



Since 1880

CELEBRATING 145 YEARS



Mobile County Training School Alumni Association's

Donate \$145 for 2025

Support the Mobile County Training School Alumni Association's mission to make a difference!

Help us raise funds to support our mission, as we honor and remember teachers, classmates, and family members of MCTS to commemorate the 145th anniversary of our illustrious school. Our goal is to have 2,025 donations of \$145 in 90 days. Show your love and give today!

Donate Today!

Beginning April 1st, 2025 through June 30th, 2025

Pay online by visiting www.mctswhippets.org/donations or

Pay by mail - Send Check of Money Order to MCTS Alumni Association, P.O. Box 10274, Prichard, AL 36610.

Table of Contents

Election Results.....2	Africatown Cemeteries.....6	The Africatown Collective.....16
MCTS Middle School.....3	The Heritage Space.....10	Featured Legacy Members.....18
Middle Passage Ceremonies.....5	The Isaiah O. Pinkney Leadership Fund.....15	Honoring MCTS Alumni.....24

From The President's Desk

By: Anderson Flen

"If you are who you say you are, it will show in everything you do." This powerful principle was instilled in me by my elders at an early age, and it has served as a guide through both the triumphs and challenges life has presented. It has grounded me, shaped my path, and kept me connected to the values that truly matter.

Throughout my life, I've been fortunate to be surrounded by remarkable people. These blessings have motivated me to work hard wherever I've traveled, ensuring that I left those same values in good standing. I was taught long ago that actions speak far louder than words. My father, though not formally educated, exemplified this through his steadfast values and consistent integrity.

I am reminded of the men in our Africatown community and beyond—neighbors, church members, and mentors—who, though they rarely spoke the words "I love you," communicated love clearly through their actions. Their deeds resonated deeply, teaching lessons far more enduring than mere words ever could.

One of my favorite Bible passages, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, captures the essence of this beautifully: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong doing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

Intentionality, strategy, and paying it forward—these three pillars embody the wisdom my elders passed down to me and others who were willing to embrace the truths they shared. These values were woven into the fabric of our lives, evident in every home, every community gathering, and every relationship we nurtured. To this day, I strive to live by these principles, holding fast to the rules and values that shaped me. The bonds I share with my closest high school and college friends are rooted in these same enduring truths.

In recent years, my circle has expanded to include people from many different backgrounds—individuals who don't look like those I grew up around, but who have become family in their own special ways. Among them are National Park Service employees who welcomed me into their world, sparking friendships that feel like home. From new friends in Mississippi who hosted me in their home to moments like sitting in President Abraham Lincoln's pew in a Washington, D.C. church, these connections have left lasting impressions. I've met friends in the most unexpected places—an elevator in New York City, the Plateau Cemetery, or through a letter of inquiry from the Saint Paul's Minnesota Foundation, which grew into a gift of education for generations yet to come.

These relationships, stretching from local communities to universities across the globe, have enriched my life in countless ways. They've brought blessings to Africatown, offering resources, talents, and love with open hands. All of these experiences have reaffirmed my belief in the enduring power of love and action.

"If you are who you say you are, it will show in everything you do." Let us all strive to live with love, with sincerity, and with our whole hearts and souls.



2025 Election Results

The MCTS Alumni Association held its' 2025 Election in January, below you will find the new Administration that will be installed soon.

Position	Newly Elected 2025 MCTSAA Member
President	Charles Holloway
Vice-President	Damian Marks
Recording Secretary	Keisha Flen
Financial Secretary	Geraldine Giles Hunter
Chaplain	Barbara Bell Morrisette
Parliamentarian	Les Walker
Board Members	Minnie Dewberry Belinda Harris Ronnie Perine Joyce Roberson Greg Stephens



Heartfelt Thanks for Your Support During the 2023-24 School Year

By: James N. Patterson Jr.



Dear Members of the Alumni Association:

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. As we reflect on the past school year, I am overwhelmed with immense gratitude and appreciation for the unparalleled support you have provided to Mobile County Training Middle School.

Throughout my years in education, I have rarely witnessed the level of commitment and generosity that your organization has demonstrated. Your dedication has truly set you apart, and it has been an honor to have your partnership in our journey toward academic excellence.

Our primary goal for the 2023-24 school year was to enhance the overall academic performance of our students and improve our results on the state assessment. With your generous donations, sponsorships, and unwavering support, we successfully implemented a variety of incentive programs that motivated our students to strive for excellence.

Your contributions also played a crucial role in supporting our teachers, ensuring they were equipped and encouraged to provide the highest quality education. The positive impact of your support is evident in the heightened enthusiasm and dedication observed among both students

and staff.

I am thrilled to share some remarkable news: The state report card results are in, and our grade improved from a 49 to a 67—the largest growth in the system and one of the largest in the entire state! This achievement is a testament to the hard work of our students and staff and the unwavering support of incredible partners like you. We are extremely proud of this progress and are already planning and striving to achieve an even higher grade in the coming year.

The outcomes of this journey have been nothing short of transformative, and your support has been instrumental in driving this change. As we set our sights on even greater success, we humbly ask for your continued support as we persist in our mission of academic excellence.

Words cannot fully express the depth of my gratitude for everything you have done. Your commitment to the success of Mobile County Training Middle School is truly inspiring, and I am profoundly thankful for your partnership.

Thank you once again for your remarkable support. We look forward to continuing this journey together and achieving even greater milestones in the future.



Warm Regards,

James N. Patterson Jr.

Principal, Mobile County Training Middle School

heartfelt
thanks!

State of Alabama
State Board of Education



Montgomery, Alabama

Resolution

IN RECOGNITION OF LEGISLATIVE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM AWARD

WHEREAS, the Alabama State Board of Education recognizes, appreciates, and encourages schools to implement instructional programs that result in having higher levels of performance for Alabama students; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative School Performance Recognition Program was created within the Alabama State Department of Education to reward public schools that either:

1. Demonstrate high performance by being ranked in the top 25 percent of public schools, as ranked in the school grading system.
- or
2. Demonstrate exemplary progress by improving the overall annual ranking of the school by at least one letter grade, as ranked in the school grading system; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative School Performance Recognition Program provides an opportunity for all public schools across the state an opportunity to be recognized for their positive educational advances and the outstanding academic achievement of their students:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Alabama State Board of Education does hereby commend and congratulate the Legislative School Performance Program Recognition Schools comprised of the 25 Top 25 Percent Schools and 25 Most Improved Schools listed below for their hard work and determination to improving student outcomes.

Alexander City School System

Alexander City Middle School – Most Improved

Birmingham City School System

Oliver K5 School – Most Improved

Inglennook School – Most Improved

Richard Arrington Elementary – Most Improved

Etowah County School System

Hokes Bluff Elementary School – Most Improved

Fayette County School System

Fayette Elementary School – Most Improved

Gadsden City School System

Donehoo Elementary School – Most Improved

Eura Brown Elementary School – Top 25

Hartselle City School System

Barkley Bridge Elementary School – Top 25

Homewood City School System

Edgewood Elementary School – Top 25

Shades Cahaba Elementary School – Top 25

Hoover City School System

Brock's Gap Intermediate School – Top 25

Deer Valley Elementary School – Top 25

Greystone Elementary School – Top 25

South Shades Crest Elementary School – Top 25

Huntsville City School System

Monte Sano Elementary School – Top 25

i3 Academy School System

i3 Academy Phase 1 – Most Improved

Jefferson County School System

Chalkville Elementary School – Most Improved

Legacy Prep School System

Legacy Prep – Most Improved

Macon County School System

Notasulga High School – Most Improved

Madison County School System

Lynn Fanning Elementary School – Most Improved

MAEF Public Charter School System

Acceleration Day and Evening Academy – Most Improved

Marengo County School System

Marengo High School – Most Improved

Mobile County School System

Eichold-Mertz School of Math and Science – Top 25

Mobile County Training Middle School – Most Improved

Old Shell Road Magnet School – Top 25

W H Council Traditional School – Top 25

Monroe County School System

Monroe County High School – Most Improved

Montgomery County School System

Bear Exploration Center – Top 25

Dannelly Elementary School – Most Improved

Forest Avenue Elementary School – Top 25

King Elementary – Most Improved

Loveless Academic Magnet Program High School – Top 25

Morgan County School System

Danville-Neel Elementary School – Most Improved

Mountain Brook City School System

Brookwood Forest Elementary School – Top 25

Cherokee Bend Elementary School – Top 25

Crestline Elementary School – Top 25

Mountain Brook Elementary School – Top 25

Russell County School System

Dixie Elementary School – Most Improved

Selma City School System

Clark Elementary School – Most Improved

Shelby County School System

Oak Mountain Elementary School – Top 25

Tuscaloosa City School System

Rock Quarry Elementary School – Top 25

Southview Elementary School – Most Improved

Woodland Forrest Elementary School – Most Improved

Tuscaloosa County School System

Holt High School – Most Improved

Vestavia Hills City School System

Pizitz Middle School – Top 25

Vestavia Hills Elementary Dolly Ridge – Top 25

Vestavia Hills Elementary East – Top 25

Vestavia Hills Elementary West – Top 25

Winston County School System

Winston County High School – Most Improved

Done this 13th day of February 2025

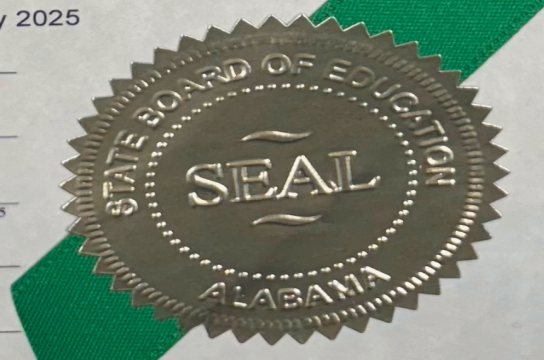
Jacquelyn M. Zeigler, District 1

Kelly M. Mooney, District 3

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D., Vice President, District 5

