



# COMMUNIQUE

A Publication of Mississippi Valley State University for Faculty, Staff, Alumni and Friends | April 18, 2016 Vol. 14 Edition 4

## FOUNDER'S WEEK OBSERVANCE BEGINS APRIL 18

Mississippi Valley State will hold the 2017 Founder's Week Observance, honoring the founding of the institution, while also paying tribute to its founding President and First Lady, James Herbert and Augusta Charter White.

The celebration will be held from April 18-22.

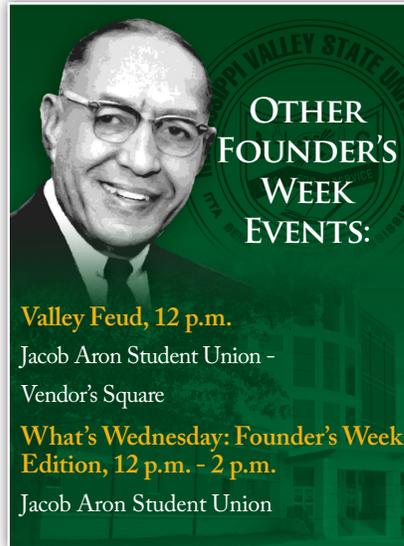
On Tuesday, April 18 the observance will begin with the viewing of the documentary about the establishment of the university along with a panel discussion at 9:30 a.m. in the Business Education Building Auditorium.

There will also be a community service project conducted on and off campus. People interested in participating in the service project can contact Gladys Flagg in Community Service Learning by email at [gflaggs@mvsu.edu](mailto:gflaggs@mvsu.edu). The day will culminate with a jazz band concert at 7:30 p.m.

Another highlight of the week will be on Thursday, April 20. There will be a Founder's Day Breakfast held at 7:30 a.m. in the H.M. Ivy Cafeteria, Dining Hall IV. Following breakfast at 9 a.m., there will be a gravesite ceremony memorializing Dr. and First Lady White. The ceremony will be held in the Lois Aron

Chapel as an alternative location in case of rain. At 10 a.m., there will be a dedication ceremony honoring Dr. Cliff Williams in the Business Education Building.

The Founder's Day Convocation will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday in the H.G. Carpenter Auditorium. The speaker for this occasion will be Dr. Antwan D. Robinson, a cardiologist in Jackson, Tenn. Robinson received his undergraduate degree from MVSU. He attended medical school at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, Tenn. He performed his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan Health Systems in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dr. Walter Roberts, former chairman of the MVSU Foundation, will be honored during the convocation with a dedication ceremony.



A dedication ceremony honoring Mrs. Mary Crump will be held in the Science and Technology Building at 3 p.m. on Thursday. The Inauguration of the Student Government Association Officers will be held at 5:30 p.m. Thursday in the chapel.

Thursday's activities will conclude with the Student Gala at 7 p.m. in the Charles R. Lackey Recreation Center. The tickets are \$10 for students and \$20 for non-students.

On Friday, April 21 from 11 a.m. -3:30 p.m. Valley Pride Day will be held on the Quad. The MVSU Baseball Alumni Weekend, hosted by the Office of Alumni Affairs will also be held.

The MVSU Alumni Baseball Weekend will continue on Saturday, April 22 with various locations and times.

## MVSU FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH CHURCHILL DOWNS

In his articulation of a vision for Mississippi Valley State University, Dr. William B. Bynum, Jr., President, declared that it would be "recognized across the nation as a premier institution." That vision is a step closer to being realized with the execution of a memorandum of understanding between MVSU and Churchill Downs Incorporated (CDI).

The MOU recognizes interests shared by MVSU and CDI in education, training and development and represents the culmination of a relationship established during recruitment efforts for MVSU's Organizational Management Program (OMP) (an accelerated degree program for adult learners). It was signed on Tuesday, March 21, 2017, at the Riverwalk Casino in Vicksburg, Mississippi, by President Bynum and Charles Kenyon, Sr., vice president of Human Relations for CDI.

