



COMMUNIQUE

A Publication of Mississippi Valley State University for Faculty, Staff, Alumni and Friends | August 2018 Vol.15 Edition 8

CLASS OF 2022 ARRIVES AT THE VALLEY



Mississippi Valley State University's Class of 2022 has officially become a part of the Valley family.

Hundreds of incoming freshmen and their families received a warm Valley welcome Sunday, Aug. 12.

Campus Greek and service organizations were on hand to assist the new students with moving their belongings into their new home away from home.

Once their families officially said their goodbyes Sunday evening, the students began the New Student Academy—a week-long slate

of welcoming event and informational sessions that led up to the first day of classes and the Rites of Passage Candlelight Ceremony Monday, Aug. 20.

A MVSU tradition, the Rites of Passage Candlelight Ceremony highlights the new students' public acknowledgment of their commitment to honor the history and traditions of the University.

The freshmen address was given by MVSU Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Constance Bland.

"Tonight, you engage in a ceremony that marks the beginning of your journey into higher

education and onto a path that few of your peers will have the opportunity to take," said Bland to the dozens of freshmen in attendance.

"The research shows that when you graduate, only one of the four people that you began with will be in your graduating class," she continued. "I'm asking you take a pledge right now that you're going to ensure that your four classmates will be in the graduating class also."

Bland wrapped up her speech by leaving the students with words of encouragement and inspiration.

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COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER ED SAYS MVSU'S FUTURE IS BRIGHT

"I think the future is bright here at Mississippi Valley State University. The university is financially sound and has the capacity to do some great things."

That was the message of optimism echoed by Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Commissioner Dr. Alfred Rankins during his visit to Mississippi Valley State University Friday, Aug. 24, as part of his listening tour.

During the visit, Rankins met with various constituency groups, including President Dr. Jerry Briggs, cabinet members and department chairs, faculty, staff, students and alumni to get their input on how they view MVSU and what the IHL can do to help.



RANKINS

The one-day visit included an open forum and community reception as well as intimate round table discussions.

"I can't provide effective leadership if I don't know what the issues are," said Rankins. "That's why I'm

here—to listen and have dialogue with those out there in the trenches with our students every day."

A major concern expressed by many was the major loss of support the University is anticipating with the ending of funding from the AYERS settlement in 2022.

Rankins said that he believes MVSU is well-positioned to absorb the deficit but shouldn't depend on state appropriations. His suggestions included moving AYERS-supported salaries to other funding sources and growing revenue through tuition and fees.

"The University needs to be very strategic on trying to grow and grow in the right way," Rankins said. "You can't plan budgets based on hope...Valley needs to take its fate into its own hands and be ready."

Rankins was appointed to his position as the top administrator of higher education in the state in March 2018 and began serving in the role July 1, making him the first African

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MVSU, GPSD CELEBRATE NEW EARLY COLLEGE WITH OPENING CEREMONY



Mississippi Valley State University joined representatives from the Greenville Public School District (GPSD) in celebrating the inaugural class of the GPSD Early College during a special opening ceremony Wednesday, Aug. 22.

Stationed on MVSU's campus, the early college offers select GPSD students the opportunity to gain college credit while earning their high school diploma.

The ceremony, hosted in MVSU's Business Education Building Auditorium, was designed to formally welcome the 10th graders to MVSU's campus and give community members and stakeholders the opportunity to see the early college in action.

The event was highlighted by the mock signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) by MVSU President Dr. Jerryl Briggs, Sr. and GPSD Superintendent Janice Page.

"This is just the beginning of a long-standing partnership with the Greenville Public School District. Here, at the university, we believe in our vision of 'One Goal. One Team. One Valley... In Motion' and 'In Motion' means partnerships like the one we're celebrating right now," said Briggs during his opening remarks.

"The university is moving, and we're moving in the right direction. Creating opportunities for all to have access and availability to higher education is one of our premier goals. This is just one example of how we're moving the university forward," he added.

Then in their third day of classes, the students were referred to as "trailblazers" by Page.