F. Allen Long Jr., District 7

Eric G. Mackey, Secretary and Executive Officer



Tracie West, District 2

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D., District 4

Marie Manning, President Pro Tem, District 6

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D., District 8

Governor Kay Ivey, President

Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project (MPCPMP)

By: Ann Chinn

The **Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project (MPCPMP)** was established in 2011 as a national non-profit. Our mission is to commemorate African ancestors who experienced the Middle Passage, the 2 million who perished during the trans-Atlantic voyage and the 10 million who survived. **MPCPMP** focuses primarily on this history related to the United States where 500,000 captive Africans and their innumerable descendants built this nation with their bodies, minds and spirits under a system of exploitation, inequality and injustice. In spite of the imposed restrictions and cruelties over centuries there has been a constant resistance to survive and flourish as human beings entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

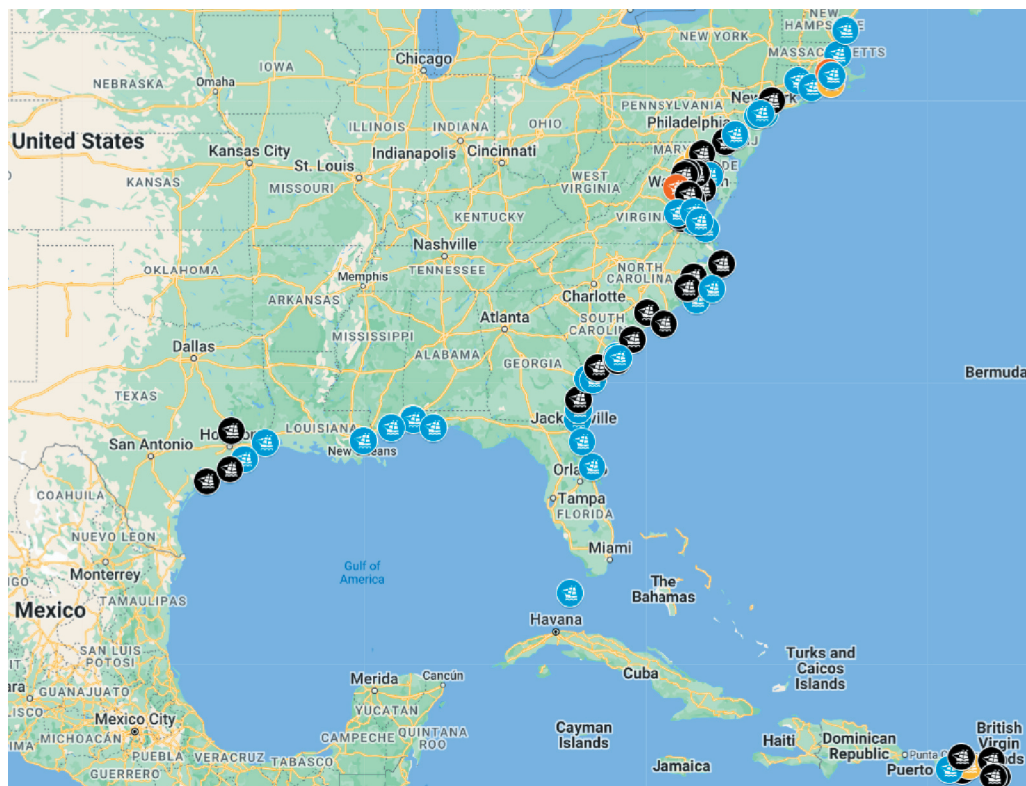


MPCPMP began by identifying the places on the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf coasts where Africans first set their feet after the weeks and months long ocean voyages. We relied, and still do, with data from *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*. Initially we identified 42 documented locations and since then with additional research the number has expanded to 90 from Maine to Texas.

In 2017 **MPCPMP** met with representatives of the Africatown community at the Main library in downtown Mobile. The initial conversation was an introduction to our organization and a discussion of whether Africatown residents would be interested in installing a historical marker acknowledging its connection to the Middle Passage. For those of us connected to **MPCPMP**, it was a landmark visit since Africatown was established by people who were transported on the documented final shipment of captives directly from Africa to the United States.

The initial response was positive followed by several trips directly to Africatown as well as participation in several community wide forums and events. Additionally, by 2018, members of the community approved the inclusion of Africatown with all the other documented U.S. Middle Passage arrival locations in a request to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Slave Route Project as a site of memory and heritage. That designation was approved in 2019 based specifically on international history (trans-Atlantic).

At the time of Africatown's marker creation, a committee was established and a collaborative effort produced the final agreed upon text and marker design. **MPCPMP** offered advice but all decisions were made by local residents and community partners. Funds were identified by Africatown and fabrication of the marker was monitored by **MPCPMP**. We are now waiting for the marker installation - hopefully in 2025.



Based on shared values and respect what has occurred over the years we have worked with Africatown is a model for collaboration in planning and implementation. The vision of **MPCPMP** encompasses honoring ancestors, encouraging local communities to hold remembrance ceremonies and install markers, educating people about the vital contributions that Africans and their descendants have made locally and nationally; and researching all places of entry of Africans during the 350 years of trans-Atlantic human trade. [link for website here]

In 2023 **MPCPMP** with a Mellon grant, funding for both physical and digital markers at arrival sites is possible through 2026. Our hope for the future is that Africatown will serve as a base for coordination and information sharing for all 90 U.S. documented Middle Passage arrival locations.

Visit <https://www.middlepassageproject.com/> to see all the documented sites.

African American Culture and Heritage

Mobile's: Memorial Gardens, Burial Grounds, Cemeteries and Graveyards.

By: Jim Ellis

Burial ground, memorial garden, cemetery and graveyard are very commonly now used somewhat interchangeably, however graveyard is a term that is historically older and generally refers to the small plots of land set aside next to churches over the centuries. Memorial gardens is also a historically old term as well as often families and communities buried their loved ones in actual gardens, with the panoply of plantings, flowers, etc. to memorialize their loved ones. As populations grew and the graveyards filled communities sought large(r) tracts of land for burials of their loved ones and these large tracts of land came to be known as cemeteries. Burial ground is defined as a place where a person is buried or where multiple people are buried and not limited to the size of the land (could be very small (1 or graves) to very large land areas (with over thousands of burials), it is also a general term that has been used to encompass all the diverse parcels of land where people were buried. The more generic term of "Public Ground" is also historically related to burials in places that were open to the general public often in publicly owned cemeteries. Burial grounds as a whole have many differing land histories as well as socio-cultural personal and community/societal management histories. Also today there is a growing movement across the country to better recognize and restore the historically older burial grounds that are being rediscovered or that have existed for over a hundred years or more. There is now a national movement in heritage preservation to recognize all the different dimensions of culture and heritage that has focused for so long solely on traditional landmarks and historical structures. *"Among its lesser-explored aspects is the vital role played by cemeteries, the repositories of our collective past that silently weave the tapestry of societal memory."* This increasingly important management style includes what is called the "rewilding" of cemeteries and recognizing them as places of history, identity and social networking of a community. These spaces are also increasingly seen as welcoming places where one honors those who have passed while creating thriving ecosystems, offering a peaceful retreat for all and creating a natural landscape of flowers and plantings that reduces maintenance costs while at the same time creating green spaces for the community as a whole. Imagine the natural plantings and wildflowers, the noise and air quality enhancement and the sustainability of these green spaces a community can provide. All these key elements however require a community centered master plan that addresses the remembrance and restoration and it also requires that we know where all these burial grounds are and how they are connected through heritage and time. Lest they be forgotten one must first become aware of what we know.