Also in attendance were Dr. Cressia M. Brown, acting chair for the Department of Business Administration and coordinator of the MBA program, and Michael Taylor, executive director of Enrollment Management and Valley's Greenville Higher Education Center. Brown was invited to present MVSU's online Business programs to corporate leaders who were assembled in Vicksburg for a human resources meeting.

"More than a year ago, Mr. Naraseeyappa Rajanikanth, coordinator of the OMP, began discussions with management at Harlow's Casino in Greenville," said Brown. "With the expertise of Taylor, I've had the opportunity to forge a more comprehensive relationship – not only with Harlow's, but with the parent company, Churchill Downs Incorporated, to expand our opportunities. As coordinator

of the MBA program, I recognized that the online MBA program was an additional asset, particularly since our local community college's efforts were focused on job entry. The field for academic credentialing at the next level was wide open."

Well known for its namesake race track and its signature event, the Kentucky Derby, CDI is a publicly traded company that evolved from one world-famous venue in Central Kentucky to the United States' premier racing, gaming and entertainment company with a myriad of holdings, including racetracks, casinos, Big Fish Games, the world's largest distributor of casual games, the country's leading online wagering business, TwinSpire.com, a video poker business, a multi-state network of off-track

See "Partnership" *Next page*

# NEWSOME HONORED BY BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

Dr. Abigail S. Newsome, Director of BioInformatics at Mississippi Valley State University, was recently awarded the Beverly Burton New Board Member of the Year at the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Southeast Regional Conference in Montgomery, Alabama, last week.

Last December, Newsome was voted as Chair of the Corporate Board for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mississippi Delta. The Board helps support and promote awareness for the eight clubs within the organization. The organization is responsible for eight Delta area Boys & Girls Clubs. With locations in Tunica, Clarksdale, Jonestown, Grenada, Itta Bena, Greenwood, Lexington, and Yazoo City, the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mississippi Delta served over 2,200 children last year with the after-all schools.

Newsome is a native of Itta Bena and received her B.S. from MVSU and her Ph.D from the University of Southern Mississippi. She has served on the Local Advisory Committee for the Boys & Girls Club at MVSU and the Corporate Board for the past two years. She also works closely with the Office of International Programs at MVSU to support international students and secure study abroad opportunities for MVSU students. She is married to Dr. Albert L. Love and they have one son, Christopher (Christiana) and two grandsons.



**NEWSOME**

“We have benefitted greatly from Dr. Newsome’s leadership, vision, and active involvement with our management team,” said Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mississippi Delta CEO, David Dallas. “The Burton Award is one of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s highest honors.”

The award was named for Beverly Burton who was a long-time Board Member and volunteer for the Boys & Girls Clubs in Mobile, Alabama. She was later appointed to the National Area Committee by Boys & Girls Clubs of America to help support clubs in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. She was killed in a plane accident in 2006 after giving a speech in Natchez, MS, on behalf of the Boys & Girls Clubs. A scholarship program for club kids also bears her name.

“I had the opportunity to serve with Beverly Burton years ago when I worked with the Boys & Girls Clubs in Mobile, Alabama.” said Clyde McGuire, Director of Development for Boy & Girls Clubs of America. “Dr. Newsome embodies the spirit of Beverly Burton. She is truly making a difference for the young people in the Mississippi Delta.”

