville,

First Stop and the National Children's Advocacy Center
April 27: Christmas Charities Year-Round and Huntsville Botanical Garden
May 11: Fantasy Playhouse
May 25: Thrive Alabama and United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville & Tennessee Valley

Prior Vetting

City agencies that request City funding are already subject to a vetting checklist. Organizations must also provide a list of board members, recent audits, IRS designation and/or documents related to the group's 501(c)(3) designation, mission and projected use of allocations.

Smith said the agencies chosen to speak were requested by Council members and Mayor. Some have received City funds for years, while others are relatively new to the appropriation process.

"It's a great opportunity for these groups to provide an update on their operations and outcomes to the Mayor, Council and community," Smith said. "I know I've learned a lot more about the vital role these agencies play in our community. It's been very informative."

- huntsvilleal.gov



Huntsville City Council Meetings

Huntsville City Council's regular meetings are held in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

Council work sessions are also held in the Chambers of the Municipal Building on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

For more information, call (256) 427-5011.

A&M Honors Student on "Wheel of Fortune"

Tomia Gordon, a junior communications media major from Phenix City, Alabama, was a contestant on the Wednesday, April 5, "Wheel of Fortune" College Week.

"She was the only HBCU student represented," says AAMU Honors Program Assistant Director Carla Draper-Holloway. Tomia competed against students representing Texas A&M and the California-Fullerton.

Gordon also is the executive president of the AAMU Honors Program.

Draper-Holloway organized a watch party to see if Tomia would win it big. She won the episode to the tune of \$31,700.

Gordon was also



featured on the "Wheel of Fortune" College Week commercial.



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