The following is a listing of African American Cemeteries known to be located in Mobile as of January 2025, it is neither exhaustive nor complete, these cemeteries are known to be Primarily African American Cemeteries based on Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) and other data. Located in Africatown Plateau, Happy Hills and Magazine Point Community: **Plateau Cemetery** consisting of the Old Plateau section (AHCC, 2008, + marker) (estab. 1876) and New Plateau section established in the 1940's, approximately 1.6 miles from the **Old Black Cemetery (aka Old Negro Cemetery, Buford Plantation Cemetery, Prichard Cemetery and African Cemetery as seen on death records and in other documentation**. The age of this cemetery is undetermined but believed to hold possibly slave burials given the land history (the earliest documented burials appear to be from 1855 and 1866)

Toulminville area: **Oaklawn Memorial Cemetery (AHC, 2018, + marker)** of Mobile was formally established in 1931 as a business entity to serve the local African American community. Oaklawn is situated within approximately 2.6 miles of the Plateau Cemetery and under 1 mile from **St. Austin Cemetery (AHCC, 2021)** (estab. 1878). Oaklawn is also located directly next door to the Catholic Cemetery (AHCC, 2010) (estab. 1848, formerly known as the Stone Street Cemetery). Based on available records there are many African American burials in the newer sections of this cemetery as well.

Washington Square area: Approximately 3.6 miles away is the city of Mobile cemetery complex known as **Magnolia Cemetery (AHCC, + marker)** (estab. 1836). **Magnolia Cemetery #2 or Little Magnolia Cemetery** is the primarily African American burial ground in this complex, although many African Americans are buried as well in the main section of the cemetery. Also associated with this cemetery is the **Magnolia Cemetery Annex (or Cemetery #3)** and then directly to the north of Little Magnolia Cemetery is an approximately 10-19 acre parcel owned by the City that was an early burial ground that began in the mid to late 1800's with an estimated 4,000 unmarked graves believed to be primarily African-American burials. It is recognized as the **Magnolia Cemetery Public Ground cemetery**. (*). Originally as large as 50 acres, the history in this area remains to be told.

Farther away: Located approximately 6 miles to the west in the College Park area the historically important African American Sand Town community (AHC marker) (estab. 1845 or earlier) where the Sand Town Cemetery (aka Rising Sons Cemetery) is located. It has a documented 1861 burial (headstone). Approximately 12 miles from Oaklawn in the McVoy area is **Casher Community Cemetery (AHCC 2009, estab. 1887)**, it is located off of present day Dauphin Island Parkway (formerly Cedar Point Road). Approx. 3 miles northwest of Casher, there is also the **Richardson/**

Frazier/Crawford Cemetery (est. late 1800's) in the *Spring Valley area* of Mobile.

Lost Black Cemeteries: In a 1979 memo to the City of Mobile (included in a MCHDC 1980 report in response to the memo) Henry C. Williams references the **Kelly Hill Cemetery in the Happy Hill area**. The cemetery is understood to have been buried beneath Africatown Boulevard. Additionally in this historical context there were several other cemeteries documented in the Toulminville area. Approximately 2.6 miles to the west of Oaklawn was **Lincoln Cemetery** (estab. as a “colored cemetery” in early 1900) by 1991 sections of it were developed into the present day African American **Gethsemane Cemetery** (est. 1993). Also near to Oaklawn there is mention of an **Old Crawford Cemetery** (the nature of whether this was an integrated or primarily African-American Cemetery is unknown), located off of Crawford Lane (established sometime between 1846-1882 within a half mile of Oaklawn Cemetery). The **Frazier Farm Cemetery** that was located off of present day the formerly Cedar Point Road remains a mystery but is understood to have been located on their family farm where we are told Gilliard Elementary School is located today.

*One cannot leave the context of African American Cemeteries in the broader Mobile County out of the discussion such as **Lawn Haven Cemetery**, a primarily African American Cemetery (est.1971), located in the county on the outskirts of the city of Mobile. **Gethsemane North Cemetery** (est. 1994) in Eight Mile, Prichard and previously called Gracelawn Memorial Gardens. **Whistler Citizens Cemetery** (est. 1902) is an African-American cemetery located approximately five miles north of Oaklawn Cemetery in the city of Prichard and nearby to Whispering Pines and Prichard Cemetery. On the southern edge of the city off of Bellingrath Road there also lies Laurendine Cemetery (likely an earlier cemetery associated with plantation and farm community of the late 1800’s-early 1900’s) the earliest documented grave with a marker is for a burial in 1919.*

To our knowledge, there is no currently organized effort to both document and raise the profile of all these African American Heritage sites and to identify all the other burial grounds across the City and the County that said there are two sources where “community sourced” information on such sites can be found - Find A Grave Find a Grave <https://www.findagrave.com/> - Millions of Cemetery Records through thousands of volunteers has created a community based memorial effort for those who have passed before us. Historic sites registered with the Alabama Historical Commission can now be found on the Alabama Historical Commission Historic Preservation Map Initiative and interactive map Alabama Register of Landmarks & Heritage Interactive Mapping Initiative site: <https://ahc.alabama.gov/historicpreservationmap.aspx>

All these burial grounds are connected together through a common history, churches, communities, families and the common need to care for these sacred grounds as well as the strong need to tell the stories of those who have tilled the soil, taught the children, served our communities as well as nation, built the city and county of Mobile and made what we have possible today.

The search for these historical, cultural and heritage sites continues, if you would like to join this effort and share information on burial ground that you know if as well as tell the stories of those buried there please email us at:info@africatownhpf.org

Burial places, specifically cemeteries, are the most visible public remnants of a community’s history. As public documents of human occupation, cemeteries serve as records of a community’s roots. They not only embody the community’s history, but also are proof of its members’ pride of place. They provide evidence of the struggles to continue on in the face of adversity from generation to generation. The community that truly values its heritage will make a strong fight to ensure its future.

(Cobb County Cemetery Preservation Commission. <https://www.cobbcounty.org/community-development/planning/historic-preservation/cemetery-preservation-commission>)

Rewilding Cemeteries some references and interesting reading:

* Cemeteries’ Vital Role in Preserving Our Cultural Heritage - <https://www.rollingoaksmemorialgardens.com/understanding-the-role-of-cemeteries-in-heritage-preservation/>

* Old cemeteries to get new life with rewilding program | GreenSource DFW - <https://greensourcedfw.org/articles/old-cemeteries-get-new-life-rewilding-program>

* Graveyards Are Going Native: Rewilding in Memorial Spaces - <https://www.backyardboss.net/native-rewilding-in-memorial-spaces/>

* Transforming cemeteries is about more than letting nature take over and turn it into a natural landscape — it’s a way to create spaces that honor the past and nurture the future. [Public Life After Death: How Six Cemeteries Are Reclaiming Their Role as Public Spaces](#)

REMEMBERING OUR FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES



Please become a contributing member to the
Africatown Old Plateau Cemetery Heritage Site Annual Campaign 2025

Show Your Love!!!



\$1,500 Platinum Annual Donor

- Listing on the AHPF Website For 2025
- An AHPF Africatown Healing Framed Pledge
- A Framed Handkerchief with Old Plateau Cemetery Image 2025
- An Old Plateau image Coffee Mug



\$ 1,000 Gold Annual Donor

- Listing on the AHPF website for 2025
- An AHPF Africatown Healing Pledge Certificate
- An Africatown Handkerchief with Old Plateau Cemetery Image



\$ 500 Silver Annual Donor

- Listing on the AHPF Website for 2025
- An Africatown Healing Pledge
- An AHPF Coffee Cup



All Other Supporters Any Amount of Donation

- Listing on the AHPF website for 2025

Donate Today at Africatown Heritage Preservation Foundation

<https://africatownhpf.org/donate>

2024 Lantern Walk

By: Pablo Vasquez

I first heard of Africatown in relation to the Clotilda, the last known slave ship to bring enslaved Africans over to the United States. Other than that, though, I didn't know much about this historic community. So, when I heard that I'd have the opportunity to visit Africatown for its 3rd annual Lantern Walk, the decision to go was an easy one.

I didn't quite know what to expect for this trip. I had only been to Alabama once before, and that was to visit the Equal Justice Initiative's National Memorial for Peace and Justice earlier in the year. I suppose I anticipated a similarly powerful and emotional experience, and yet, while my trip was exactly that, it was also so much more.

What I found visiting Africatown was a community deeply committed. People committed to each other, to protecting and preserving their history, to investing and creating a future, to establishing their own narratives, and to living in and honoring the present moment.

This year's Lantern Walk was dedicated to Mobile County Training School teacher Mr. Isaiah O. Pinkney, a pillar of the community who recently passed away. During the morning brunch, members of the community gathered and told stories honoring Mr. Pinkney and his legacy. Towards the end of the brunch, all of the Mobile County Training School alumni sang the school's alma mater. It was a simple, yet beautiful moment that highlighted to me, just how important the Mobile County Training School was, and is, to Africatown. I remember thinking how I didn't even know if my high school had an alma mater, let alone what the lyrics were.



There were other highlights of the trip too. The Lantern Walk itself was definitely an experience I'll never forget. We each received small lanterns that we held as we walked along a preplanned route. We visited several sites of significance, including the high school and the cemetery, and we learned about Africatown in a way that you cannot experience online. There is something to be said about physically being in a place, about putting in work to honor those who came before us, about making an effort to make an effort.