The Beverly Burton award was presented to Dr. Newsome by fellow Mississippian Jon Anderson, former CEO of the Wealth Management Fund for Trustmark Bank. Anderson serves on the Board for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Mississippi and serves on the National Area Council of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

# EVENT CALENDAR

## April

- 18 - *MVSU Jazz Band Concert, 7:30-9 p.m., W. A. Butts Social Science Auditorium*  
*MVSU Softball versus Nicholls State (DH) 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. (Valley Softball Field)*
- 20 - *Founders Day Breakfast, 7:30-9 a.m., H.M. Ivy Cafeteria (Dining Hall IV)*  
*Founder’s Week Gravesite Ceremony 9-11 a.m., Lois Aron Chapel*  
*Founder’s Day Convocation, 11-1 p.m., H. G. Carpenter Auditorium*  
*Founder’s Week Pioneer Luncheon, 1-3 p.m., H.M. Ivy Cafeteria (Dining Hall IV)*
- 21 - *MVSU Baseball versus Alabama A&M, 3 p.m. (MVSU Baseball Field)*  
*Baseball Alumni Weekend meet and greet 1-6 p.m. (MVSU Baseball Field)*  
*Baseball Alumni meet and greet (Rain Plan) 2-4 p.m. H.M. Ivy Cafeteria (Dining Hall IV)*
- 22 - *Baseball Alumni Breakfast, 9-11 a.m., H.M. Ivy Cafeteria (Dining Hall IV)*  
*Baseball Alumni Weekend Cookout, 1-6 p.m., MVSU Baseball Field (left field)*  
*Baseball Alumni Weekend Cookout (Rain Plan) 3-5 p.m., H.M. Ivy Cafeteria (Dining Hall IV)*
- 26 - *Alcohol Awareness Outreach, 10-2 p.m., Jacob Aaron Union (Lobby)*
- 27 - *Athletics Awards Ceremony, 6-9 p.m., H.G. Carpenter Auditorium*
- 28 - *MVSU Softball versus Alabama State, 6 p.m. (Valley Softball Field)*

## Partnership *continued from page 1*



betting (OTB) facilities, and a collection of racing-related data, totalisator and telecommunication companies that support CDI’s sports and gaming operations.

CDI employs more than 5,000 people and maintains physical operations in eleven states: California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, New York, Ohio, and Washington.

“Online learning gives us direct access to 5,000 prospective students,” said Brown.

*Pictured from left are Dr. William B. Bynum Jr., MVSU president; Dr. Curressia Brown, acting chair for the Department of Business Administration and coordinator of the MBA program; and Charles Kenyon, Sr., vice president of Human Relations for CDI.*

# MURPHY WINS OUTSTANDING WITNESS AWARD AT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

The Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) Mock Trial Team recently competed in the Jackson Regional Mock Trial Tournament held at the Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson.

MVSU competed against The University of Alabama at Birmingham, The University of Georgia, Tulane University and The University of North Alabama.

“The team compiled a respectable record on their eight ballots over four rounds narrowly losing three ballots that would have placed them in the opening round of national championship competition,” said Dr. Larry Chappell, the team’s advisor. “The competitiveness of the team is quite an accomplishment considering the number of first-year and sophomore students on the team. All of the team will be returning next year with the exception of one graduating senior.”

Jasmine Murphy, sophomore pre-law/legal studies and English double major from Itta Bena, Miss., won an outstanding witness award for the defense for her role as Dr. Vic Fogel,



*The Mississippi Valley State University Mock Trial Team ended the season competing in the Jackson Regional Mock Trial Tournament held at the Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson. Pictured from left are Dr. Larry Chappell, advisor; Jasmine Murphy, Dr. William Bynum, MVSU president; Kenya Junes, Alexxus Ervins; second row, Kambreca Mitchell, Barbara Duncan, Destaree Simmons, Laquita White and Neysha Sanders, Esq.*