"You've stepped up to the challenge. You've already set the bar high, and you're on your way to meeting the high expectation that we've set and you've set for yourselves," said Page to the roughly _____ early college students present.

"We know that you're up to the challenge, and we want to make sure that we're doing everything to ensure your success. Continue to do well and we're looking forward to hearing great things."

MVSU is the first four-year Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning to participate in an early college program.

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"GOD'S PLAN" GETS MVSU STUDENTS CAREER READY



Students begin their journey to college in hopes of obtaining the knowledge and training that will benefit them in their future professional endeavors.

Mississippi Valley State University students are off to a good start after attending the event, "God's Plan", during the 2018 Week of Welcome.

Hosted by the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement in partnership with Office of Career Services, the event offered students information on how to be successful and competitive in today's global work environment.

The event included individual consulting on branding and image from Beth Foley Barnes of Delta Radio, a presentation by Valencia Morris, district ranger for the U.S. Forest Service and mock interviews from multiple employers.

Professional headshots were also provided courtesy of MVSU's Office of Communications and Marketing, giving students an opportunity to begin building their personal brand portfolio.

Ashley Adekweh, a junior majoring in Environmental Health & Health Physical

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MVSU'S BROOKS JOINS DELTA COUNCIL BOARD

Mississippi Valley State University Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison La Shon Brooks was recently appointed to serve on the board of directors for Delta Council, an organization devoted to promoting the development of the economy in the Mississippi Delta.

Brooks' appointment was made by Delta Council President Woods Eastland. As a director, Brooks has joined the organization's community and county directors, who are elected by the membership election process. Her appointment will last for one year.

"We're proud to have a high-level staff member from the Valley represented on our board of directors," said Eastland. "La Shon is an outstanding person, and she will contribute a lot. We're thrilled that she has agreed to the position."

Brooks said she is honored to be extended the opportunity.

"The work of Delta Council includes agriculture, workforce development, and infrastructure—all



of which are very important to the Delta and the state," she said. "I am very excited to be a part of such an important and progressive organization."

Based in Stoneville, Delta Council represents 18 Delta and part-Delta counties of Northwest Mississippi.

Founded after the Great Flood of 1927 and in the midst of a depression, the Delta Council remains one of Mississippi's most influential organizations.

The scope of the organization's influence has included agriculture, ag-research, economic development, industry, flood control, transportation, health, education and forestry.

To learn more about Delta Council, visit www.deltacouncil.org

Early College *continued from page 2*

As part of the partnership, MVSU has provided classroom space to house GPSD Early College students who will spend their days on Valley's campus completing high school and college courses. Professors from MVSU are teaching the college courses while GPSD teachers are providing high school instruction. GPSD, in conjunction with a MVSU agreement, is providing the students' transportation to Itta Bena.

GPSD Board of Trustees member Jan Vaughn said that setting up the early college wasn't an easy feat.

"It took a lot of long hours and discussion to get us where we are today. We know how important a college education is, and we're so overwhelmed about this great opportunity. It's a great savings and investment in the student's future," she said.

MVSU Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Constance Bland noted that the early college initiative has already garnered interest from surrounding school districts.

"We think the early high school program is nothing short of wonderful, and we've already gotten three calls from other school systems that want to join. It's a wonderful partnership and we thank (GPSD) for being the first to work with us on this endeavor," she said.

MR. & MISS MVSU ATTEND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Mr. and Miss Mississippi Valley State University 2018-19 Tony Holland and Stormy Green recently attended the 17th Annual HBCU Leadership Conference in New Orleans.

The MVSU student leaders traveled to the Crescent City for the leadership conference, designed to provide helpful information, support and resources for newly elected kings and queens as they prepare for their upcoming reigns.

In addition to networking with kings and queens from other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Holland and Green had the opportunity to listen to presentations from trained professionals on a variety of topics, including articulation, stage presence, etiquette, confidence, and professionalism.