There were so many more moments and people and places that made this trip a special one in my heart. My time in Africatown moved me in a way that I still haven't fully come to terms with. All I know is, I am forever grateful that I got the opportunity to go, and I hope that I'll get to go again.

Pablo Vasquez holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in politics with a primary concentration in American politics and a secondary concentration in quantitative studies from Princeton University, and a Master of Arts degree in arts politics from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He is currently in his third and final year at the Howard University School of Law where he has served as the president of the 1L class council and as a student attorney with the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center's Movement Lawyering Clinic.

During his Spring 2024 semester, Pablo successfully completed a semester exchange program with the Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University, and it was during this exchange program that he connected with the African-American Redress Network (AARN) to work on the Black Audit Project. Pablo has been working with AARN for the past year, conducting legal research and providing legislative and policy analysis.

He helped co-author the "ADDRESSING RACIAL INEQUALITIES IN AMERICA: A United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Audit of US Black Communities - Kansas City, Missouri" report, and he is currently working with AARN and the City of College Park's Restorative Justice Commission to help advance the reparations effort in Lakeland.

The Heritage Space

By: Alexandra Jones

Narrative of Project Process:

The Heritage Space is envisioned as a centerpiece that celebrates and showcases Mobile County Training School's vital role within the broader Africatown community. Designed as a multi-use facility, it will serve as a gathering place for alumni and afterschool groups while also preserving and honoring the school's remarkable legacy. This space will feature a dedicated archive and an exhibition that chronicles the rich history and heritage of Mobile County Training School. Additionally, it will include oral history videos and provide areas to spotlight various classes celebrating their reunions. The exhibition and heritage space are expected to be unveiled to the wider school community by the end of summer 2025, highlighting its significance and ensuring its legacy endures for generations to come.

This project seeks to reshape and expand the historical narrative of Africatown, a community with a profound legacy that extends beyond its connection to the story of the Clotilda ship and enslavement. By focusing on the broader history of the area, the initiative aims to uplift and celebrate the educational, cultural, and social achievements of this historic community. At the heart of this effort is the Mobile County Training School Archive and Heritage Space, a collaboration grounded in community-based partnerships with heritage professionals. This space preserves and celebrates the intergenerational story of education in Africatown from its founding to the present day.

Preserving a Rich Educational Legacy

The Mobile County Training School Alumni Association (MCTSAA) has played a pivotal role in preserving the rich history and cultural legacy of the Mobile County Training School. This commitment ensures that future generations recognize and honor the school's impact. Central to their efforts is a space known as "The Den," a curated display of artifacts located within a building on the Mobile County Training School property. The Den serves dual purposes: as a meeting space for the MCTSAA and student groups and as a heritage exhibition area.

The Den's extensive collection includes photographs, trophies, plaques, awards, yearbooks, books, journals, historical documents, school furnishings, artwork, posters, and a range of nostalgic and personal items. Carefully curated to represent the academic, administrative, extracurricular, and cultural aspects of the school's history, the collection spans from the 1920s to the present. These items reflect the school's profound influence on its students and the Africatown community.



Recognizing the importance of preserving this collection, the MCTSAA collaborated with the local school system and a County Commissioner to undertake a significant renovation of The Den. Working closely with heritage professionals, they redesigned the space to balance historical focus with modern functionality. This transformation has enhanced The Den's role as a heritage exhibition and a space for community gatherings.

Integrating Heritage Preservation into Education

In the spring of 2024, the MCTSAA partnered with Archaeology in the Community (AITC), the Slave Wrecks Project of the Smithsonian, and the Mobile County Training School to develop a week-long program introducing students to archaeology and heritage preservation. This program was strategically designed to integrate heritage preservation education with the ongoing development of The Den as a heritage space.

During the program, students collaborated with their classroom teacher and worked under the guidance of Dr. Jones from AITC and Ms. Mitchell, the project’s curator. The program focused on teaching the concepts of tangible and intangible heritage. Its primary goal was for students to develop storyboards that would later form the basis of exhibition panels in The Den. Over the week, students engaged with heritage professionals who provided invaluable insights into the preservation and exhibition process.

Staff from the Mobile History Museum demonstrated techniques for cleaning and preserving artifacts, while students visited the Heritage House to learn how materials are used to create museum-quality exhibitions. This immersive experience equipped students with practical skills and a deeper understanding of the importance of heritage preservation.

A highlight of the program was a series of oral history interviews. Students met with 11 alumni from different eras to conduct interviews and ask questions about their experiences. These interviews, combined with artifacts from The Den and guidance from the MCTSAA, informed the development of three thematic storyboards. These storyboards, chosen by the students and approved by the alumni association, now serve as the foundation for the heritage exhibition panels. This collaborative process ensures that the exhibition reflects the perspectives and narratives most meaningful to the school community.



Community Engagement and Collecting Memorabilia

To further enrich the heritage space, the MCTSAA organized several events to engage alumni and gather photos, documents, and memorabilia for the upcoming exhibition. One such event was a “Photo Sharing” session held in July 2024. Alumni were invited to bring their photographs and documents, which were scanned on-site by Ms. Mitchell and JB Design, the exhibition designer. This gathering became a heartfelt occasion, as participants shared not only physical materials but also personal stories and memories.

Another key event took place during the Annual Lantern Walk weekend on November 2-3, 2024. This year’s theme, “Moving Past Fear to Healing—Through Truth, Justice, Education, and Love,” reflected the spirit of reconciliation and community-building. The weekend’s activities included events to honor past and present teachers and foster a sense of unity among attendees. The MCTSAA used this opportunity to inform participants about the ongoing heritage space project and encourage involvement and contributions.

Developing Exhibition Themes

To ensure the exhibition reflects the richness of the school’s history, the MCTSAA has been collaborating closely with Ms. Mitchell on the themes and text for the exhibition panels. These themes include:

- Introduction
- The Founding Era
- Building Excellence: The Baker Era
- Changes and Transformation: The 1960s
- Middle School Years
- Sports, Clubs, and Community
- What We Wear: Clothing and Uniforms
- Notable Alumni

The development process has required frequent Zoom meetings, in-person alumni gatherings, and email exchanges to accommodate the geographical spread and generational diversity of contributors. Once text is finalized, Ms. Mitchell forwards it to JB Design, which creates the exhibition panels. Currently, the MCTSAA is reviewing the first round of panels and providing feedback to ensure the final product accurately represents the school's legacy.

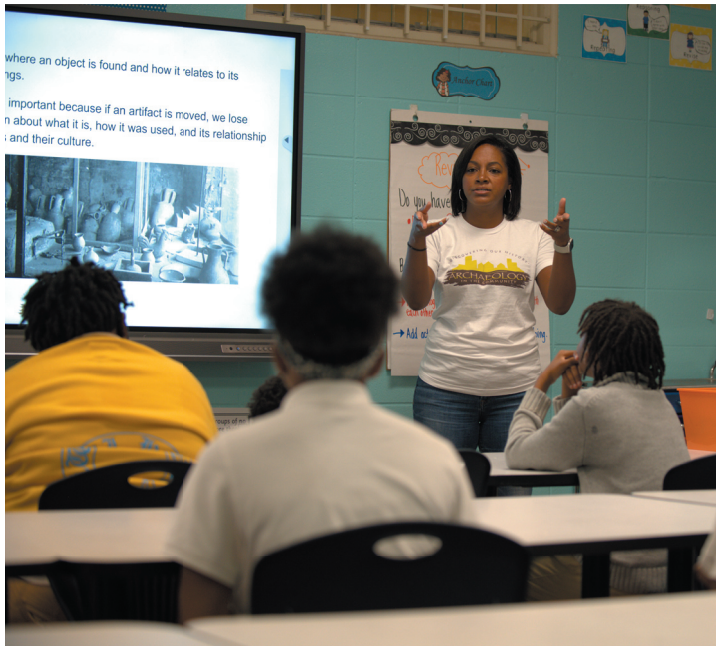
Academic Collaboration and Internship Opportunities

The educational focus of the heritage project extends to higher education through a new course at the University of South Alabama (USA) designed by Dr. Messenger. This course, scheduled for the spring 2025 semester, focuses on Africatown's history and the heritage space project. The curriculum begins with the history of the Africatown community and features guest lectures by Dr. Jones, Dr. Mitchell, and Mr. Flen. In the later weeks, students will concentrate on cataloging items owned by the MCTSAA, gaining hands-on experience in archival work and community engagement.

Five students from this course will be selected to continue their involvement through summer internships with the MCTSAA. These internships will focus on maintaining the heritage space and archives, providing students with real-world experience in heritage preservation and community-based projects.

Engaging Youth in Heritage Work

In the spring, Dr. Jones will lead a joint project involving USA students and Mobile County Training School students. This collaboration aims to foster dialogue between the two groups and inspire middle school students to consider heritage-focused careers. Participants will work together on projects, allowing the younger students to gain exposure to college-level work and build aspirations for higher education. As part of this initiative, middle school students who choose to continue in the program will receive stipends in the form of gift cards, encouraging their ongoing participation and interest in heritage preservation.