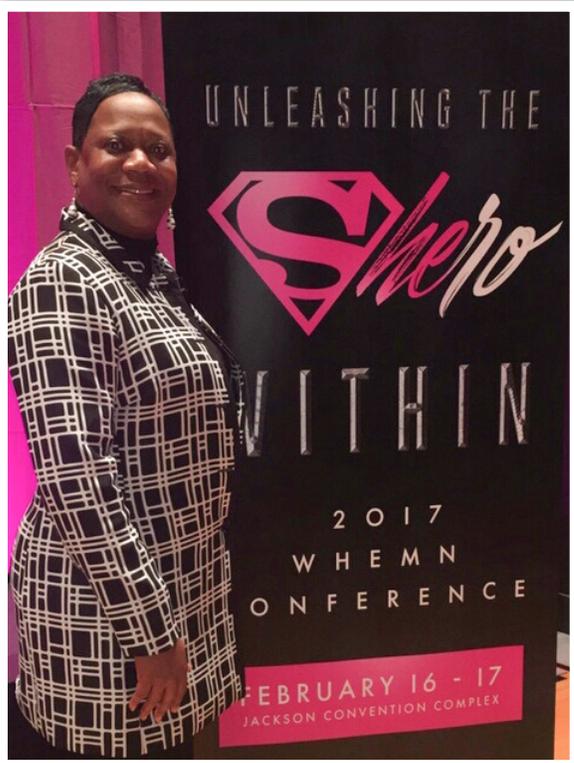
an expert on journalism. She also received strong scores and rankings for a separate role as psychologist Cary Kramer on the plaintiff side. This was her second outstanding witness award in less than a month.

“Playing an expert witness is quite challenging since the witness must learn credentials; tests

and methods; supporting evidence; and major conclusions for complicated professional studies, he said. “To testify on both sides as an expert is a grueling challenge that Ms. Murphy met well.”

See “Witness” page 8

# JONES RECEIVES WHEMN SHERO HONOR



“Unleashing the Shero Within,” was the theme of the 2017 Women in Higher Education – Mississippi Network (WHEMN) conference held in mid-February in the downtown Jackson Convention Complex.

Jackson State University hosted the event and it was a Mississippi Valley State University staff member who was honored in a major way during the conference.

Dr. Yolanda Jones, director of the Student Counseling Center, received the 2017 Shero Award.

“I am deeply humbled to have received the 2017 Shero Award in my home state,” said Jones. So many have sacrificed for me; therefore, I wake up daily attempting to reciprocate. To have been selected from all of the other nominees was confirmation that I must continue to dedicate my life promoting

and supporting others in my walk of life.

In addition to the award, Jones shared she is thankful and appreciative for having the opportunity to take part in the WHEMN Conference.

“This was one of the most innovative networking opportunities that I have ever experienced. I left this conference with a renewed sense of hope and humility,” she added.

The conference’s mission is to identify, develop, advance and support women in higher education in Mississippi. To that end, WHEMN is dedicated to promoting and supporting women in leadership in higher education, assisting in career development and mentoring of women in higher education, and enhancing the visibility of women administrators on Mississippi’s campuses.

See “Shero” page 4

# FITZGERALD DELIVERS ADDRESS AT MVSU'S HONORS CONVOCATION

Oleta Garrett Fitzgerald stood before the Mississippi Valley State University family Thursday morning and told the honorees of the 2017 Honors Convocation that, "we need your help."

Fitzgerald was the speaker for the annual event, which celebrated 689 students for their outstanding academic achievements.

The convocation was held in the H.G. Carpenter Auditorium. The program recognized president's scholars, distinguished scholars, honor scholars and scholars. In addition numerous students received honors during the outstanding scholar awards and special awards segment of the program.

Fitzgerald was direct in her address to the students and expressed to them the significance



**FITZGERALD**

of education in their lives.

"A child who does not have access to a good education, particularly, in the 21st century is sentenced to economic and social death," said Fitzgerald.

In addition, she also spoke to the danger of students not being educated nor skilled in an economy, that is moving in a different direction.

"If robots are going to be doing our jobs then we better know how to build a robot or repair a robot.

Dr. William B. Bynum, Jr. University President shared some of the outstanding achievements from the students, faculty and staff.

"We have seen our students, faculty and staff achieve great things and each time we have had the opportunity the Valley has showed up and showed out," said Bynum.