"This conference benefited me in numerous ways," said Green. "As a newly elected queen, I received a great deal of insight on how to begin my reign. They provided us with tips on how to dress and speak properly, how to lead someone in our respective positions and even correct table

etiquette."

Holland said that attending the conference was a great new experience for him.

"I had the opportunity to meet and connect with kings and queens from HBCUs all over the country," said Holland.

"As kings, most of us faced many of the same issues. I networked and made a lasting bond with a multitude of young men. This conference gave me a group of new friends I can relate to on multiple levels despite our demographics, and I appreciate the opportunity to represent on behalf of MVSU," he added.

Green said the presenters were good and a few of them left a lasting impression on her and helped her to learn a lot about herself.



"I was enlightened on how to be a leader within myself and emit that into someone else. Not

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TWO MVSU OFFICERS COMPLETE POLICE ACADEMY

Two Mississippi Valley State University officers are now ready to protect and serve after successfully completing the Law Enforcement Training Academy at Mississippi Delta Community College.

Officers Svante' Brown of Greenwood and Henry Manuel, Jr. of Moorhead were among 24 cadets to graduate from the Academy Aug. 2 in Moorhead.

"Both of these young men started as security, and I saw the potential in them," said MVSU Director of Public Safety Chief Alex Granderson. They have the will, the drive and the attitude for this profession. It's hard to find good candidates for law enforcement in this day and time, but I'm very blessed to have them on my team."

The cadets lived on campus five-days per week for 12-weeks to complete the academy, which included intense physical training and learning of the law.

During the graduation ceremony, Manuel was recognized for earning 3rd place and Brown for earning the 5th place Top PT (Physical Training) award. Both officers were also recognized for



successfully completing the Warrior Challenge and for running five miles in under 50 minutes.

As part of the training, the officers also earned certification in shooting, shuffle steering, OC

pepper spray and defense tactics.

Brown has been employed with MVSU for 3.5 years, and Manuel has been employed at The Valley for 2.5 years.

2022 *continued from cover*

"Remember that the academic journey will seem long, but time will pass quickly. Acknowledge that the tasks set before you will be challenging but will satisfy your thirst for knowledge.

Understand that college will present you with opportunities that will seem challenging, but it will be exciting work that will last a short period of time, however, the rewards and benefits you will receive will last a life-time," she said.

Acknowledging that many of the students are the first in their family to attend college, Bland reminded them that they hold the power to change the trajectory of future generations.

"For those of you who are the first in your family to pursue a college degree, always remember the hope that your family has placed on your shoulders and the honor the dreams that each of them carry in their hearts for your success," she said.

"Take ownership of your own education and most of all I challenge to be a member of the graduating class and an alumnus of Mississippi Valley State University."

The New Student Academy was organized by MVSU's Office of University College.

MVSU JUNIOR VISITS STATE CAPITOL AS PART OF SUMMIT



Mississippi Valley State University Junior Class President and Tutwiler native Janice Citchens recently visited the state capitol as part of the Mississippi New Leadership Summit. Sponsored by Mississippi University for Women and Stennis Center for Public Service, the summit fosters the growth of future women leaders. Citchens is a Sociology major with a minor in English and aspires to become a lawyer.

MVSU PROFESSOR CO-TEACHES COURSE TO WOMEN INMATES AT CMCF



MVSU History Professor Kathryn Green co-taught a college course this summer to women inmates at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility.

Green received the opportunity as part of the Prison to College Pipeline program, which offers inmates the opportunity to receive college credit for courses they take.

Green worked with Dr. Robby Luckett, a professor at Jackson State University, to teach the course Modern U.S. History.

“The students were so proud of their accomplishments, and they were really good students for the course,” said Green. “I have used the opportunity to talk up MVSU and took examples of curriculum MAPs to show the students, talking about transfer of credit opportunities and programs available at Valley.”

Green said the opportunity was a “wonderful experience” and that she hopes to be able to continue next summer as well as pursue additional educational opportunities for prisoner populations in the state.

The program was sponsored the Mississippi Humanities Council.