The Vision for the Heritage Space

The Heritage Space is envisioned as a centerpiece for celebrating and showcasing the Mobile County Training School's vital role within the broader Africatown community. Designed as a multi-use facility, it will serve as a gathering place for alumni and afterschool groups while preserving and honoring the school's remarkable legacy.

The space will feature:

- A dedicated archive for preserving historical documents and artifacts.
- An exhibition chronicling the rich history of Mobile County Training School, including oral history videos and displays celebrating various classes and their reunions.
- Areas for school related events and educational programs.

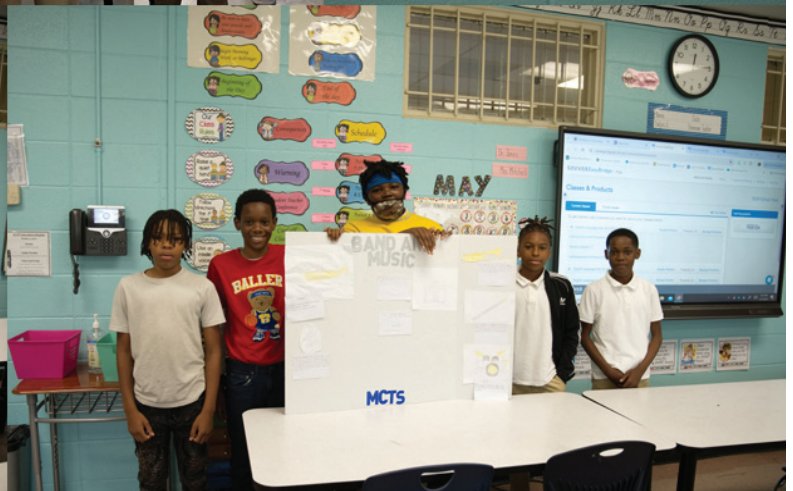
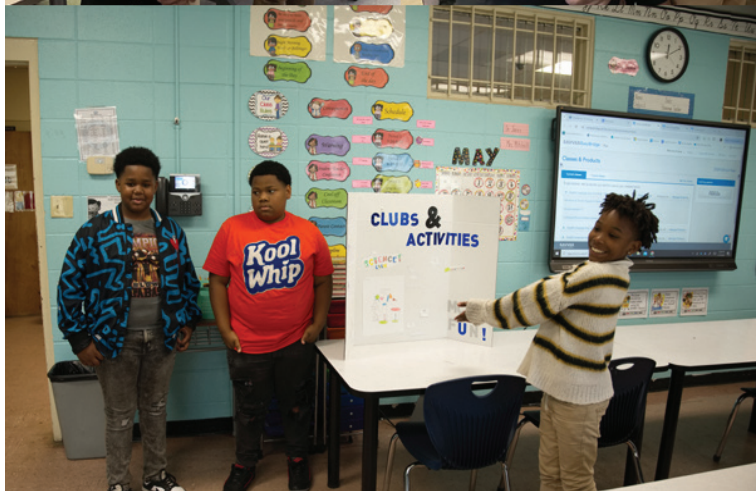
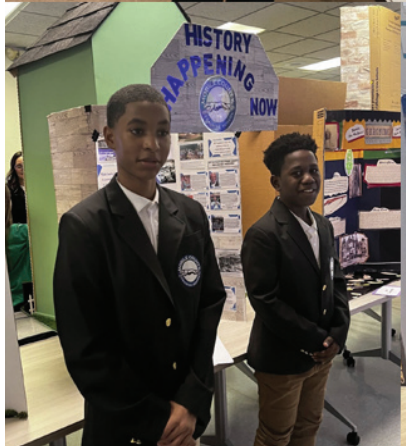
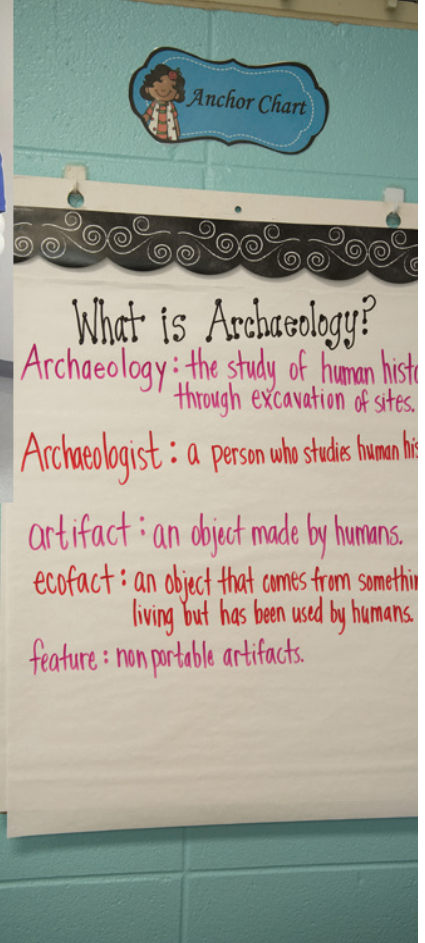
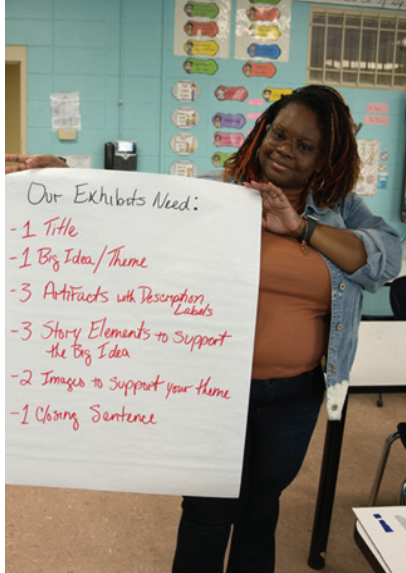
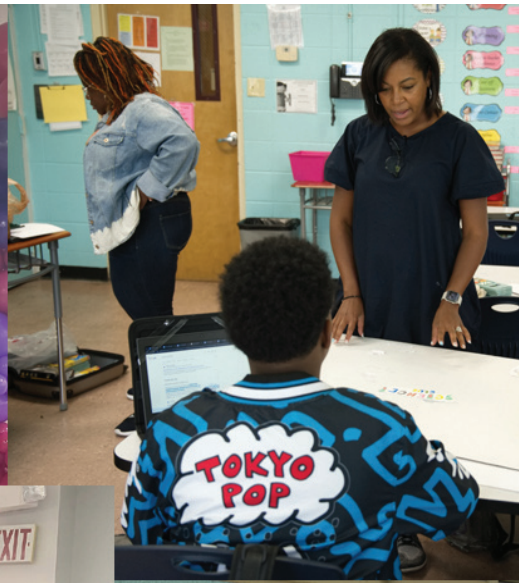
The exhibition and heritage space are set to be unveiled to the wider school community by the end of summer 2025. This milestone will highlight the significance of the project and ensure that the school's legacy endures for generations to come.

Conclusion

This project is a testament to the power of collaboration and community engagement in preserving history. By integrating heritage preservation into education, fostering intergenerational connections, and creating a dynamic heritage space, the Mobile County Training School Alumni Association has ensured that the rich legacy of Africatown's educational and cultural contributions will continue to inspire and inform future generations.

We Are Family...We Are One





The Isaiah O. Pinkney Leadership Fund

Mr. Isaiah O. Pinkney, a 1952 MCTS graduate, was a man that represented the qualities of a servant leader in all that he did.

Therefore, it gives me great honor to announce the Isaiah O. Pinkney leadership fund. This fund is open and welcomes donations from all.

The fund is housed at the Mobile Community Foundation of South Alabama. Please mail your donations to the attention to the Mobile Community Foundation of South Alabama, P.O. Box 990, Mobile, Alabama 36601 . Please note on your check, this donation is for the Isaiah O. Pinkney Leadership Fund.

You are also able to give directly on their website - <https://www.communityfoundationsa.org/>.

Please include this is for the Isaiah O. Pinkney Leadership Fund.



The Isaiah O. Pinkney Leadership Fund will support the following areas of interest:

1. Recognition of an outstanding teacher at MCTS Middle School, selected by the eighth grader students at Mobile County Training School yearly.
2. Provide scholarship support to the MCTSAA Scholar Fund for desiring high school graduating seniors.
3. An annual gift to Big Zion AME Church in recognition of a youth who represent the actions and spirit of Mr. Isaiah O. Pinkney in the church.

Dedicating the Tree Planting in Memory of Isaiah O. Pinkney





2023 Law Day Liberty Bell Award

On Friday, May 12, 2023, the Mobile Bar Association held its Annual Law Day to celebrate the rule of law in a free society. During the luncheon, we awarded 10 organizations with our Liberty Bell Award to recognize their dedicated service to the preservation and elevation of Africatown. The **Liberty Bell Award** was established more than thirty years ago by the American Bar Association to recognize an outstanding citizen, particularly a non-lawyer, who by their service has promoted a better understanding of the Constitution, encouraged respect for the law and the courts, stimulated a deeper sense of individual responsibility, contributed to the effective functioning of our government, and/or fostered a better understanding and appreciation of the rule of law.