Fitzgerald is the director of the Children's Defense Fund's Southern Regional Office (CDF-SRO), and she also serves as the regional administrator for the Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative for Economic & Social Justice (SRBWI). Fitzgerald holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from Tougaloo College in Jackson.

SRBWI operates in 77 counties across the Black Belts of Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Mississippi Delta. CDF-SRO also serves as the lead for the W.K. Kellogg funded Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids (SPARK) Initiative.

## MVSU UPWARD BOUND SCHOLARS BOWL TEAM TAKES FIRST PLACE IN STATE COMPETITION

MVSU Upward Bound Scholars Bowl Team secured a win against Alcorn State University's Upward Bound program to claim the state TRIO program's title. The Student Initiatives competition was held on the campus of Mississippi Valley State University.

Valley's Upward Bound has advanced to the regional round of competition which will be held on April 8, 2017 on the campus of Atlanta Metropolitan State College in Atlanta, Ga.

"The team has the prestigious honor of representing the state of Mississippi for three of the past four years as state champions," said Derrick Jones, executive director of the Upward Bound program and current MAEOPP president.

Team members are Anfrenee Brister, captain; Pheniquiana Broadnax and Charleen Carter, all from Leflore County High School; Tikayla Crain, Greenwood High School; Kayla Redmond, Holmes County Central High School; and Kyla Cole, Amanda Elzy High School.

Lamar Swint served as the Scholars Bowl coach in addition to his assistant director duties for the Upward Bound Program.

Mississippi Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (MAEOPP) members are involved in equal educational opportunity for disadvantaged individuals, while advancing the ideals of student access, persistence and completion of postsecondary education. MAEOPP is dedicated to supporting TRIO Personnel through professional development, education, and activism for TRIO.



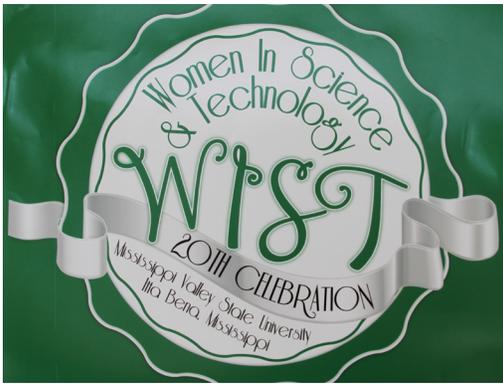
### Shero *continued from page 3*

Throughout the conference, the Greenwood native attended sessions aimed at empowering women leaders to harness their special talents and abilities; identify and conquer weaknesses; understand their purpose; and discover the skills necessary for effective leadership for themselves and their teams.

Jones began as an outreach counselor at MVSU in 2002 and was promoted to director in 2007.

She currently serves on the Mississippi Blues Commission and instrumental in the development of the MVSU Boys and Girls Club.

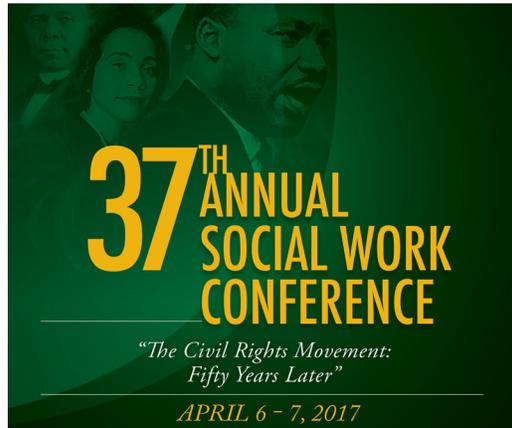
She is very active on campus and serves on several committees. Dr. Jones has received numerous local and state awards, including the Congressional Black Caucus Award; Top 30 under 40; and was recently included in the Congressional minutes after Congressman Bennie Thompson honored her for her dedication to serving others and giving back to her community. Dr. Jones has received the Title III Project Manager of the Year three times, including the honor for 2016.