MVSU ALUM BEGINS NEW JOURNEY IN TEXAS

Mississippi Valley State University alum Kortney Haymore has landed in the state of Texas to begin a new journey in his professional life.

Haymore, who graduated from The Valley in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Health, has accepted a position as an Industrial Hygienist with Gobbell Hays Partners, Inc. in San Antonio.

Before landing this position, Haymore worked for MVSU’s Office of Student Records as a records evaluator. Haymore is a former MVSU Student Government Association (SGA) President.

“This transition is bittersweet because my love for MVSU runs deep. However, this was an opportunity that I could not allow to pass me by. I am excited to take on a new career and relocating to San Antonio,” Haymore said.

With Gobbell Hays Partners, Inc., Haymore

will be working in the environmental realm as an Industrial Hygienist.

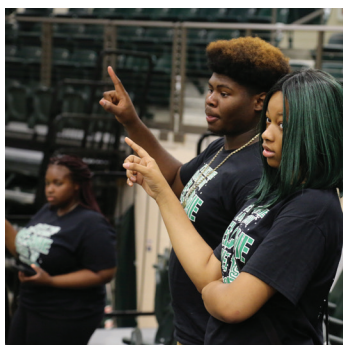
“Whether it’s a traditional environmental issue like asbestos, mold, dust or a complex indoor-air quality issue that requires the architectural side of things GHP, Environmental + Architecture are the experts in assessing the core of a problem and managing the remediation process from start to finish,” he explained.

Haymore said that MVSU has prepared him for this next step.

“I’m grateful for my educational and networking experiences at Mississippi Valley State University that have prepared me for what’s ahead,” he said. “I am forever indebted to the many faculty, staff, and students who have supported me throughout my matriculation at the University. Wherever I go, whatever I do, I’m proud to tell the world that I’m a product of MVSU.”



NEW STUDENT ACADEMY 2018



Commissioner *continued from cover*

American commissioner.

Before his current role, Rankins served as the 19th president of Alcorn State University, the nation's oldest public land-grant HBCU.

Prior to that, he was the IHL's deputy commissioner, which included a one-year stint as the acting president of MVSU.

In his new position, Rankins sees his toughest challenge as being able to get funding and support from the state to address the needs that MVSU and other state universities face.

"I need to show the legislature that they're not just giving money to Mississippi Valley State—they're investing in it, and they're going to get a return on that investment."

Rankins' other goals include increasing educational attainment in the state.

During his MVSU visit, Rankins also dispelled the rumor of merging some state institutions, specifically HBCUs.

"Nobody is talking about mergers except people on campuses," he commented.

Rankins believes that MVSU's focus needs to be on recruiting new students and retaining them.



"I think the outlook for Valley looks good. With three dorms scheduled to eventually come back online, the university has the capacity to grow and do some things that other institutions can't do," he said.

"There are a lot of good things that are going on here at the Valley despite the challenges. It's my goal to help Valley get to where it wants to be."

MVSU STORE SUPPORTS WELCOME WEEK



MVSU Convenience Store Manager Tavarris Cross recently donated 40 cases of water and soft drinks to the Office of Student Leadership & Engagement. The donations were used to support OSLE's Week of Welcome. Pictured, from left, are Cross; Kotrese Saulsberry, OSLE assistant director; and Edonimas Perry, student union activities coordinator.

WELCOME ABOARD



Kendall Dixon
Residence Hall Monitor
Residential Life



Brandon Ford
Community Service
Coordinator
Student Affairs



Sonja Hardeman
Residence Hall Monitor
Residential Life



Cassandra Hawkins, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Rural
Public Policy
Social Sciences



T'undra Jordan
Administrative Assistant
Financial Aid



Alexandra Miller
Assistant Women's BB Coach
Athletics



Rohan Omarshan Naraine
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Athletics



Shakina Nelson
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Office of Residential Life



Neysha Sanders
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Legal Studies



Al Scott
Grounds Supervisor
Facilities Management



John Townsend
Assistant Professor
Fine Arts



JaQuay Walls
Residence Hall Monitor
Residential Life



Christine Watson
Driver
Mass Transit



Egypt Williams
Residence Hall Monitor
Residential Life

Conference *continued from page 3*

only did we learn from the speakers, but we also learned from other HBCU kings and queens. We had the opportunity to understand and get to know each other on a deeper level," said Green.