Recipient: Local Champions of Africatown

They are:

- African Town Community Teach & Outreach
- Africatown C.H.E.S.S. - Clean Healthy Educated Safe & Sustainable
- Africatown Community Development Corporation
- Africatown Heritage Preservation Foundation
- Africatown Redevelopment Corporation
- Clotilda Descendants Association
- Legal Services of Alabama
- Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission, District 1
- Mobile County Training School Alumni Association
- Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition

The Africatown Collective

In May 2023, the Africatown community became the first group to receive the Mobile Bar Association Liberty Award. Prior to this event happening, only one source would receive the award prior to this happening. We must give thanks to vision and work of Ms. Suntrease Williams-Maynard.

From this action the Africatown Nonprofits have formed the Africatown Collective,

The AHPF's Africatown Collective Vision & its Composition

The Africatown Collective is currently a quarterly gathering of almost every faith institution and CBO in Africatown intended to serve as a means to share information, update on one another's work, collaborate on ongoing projects or new initiatives, and build camaraderie and unity. The Collective has been convening since June 12, 2023. The most recent meetings were on February 4, 2025 at the Green Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

Mobile County Training School Alumni Association...We Are One!!!



2024 MCTS Alumni Association All Classes Reunion

By: Joey Womack

Dear Mobile County Training School Alumni Association:

Thank you for the incredible honor of serving as the keynote speaker for your 2024 Banquet. Being the first non-graduate of Mobile County Training School to hold this role was deeply humbling, and it was a moment I will cherish for the rest of my life. My wife, Kelly, and I were overwhelmed by the warm reception and the profound sense of community we experienced that evening. The legacy of Mobile County Training School—the culture of excellence, resilience, and leadership that has shaped generations—resonates deeply with us, and it was a privilege to reflect on and celebrate that legacy alongside you.

As we discussed during the banquet, safeguarding the rich heritage of Mobile County Training School for future generations is a collective responsibility. I urged each of you to take intentional steps in preserving that legacy: recording your personal stories and experiences, entrusting your cherished school memorabilia to a trusted family member or someone in your network, and mentoring a young descendant of other alumni. These actions will ensure that the culture of greatness, which has become synonymous with Mobile County Training School, endures and inspires generations to come. Together, we can keep the spirit of this remarkable institution alive and thriving.

Thank you again for this extraordinary opportunity. Kelly and I will continue to hold this experience and the legacy of Mobile County Training School close to our hearts.

With gratitude and respect,
Joey Womack



Recognizing our Descendants

Kevon Williams



Simply mentioning Plateau to Kevon Williams brings a cascade of images and memories of childhood summers well spent. His heart string comes alive as he gently speaks of being nurtured and molded by the strength of family and family values. His father, grandmother, aunts and uncles are all from Plateau. While his mother is from Prichard. He is originally from Houston.

Even though the smell from the paper mill is strong in his memories, it is overshadowed by the life skills and lessons learned. He enjoyed picking food for breakfast from his grandmother's garden or being sent to pick figs from his aunt's tree. He even learned to cook and iron. Williams credits his father with creating his love of fishing and instilling in him the wisdom of water and its bounty of lessons. When faced with life's questions, he often thinks of what he learned and uses his pride of who he is and where he comes from to support his decision making.

Williams is very modest about his accomplishments. He is outstanding in both football and rugby. He played football as a wide receiver with the New Mexico Highlands Cowboys until 2012. He started Rugby in 2013 and as an exceptional player, he earned the 2014 College Sevens Player of the Year award

by Rugby Today Magazine. You would never know that he's an American rugby player who plays for the United States Sevens Rugby Team on the World Rugby Sevens Series. Or that he went to the Olympics 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris as captain of the team. In 2016 he joined the U.S. National Rugby team for the 2016 Dubai Sevens and 2016 South Africa Sevens. Williams was a consistently great starter for the 2021 - 2022 World Series.

A word to live by for Williams is persevere. He states, "Life isn't easy, but it builds and molds a person. So don't ever quit". He is deeply guided by the poem IF by Rudyard Kipling. Williams believes that this poem epitomize the teachings of the ancestors which are composure, balance, integrity, humility, and self-reliance.

He also credits his wife (a college basketball player) and two children as the motivating factors that keeps him going, even when things are difficult. As for now, Williams is enjoying downtime. This is the first time, he has not been playing sports since high school. Now in transition, he's considering all those things that he thought he might want to do and now has the option to do it.

When Kevon Williams' grandmother sent him to pick food from her garden during his summers in Plateau, she didn't know. His father taught him the wisdom and lessons of water when fishing, his father didn't know. His teachers and coaches in school in Huston, didn't know. No one knew that this boy was being groomed to become a man of integrity, humility and balance, but Kevon Williams knew. He knew that he had learned the power of perseverance. He armed himself with family as his foundation, and drew strength from the teaching of the past. Yet, he felt that he was not yet complete, until he found the poem "IF" by Rudyard Kipling. Now before him lays the challenging path he was born and groomed to follow.

Football reinforced the teachings of composure, as originally handed down by his forefathers of color. Then life sent him change and he changed from football to rugby in 2013. After only a year, he earned the 2014 College Sevens Player of the Year award by Rugby Today Magazine. Now the strength of humility was called upon as he grew in fame as an American rugby player who plays for the United States Sevens Rugby Team on the World Rugby Sevens Series. He drew upon the lessons of balance and leadership, as he went to the Olympics 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris as captain of the team. In 2016, he joined the U.S. National Rugby team for the 2016 Dubai Sevens and 2016 South Africa Sevens. Here he was consistently a great starter for the 2021 - 2022 World Series. Presently, his is at the point where he knows that for this journey, the pavement has ended and a new professional life will began.



Williams Family
First Row: younger brother Kendall, son Kevon Jr., baby sister Kera, mother Brenda, father Kenneth,
Second Row: daughter Xyah, Wife Marissa

If he could hear those who went before him, he would hear, "You are truly a man my son".

Recognizing our Descendants

Leland Labbe

My name is Leland Labbe and I am the son of Shirley Flen Labbe who graduated from Mobile County Training School in 1969. I graduated from Xavier University of Louisiana in 2000 and completed my MBA in 2004. I worked in the financial sector prior to joining the military as an Officer School Candidate in 2008. I was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant Field Artillery Officer and stationed in South Korea as a part of the Defense of the Korea Peninsula. After leaving South Korea, I returned to the United States where I completed the Captain Career School in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Then, I moved to Fort Bliss, TX and I worked in various staff positions until taking command of Bravo Battery, 4-27 Field Artillery at Fort Bliss, Texas.



While in command, my battery was nominated and earned the Henry A. Knox Award in 2014. The Henry A. Knox award is an annual award given to the best Field Artillery unit in the US Army. After winning the Henry A. Knox Award, I was nominated by the US Army as one of the top Field Artillery Officers and selected to become an Observer Controller Trainer for deploying units at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA. During my time at the National Training Center, I was nominated and selected into the Army Acquisition functional area as a Project Manager in 2016. In 2018, I was assigned to work on the software development of Army Mission Command systems.

During my time as an Acquisition Officer, my projects have consisted mainly in software development projects with defense industry partners supporting warfighters in the Department of Defense. In 2019, I was selected into the Army Acquisition Corps as a member. In 2021, I was nominated to work in the Pentagon, DC as a Department of the Army System Coordinator (DASC) where I supported major Army acquisitions efforts for Missile and Space efforts in the US Army. My efforts at the Pentagon led to the early entry of weapons into Ukraine and worked on defending the Army budget with congressional staffers.

In 2023, I was chosen to serve in an Army Fellowship position with Anduril Industries as part of the Training With Industry (TWI) program. During the fellowship, I worked on software development efforts in using Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous behaviors. In my future assignment, I will be working for the Director of the Army U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM), Picatinny Arsenal, NJ. I was notified by the HQ Department of Army that I will be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2025.

Recognizing our Descendants

Rhodesia Perine



I am Rhodesia Perine, the middle daughter of alumni Ronnie Perine. From a very young age, I knew my goal would be to contribute to the literary world in some form or fashion. My father introduced me to poems like Casey at the Bat, Annabel Lee, and Mother to Son, by Langston Hughes, leaving me with a thirst for literary art.

After earning my Bachelor's degree in Print Journalism from Southern University at New Orleans with a minor in English, I was one step closer to attaining that goal. By 2006, I had written my first novel, titled "Picking Blackberries," a coming-of-age story about a young woman raised under the iron fist of her grandmother. Since then, I've completed my second novel, "Until You've Walked in My Genes," under the pseudonym Madyme X.

In addition to my fiction works, I became a journalist, writing for a national and weekly publication, the Final Call Newspaper, and a contributing writer for other media outlets that picked up my articles.