# INTERNATIONAL WEEK

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS | APRIL 3 THRU 7





# MVSU STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN IHL POSTERS IN THE ROTUNDA EVENT

The other members of the team include Kenya Jones (team captain), junior double major in pre-law/legal studies and government and politics from Meridian, Miss.; Nadia Crawford, sophomore pre-law/legal studies major from Atlanta, Ga; Barbara Duncan, first year double major in english education and pre-law/legal studies from Schlater, Miss.; Alexxus Ervins, first year pre-law/legal studies major from Laurel, Miss.; Tiwana Frazier, sophomore pre-law/legal studies major from Leland, Miss; Austin Gray, first year double major in English and pre-law/legal studies from Cleveland, Miss.; Kambreca Mitchell, sophomore pre-law/legal studies major from Greenwood, Miss.; Jakaiyla Procter, senior Criminal Justice major from Chicago; Destaree Simmons Junior major in Criminal Justice from Glendora, Miss; and Laquita White, senior double major in Criminal Justice and Pre-law/legal studies from Greenville, Miss.

“We want to especially thank John McCall, senior graphic designer with Communications and Marketing at MVSU, for preparing the demonstrative aids that students used in their testimony; and Dr. John Bradford, assistant professor of sociology, who developed the charts that were used in testimony during the trials.

The educator coach for the Mock Trial Team is Dr. Larry W. Chappell, university pre-law advisor, professor of political science and coordinator of the pre-law/legal studies program.

The attorney coach for the team is Neysha Sanders; Esq. Sanders is a member of Sanders and Sanders Law Firm. She also teaches courses in the department of social sciences at MVSU. The assistant coach for the tournament was Ivory Johnson, a student who won eight outstanding attorney awards competing at Mississippi Valley State University.

The program is sponsored by the Department of Social Sciences, Leflore County Board of Supervisors, Office of Academic Affairs, and University Advancement.

Posters in the Rotunda: Showcasing Undergraduate Scholarship in Mississippi took place at the State Capitol on Thursday, March 23. Governor Phil Bryant, IHL Commissioner Glenn Boyce and many state legislators visited the poster exhibits and spoke with the undergraduate researchers about their work.

MVSU was represented by four undergraduate student researchers from three degree programs. Kayla Bailey of University Park, Ill., majoring in chemistry in the Department of Natural Science and Environmental Health, mentored in her research by Dr. Matthewos Eshete, associate professor, presented her research poster on “Interaction of Biodegradable Nanoparticles with Bovine Serum Sibumin.”

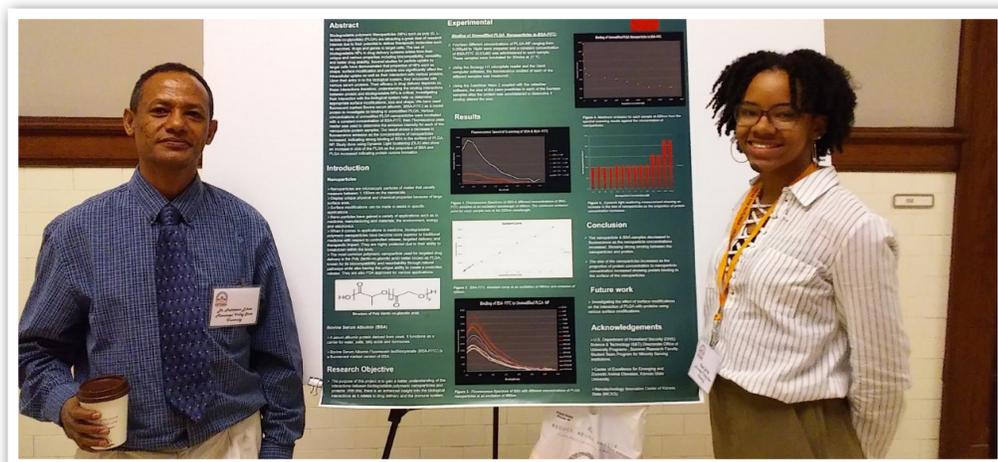
“Nanotechnology is expected to revolutionize production of materials including drug delivery, medical devices, communications,

environmental remediation etc.; thus it is poised to touch every aspect of our lives,” said Dr. Eshete.