The Leadership for Queens conference was created in 2002 by Dale Williams. The Kings Konnection, established by Anthony Jones, was created in 2005 and joined forces with Leadership for Queens.

To learn more about the conference, visit www.hbcukingsandqueens.com

WEEK OF WELCOME: WATERFEST!!

God's Plan *continued from page 2*

Education and Recreation said the event was beneficial.

"The mock interviews were very informative. As a junior-year college student pursuing two majors, I believe the event enhanced my opportunity to gain internships and potential job opportunities due to the feedback that was given from Officer Quincy Armstrong, my interviewer," Adekweh said.

Ameer Baker, a senior from Atlanta, found the personal branding session to be informative.

"This conversation is something that is necessary. There were a lot of freshmen and sophomores at the event, and that's good because personal branding is something we should focus on early," he said.

A biology major, Baker also serves as the head drum major for the Mean Green Marching Machine. He noted that his role in MVSU marching band falls in line with personal branding.

"Eventually you will get in the workforce, and you want a person to remember something about you that is significant and unique from other people," he said. "When people are watching you, what you represent will influence how people see you, and that's what the class taught us."

Under the auspice of the Division of Student Affairs, OSLE and Career Services both strive to enable and holistically empower MVSU students to be career ready.

"Career services and student leadership and engagement not only complement each other but organizationally, bringing the two together allows better leverage of resources, services and more comprehensive education to students," explained Pamela Hilton, director of Student Leadership and Engagement.

Hilton said she and Director of Career Services Essie Bryant have a shared vision that creates synergy between career services and student leadership and engagement programs, allowing support of MVSU's institutional vision to prepare students that are capable and prepared to work in a global society.



Two Minutes with...

Dr. Alvin L. Ward, II

Online Learning Technologist, Office of Online / Distance Education

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

My name is Dr. Alvin L. Ward, II, and I am 28 years old and a native of Cleveland, Mississippi. I was born in Chicago, IL in May of 1990 to Jacqueline C. Ward and the late Alvin L. Ward, Sr. I am a 2008 graduate of Cleveland High School and a 2010 graduate of Coahoma Community College. I earned my bachelor's

and master's degrees from Delta State University in 2012 and 2013 respectively, and I am a 2018 graduate of Northcentral University where I received my Ph.D. with specializations in Education and Organizational Leadership. I have a professional background in finance, accounting, public administration, and higher education. In my career, I have served in the positions of Chief Financial Officer, Director of Accounting and Human Resources, and E-Learning Coordinator. Currently I am an Online Learning Technologist in the Department of Distance and Online Education, as well as an Adjunct Professor of Organizational Management in the College of Business, here at Mississippi Valley State University.

How do you approach providing service?

Being raised by two highly educated parents who are selfless and hold memberships in service-based



organizations, the act of service and its importance was instilled in me at an extremely young age. My approach to service consists of being a chameleon for every individual action. When I say chameleon, I mean, I approach service by being relatable and specifically adapting to each situation individually. People can better receive assistance when you can relate to them and understand their

need for the services that you are providing. I remove myself from the picture, and I place the student or faculty member at the forefront to focus solely on their needs.

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

I am an avid traveler, so you can most likely find me driving across the nation, or at an airport. I also enjoy fine-

dining, so you can also find me trying out new restaurants.

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

I earned my black belt in Shotokan Karate at the age of 11. Many people are unaware that I am a musician and a lover of the arts. I have been a classical pianist since the age of 12. My first dream was to become a band director, so in high school, I taught myself to play the flute, clarinet, french horn, and saxophone.

COMMUNIQUÉ

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

Editorial material should be sent to news@mvsu.edu or mailed to:

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New Hashtag: #GOMVSU

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