Just when I thought that becoming an author was my ultimate goal, bringing my words to fruition has become my new passion. In 2023, I wrote, produced, and directed my first feature film called, “Cairo’s Egypt”, a love story. It’s now streaming on Amazon Prime (Freevee) and Tubi. I’m currently working on my next film. Overall, I desire to change people’s lives through words.

The Quote

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

- Martin Niemöller

This quote is attributed to the prominent German pastor Martin Niemöller. It is sometimes mistakenly referred to as a poem.

After World War II, Niemöller openly spoke about his own early complicity in Nazism and his eventual change of heart. His powerful words about guilt and responsibility still resonates today.

Perseverance and Legacy: Celebrating the Impact of MCTS Coaches and Athletes

By: Dr. Brandon Spradley

The Black Sports History Project, a collaboration between the United States Sports Academy and the Mobile County Training School (MCTS) Alumni Association, captures the rich memories and experiences of African Americans who played sports and lived in the Mobile area during a transformative era. MCTS boasts a proud tradition of producing outstanding coaches and athletes, whose legacies are brought to life through this project. Former athletes and coaches share their reflections on participating in sports during the challenging periods of segregation, discrimination, and eventual integration, offering a unique perspective on resilience and excellence. Through their stories, the project highlights some of the greatest African American coaches and athletes to emerge from Mobile from the 1950s to the 1980s, celebrating their significant contributions to sports and the broader community.



The accomplishments of MCTS athletes and coaches like Curtis Horton, Theodore Spradley III, Larry Shears, Norman Hill, A.C. Mosley, and William Clark stand as a testament to their unwavering spirit. They became role models in their community, proving that hard work, dedication, and teamwork could lead to extraordinary success. Whether competing in athletic competitions or mentoring younger athletes, their passion and drive served as an inspiration to generations of students and community members alike. Coaches like Curtis Horton and William Clark instilled discipline and a strong work ethic in their players, teaching them to strive for excellence no matter the circumstances. Their efforts helped MCTS produce individuals who carried these lessons of perseverance into their personal and professional lives.

The significance of this initiative extends beyond sports history, serving as a broader cultural preservation effort. It highlights the role of MCTS in empowering individuals during a pivotal era, providing a platform to share their challenges, triumphs, and legacies. Through interviews and documented accounts, this project offers an authentic window into the past, bridging the gap between history and modern-day understanding. It celebrates the enduring impact of MCTS on Mobile and beyond, ensuring that the stories of its athletes and coaches continue to inspire and resonate across generations. The project allows current and future generations to connect with the experiences of those who paved the way in sports, education, and life.

Today, the legacy of MCTS reminds us of the power of determination to overcome obstacles. The stories of these athletes and coaches are not just about victories on the field—they are about the ability to rise above challenges and inspire others. By honoring their perseverance, we celebrate a legacy that continues to motivate athletes and communities to this day. MCTS stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through hard work, resilience, and the unwavering pursuit of excellence.

Link to the Black Sports History Project:
<https://ussa.libguides.com/sportshistoryproject>



Judge praised as “Full Package”

Appenteng says she saw lawyers as having great potential to serve

Article from: Chicago Daily Law Bulletin By: Patricia Manson

At her investiture as a U.S. magistrate judge for the Northern District of Illinois, Jeannice Williams Appenteng reflected on what it means to be a Black woman serving on the bench.

“Many have said it before and it remains true: We are our ancestors’ wildest dream come true,” Appenteng said.

Appenteng is the first Black woman to serve as a magistrate judge on the Chicago-based court.

Speaking to her mentor; U.S. District Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman, who also is Black, Appenteng said the women’s respective ancestors likely could not have envisioned how far their descendants would advance in society.

“They could only dream of their descendants sitting in these seats, presiding over civil and criminal cases of all types, of all people of this nation,” Appenteng said. “And they could probably never dream of me actually swearing in new citizens to this country, when they themselves were denied that very thing, to be welcomed and to be counted as a full citizen.”

In fact, Appenteng herself is a little surprised she is serving on the bench.

“I never would have thought when I started law school that this is where I could have even ended up, let alone where I would end up,” she said to the friends, relatives and other well-wishers who gathered in the ceremonial courtroom in the Dirksen Federal Courthouse for her investiture Friday.

But others had expected Appenteng to go far in her career.

“Jeannice was thoughtful, she was always, always prepared, and she showed really extraordinary judgement in the way she approached her cases and a sense of fairness,” said Timothy J. Storino of Dentons, who was Appenteng’s supervisor for a time in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Illinois.

Longtime friend Lalan Gilkey-Johnson said Appenteng “is the whole package”



“She has integrity, patience, and a passion for service,” said Gilkey-Johnson, deputy general counsel of GE Appliances. “She consistently puts others before herself.”

Ronald S. Safer of Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP also described Appenteng as a “fair-minded, kind, compassionate” person.

But Appenteng can be tough when necessary, Safer said.

“If anyone mistakes that kindness for softness” he said “they will need God’s help.”

Gilkey-Johnson, Safer and Appenteng all worked at the law firm then named Schiff Hardin LLP.

Appenteng attended Georgetown University and then worked at a middle school in New Orleans for five years. She was assigned to the school by a non-profit

organizations established to provide support for pre-teen, at-risk, Black males.

She would have been happy to stay at the job, Appenteng said at the investiture, but “an urge and a passion to do more” led her to a career in the law.



"I saw that the people that had the greatest potential to reach more, to help people in greater numbers, were lawyers," she said. "And I thought to myself 'Well, I can do that. I can go to law school too.'"

One week after Appenteng began her studies at Tulane University School of Law in August 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans and the surrounding area.

"The city was utterly devastated and destroyed," Appenteng said, her voice breaking. "Seeing it that way was tough."

With Tulane closed and no other law school willing to accept them, Appenteng said, she and her classmates went their separate ways.

Appenteng went to Chicago, where she got a job with Schiff Hardin, now named ArentFox Schiff LLP.

Appenteng and her classmates returned to Tulane in January 2006 to complete the 2005-06 school year.

"What we came back to was a law school boot camp," Appenteng said. "We took an entire year of law school in six months."

After graduating from Tulane, Appenteng served as a judicial law clerk. She was law clerk first to now-retired U.S. District Judge James A. Beaty Jr. of the Middle District of North Carolina and later to Coleman at the Northern District of Illinois.

At the investiture, Beaty made the motion to administer the oath of office. Coleman then swore in Appenteng while her husband, Kwabena A. Appenteng Jr., held a Bible that had belonged to her grandparents.

Spectators clapped, cheered and whistled as Kwabena Appenteng, office managing shareholder at Littler, helped his wife put on her robe.

The noise died down briefly Appenteng went up to the bench and greeted each judge individually, but started up again when she took her seat.

Between her two judicial clerkships, Appenteng served for five years as an associate in ArentFox Schiff's Chicago office. She then joined the U.S. Attorney's Office.

One case she handled was the successful prosecution of R&B singer R. Kelly on charges of making child pornography and enticing minors for sex.

While some prosecutors might shy away from handling such an emotionally wrenching case, Storino said, Appenteng tackled it head-on.

"I was not at all surprised when I saw her give a voice to and bring justice for those little girls in the R. Kelly trial," she said. "My friend is the whole package."

In June 2023, the active district judges in Northern Illinois selected Appenteng to fill the vacancy created when U. S. Magistrate Judge Jeffrey I. Cummings was elevated to the position of district judge.

The duties of magistrate judges including conducting preliminary proceedings in criminal cases and ruling on pretrial matters in civil cases referred to them by district judges. Magistrate judges also conduct settlement conferences and preside over the trial of civil cases and misdemeanor cases with the consent of the parties.

Appenteng was sworn in by Chief U.S. District Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer in a private ceremony in October 2023. Pallmeyer presided over the investiture on Friday.

At the investiture, Coleman and Beaty said qualities like a knowledge of the law, enthusiasm, confidence and a willingness to work hard were among the reasons they hired Appenteng.

But Beaty confessed that the most important quality he saw in Appenteng "was just her downright likability."



Aviation Plane Renamed after Lt. George Hardy, Tuskegee Airman

Original Article By: Delaware State University

Lt. Col. George Hardy, a highly decorated Tuskegee Airman and Pilot, is now celebrated as the name of one of Delaware State University's Aviation planes.

One of the DSU Aviation Program's Piper Arrow aircraft is now the namesake of Lt. Col. Hardy after an Oct. 22 ceremony at the Delaware Airpark to rename the plane in honor of his aviation career and contributions as a veteran.

Lt. Col. Hardy – Who is 99 years old, a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and currently resides in Sarasota, Fla. – could not attend the ceremony.

As a Tuskegee Airman, Lt. Col. Hardy was one of the first African Americans to fly for the U.S. in a military conflict. During World War II, he flew 21 conflict missions, and later flew 45 and 70 in the Korean War and the Vietnam War. In those missions, he flew P-51s, B-29s, and AC 119K Gunships.

During his military service, he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering (1957) and a Master of Science Degree in Systems Engineering-Reliability (1964), both from the U.S. Air Force Institute of Technology.