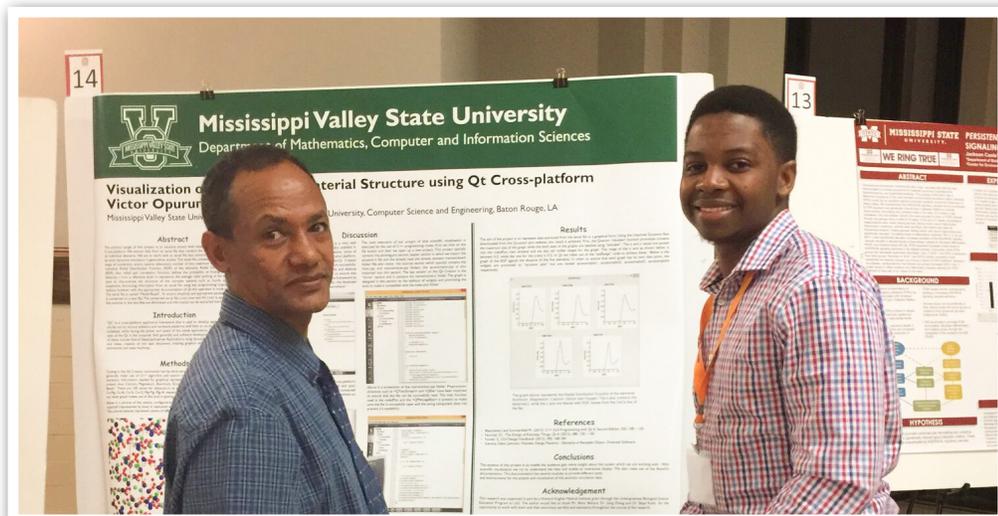
Victor Oporum of Imo State, Nigeria, majoring in mathematics and computer information science, mentored by Assistant Professor Timothy Holston, presented his research poster on “Visualization of Atomic Level Material Structure Using Qt 41.”

“Scientific visualization is the representation of data graphically as a means of gaining insight into the data. The primary target of this project is to visualize atomic level material structure using the Qt Cross-Platform,” said Oporum. His career plans are to become a computer software engineer.

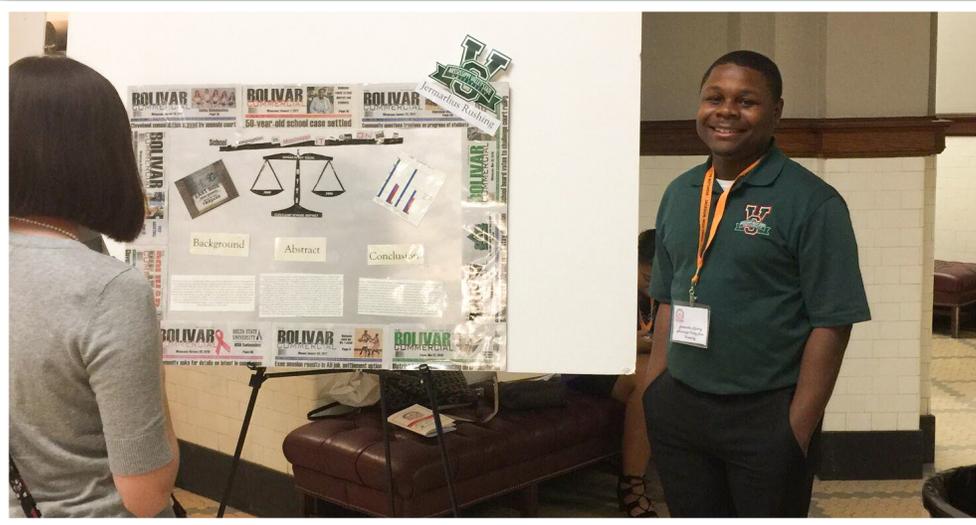
See “Rotunda” *next page*



*Dr. Eshete and Kayla Bailey at Posters in the Rotunda*



*Dr. Eshete and Victor Oporum at Posters in the Rotunda*



*Jermarius Rushing at Posters in the Rotunda*

Jermarius Rushing of Cleveland Miss., majoring in history and minoring in Africana studies and sociology, of the Department of Social Sciences, mentored in his research by Dr. Kathryn Green, associate professor. He presented his research poster on “School Desegregation in Mississippi – It Goes On and On.”

“Being a product of this district, and having experienced the neglect from the district to address the issues of the divide first hand, this researcher feels obligated to try to understand and explain to the world exactly how and why the district has fought integration for over five decades,” said Rushing.

Egypt Williams of Itta Bena, Miss., majoring in history, minoring in Africana studies of the Department of Social Sciences and also minoring in music of the Department of Fine Arts. She presented her research poster on “Government Assistance and the Increase in One-Parent Households.” She was also guided by Dr. Green in her research.

“This topic is very relevant to this state because it is at the top of the list in government assistance expenditure. With increasing budget shortfalls, it is crucial to study this issue toward achieving an equitable solution.”

Following their discussions around their posters, the students were introduced individually to the chamber of the State Assembly. A guided tour of the Capitol was offered following. There is a Facebook page “Mississippi Posters in the Rotunda” where numerous photos of the event are available.



*Egypt Williams at Posters in the Rotunda*

Mississippi Valley State University

**50th**  
GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY  
REUNION

Class of 1967

May 5-6, 2017

**WELCOME  
ABOARD**



**Quanita Foster**  
Office Manager / Data  
Specialist  
Upward Bound

# Two Minutes with...

## Dr. Rachel Beecham

Professor

### *Tell us a little about yourself and your background.*

I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pa. (home of the amazing Pittsburgh Steelers). I went to Texas A&M University and received a B.S. in Marine Biology, and completed my Ph.D. in Biology at the University of Mississippi. My first research love is sharks, but since there isn't a plethora of sharks in the Miss. Delta, I conduct most of my research on catfish. I am a comparative ecological physiologist by training and education. My current research seeks to understand how fish biology is affected by the interaction of environmental and physiological variables. Central to this research are the role that swimming energetic, mechanics, physiology, energy budgeting, and stress (catecholamines and cortisol) play in mediating fish performance (swimming ability, growth, reproductive success, metabolic capacity, etc.) under varied environmental conditions.

### *How do you approach providing service?*

Simply stated I try to approach providing service with a smile. My students would probably tell you that I am a very energetic teacher and I try to use that energy to provide my students with whatever they

need to be successful. I usually find myself advising or writing letters to numerous students throughout the semester, and trying to work with as many students as possible on small independent research projects. I love my job and I hope it shows in everything I do.

### *Where are we most likely to find you when you are not at work?*

You would probably find me painting or fixing something. I love to remodel houses, so I am constantly repairing something. If not there, at a scouting event or a baseball game with my son, Brayden.

### *What is something we would be surprised to learn about you?*

I am a swimmer. I swam through high school and continue to compete in the swimming portion of triathlons all over Ark., La., Miss., and Tenn.



# COMMUNIQUÉ

The Communiqué is published for faculty, staff, alumni and supporters of Mississippi Valley State University by the Office of Communications and Marketing

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Dr. William B. Bynum Jr.  
*President*



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@MVSUDEVILS

**New Hashtag: #GOMVSU**

Mississippi Valley State University complies with all applicable laws regarding affirmative action and equal opportunity in all its activities and programs and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or group affiliation, age, disability, handicap, or status as a veteran or disabled veteran.