As an Air Force pilot and officer, Lt. Col. Hardy's military awards and honors include a Distinguished Flying Cross, an Air Medal with 11 Oak Leaf Clusters, two Presidential Unit Citations, and a Congressional Gold Medal.

After a 28-year military career, Lt. Col. Hardy put in another exemplary 17 years as a project manager for General Telephone & Electronics before retiring at age 64.

After moving permanently in 2003 to Sarasota, Fla., Lt. Col. Hardy continued to make significant contributions in Florida through his civic, business and public engagements. Over the last three decades, he has been actively engaged in advocacy on behalf of military veterans, and he continues to be living history due to his experience and legacy as a Tuskegee Airman.



Robert D. Bowie, Board Chairman of Legacy Bridges, said the importance of the ceremony goes beyond the renaming of the aircraft.

"The efforts and accomplishments of Lt. Col. Hardy and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen opened the doors for people of color," Mr. Bowie said. "I would suggest that the Tuskegee Experiment contributed to the desegregation of the U.S. military and federal government."



In this photo: (L-r) Retired Brig. Gen. Robert D. Bowie and Dr. Joi Spraggins, Board Chairman and Founder/CEO of Legacy Bridges STEM Academy Inc., respectively; Soledad Quaninoo; and Legacy Bridges Board Member Andrew Holloway all pose at DSU's Piper Arrow aircraft that now bears the name of Lt. Col. George "Tall In The Saddle" Hardy, who was a WWII pilot for the legendary Tuskegee Airmen.

"We need to treat Black institutions and Black people with the level of distinction that we deserve," DSU President Tony Allen said. "And certainly Lt. Col. Hardy is that person."

The Renaming Ceremony was held jointly by Chesapeake Utilities, Legacy Bridges STEM Academy, Inc., DSU's Division of Institutional Advancement and its Aviation Program.

Robert D. Bowie, Board Chairman of Legacy Bridges,

The Cheese Wagon

By: Ronnie Perine

The years 1955- 1960 I was a student at Martha Thomas Elementary School located in Whistler, Alabama. Those were the years where students remained with teachers all day. For us Whistlernites, it was Ms. Moore-1st grade, Ms. Walker 2nd grade, Ms. Minnie 3rd grade, Ms. Estelle 4th grade, Ms. Burroughs 5th grade and Ms. Annie Mae 6th grade. These lovely ladies were our parents away from home. It was a simple place in time. We had a sense of being loved, nurtured, and protected. Segregation was the law of the land of the land. We were subjected to both De jure segregation (mandated by law) and De facto segregation (not mandated by law but still practiced). However, if there existed a better way of life, we simple were unaware as children. Simple put: we did not miss that what we never had.

Then the fall of 1961. Divorce and relocation shipped me from Whistler to Axis, Alabama. A quaint, but remote, community nestled in the woodlands of north Mobile County. It was quite a new experience and adjustment. However, there was a silver lining. Living in Axis meant that I would be riding the cheese wagon (school bus) to M.C.T.S. Because of segregation, we would be bussed some 20 miles or more from Axis to Plateau, Al. (Africatown). In a way, I felt lucky to be on that bus. Had it not been for Jim Crow, I would have never had the opportunity to attend MCTS (County).

I digressed. Growing up in Whistler, MCTS was legendary in my young mind and heart. Most of the high school students went to County. County was known to have great athletic programs. I remember the Williams brothers: Adol[h, Clyde, Franklin, and Billy. I knew Billy Williams before he became BILLY WILLIAMS! Whistler also had Tommie Agee, Carl Jordan, Willie Holloman, and many more. I had heard of legendary ball players from Plateau, Magazine Point, Happy Hill, and other surrounding communities. Names like Leo Dozier, Cleon Jones, Vanny Penn, Willie Mathews, James Snell, Tony Hope and the list goes on and on. So you see, coming to County was really a Big Deal.

Now I had never rode on a school bus when I relocated to Axis. When I saw the bus coming, it looked like a big block of cheese on wheels. We all boarded and began that journey to Mobile County Training School. When we finally when we arrived, I was overwhelmed with excitement. Students far and near old and young mingling together. For the first time in my educational journey, we did not keep the same teacher. We actually changed classes. Secondly, there were men teachers that were not coaches. Go Figure!

The men and women of M.C.T.S. were not only outstanding educators, they were also outstanding role models. Men like Mr. Merriweather, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Neal, Mr. Evans, Mr. Horton, and the list goes on. Super women like Mrs. Franklin, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Butler. Ms. Burroughs, Mrs. McCants and a parade of other outstanding women.

County was much more than a field of dreams for athletes. We experienced so many other endeavors. Student government, industrial arts, social clubs, academic clubs, foreign language clubs, student patrol and inspections (Big Brothers and Big Sisters), Band, choir, cheerleaders, majorettes, and many more activities.

I remember the weekly assembly programs; students were given an opportunity to stand and deliver before a captive audience. How can I forget those great teachers/faculty talent shows. Those were truly, the gool ole days.

For five years, I rode the cheese wagon. Traveling from Axis to Saraland to Plateau, so many memories. The cheese wagon got to be my best friend. You might say, we knew each other very well. That was over 60 years ago. Jim Crow, segregation, and the faithful cheese wagon gave me the opportunity to one day wear the royal blue and white of Mobile County Training School. And my senior year, the Red Tie!!!!





MOBILE COUNTY TRAINING SCHOOL
Alumni Association Scholarship Committee
Post Office Box 11362
Chickasaw, Alabama 36671
<http://www.mctswhippets.org>
"Another Step Forward"

Scholarship Awards Criteria

Note: All Applications Must be Postmarked by March 31, 2025

- 1) Applicant must be a descendant of an MCTS high school alumni, attended or descendant of MCTS Middle School, faculty, or staff member.
- 2) Scholarship applications will be accepted from graduating High School Seniors with at least a 2.5 GPA based on a 4.0 scale.
- 3) Applicant must include an official 3x5 senior photograph with the Scholarship application.
- 4) Applicants must provide an official transcript; including SAT or ACT results, with the application.
- 5) The Transcript must be an official copy bearing the School's Seal. The Transcript is to be placed in an envelope secured by the Official School Stamp over the sealed flap.
- 6) Two signed letters of Recommendation (one from school and one from the community).
- 7) Winners will be given an Award Letter.
- 8) One-half of the scholarship amount will be disbursed each semester upon receipt of proof of registration, a copy of schedule and copy of student identification, or fee payment slip.
- 9) Applicant must submit an essay. (Paper should be one-typed pages, doubled-spaced, 12-point font, and have one-inch margins). The paper's topic should be MCTS history and activities (at least two) or individuals (at least two) recognized at Alumni Banquet associated with MCTS. Applicant **MUST KNOW** the content on essay and **MUST BE** knowledgeable of MCTS History. Please see the website <http://www.mctswhippets.org> for pertinent information. Be sure to reference sources of information.
- 10) Applicant's parent/guardian must sign application.
- 11) Applicants will be contacted and scheduled for an interview with the Scholarship Committee.
- 12) Awards will be made primarily on the basis of
 - a) GPA
 - b) SAT/ACT Test scores
 - c) MCTS Essay
 - d) Knowledge of MCTS Essay
 - e) MCTS Interview
 - f) Extra-curricular Activities

Complete the application in its entirety and provide the required documentations postmarked by March 31, 2025. Please send completed applications to the MCTS Scholarship Committee at the address listed above.

The MCTS High School Alumni Association, Inc. reserves the right to verify the accuracy of any information submitted to apply for its scholarship program.

CONGRATULATION MCTSAA



205 Shell St.
Saraland Alabama 36571



Dr. C.F. Williams- Pastor and Chancellor

Congratulations
to the
MCTS All County Class Reunion
from the
CF Vigor Class of 1971



✧ In Memoriam...

Albert, Della	Edwards, Shirley	Jones, Willie James	Scott, Jim Henry
Baker, Doris	Edwards, William	Jordan, Deborah Thomas	Stallworth, Charles
Bolar, Thalia	Fairgood, Scottie	Lafitte, Wayne	Stephens, Deborah Parker
Boykin, Deborah Hawthorne	Fralin, Johnnie	Marshall, Gregory	Taylor, Sandra
Boykin, Melvin	Galloway, Henry	Meadry, Chrysantia	Taylor, Timothy
Bradley, John	Gamble, Norma Jean	Mincey, Wesley	Thornton, Gail
Brown, Michael	Gardner, Laura Stutts	Mose, Johnnie	Tucker, Aundray Lewis
Campbell, Patricia	Garror, Artelia	Odom, Shirley Blutchner	Waters, Thelma Thompson
Coleman, Raymond	Gill, Phillip	Peters, Beverly Witherspoon	Watson, Timothy
Dean, Perry	Harris, Brenda Jean Olson	Porter, William	Williams, Bobby
Dinkins, Harvey	Hill, Wilford	Prunty, Irene Smith	Wormsley, Melvin
Drungo, Silvia	Hinton, Alvin	Reese, Leola Shepherd	
Edwards, Henry	Johnson, Cynthia	Richey, Walter	