

**INSIDE
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ISSUE:**



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Rev. Jesse Jackson**
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the delta devils

GAZETTE

An award-winning college newspaper, by students for students

FEBRUARY 2026

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY • ITTA BENA, MISSISSIPPI

Volume 51 / Number 01

\$500K investment opens new doors for MVSU Business Students

By Ruchawn M. Williams, *Editor-in-Chief*

Feb. 20, 2026, Mississippi Valley State University has received a \$500,000 investment from FedEx to start up a new Logistics Supply Chain Management concentration in the Business Administration Department.

This is a major investment that will help future and current students who might be interested in this field.

Rose Flenorl of FedEx presented the check to MVSU President Dr. Jerryl Briggs, Department Chair Dr. Farhad Chowdhury, Chairman of the Business Department, and the MVSU business students.

“It’s not only an asset to Mississippi Valley State University but also for the students,” said Jordan Price, one of the business students.

MVSU is very grateful for this investment and will continue to strive under its motto, “Valley in Motion.”



Pictured left to right: Ruchawn Williams (Winona, Miss.), Jaida Wade (Dallas, Texas), President Dr. Jerryl Briggs, Department Chair Dr. Farhad Chowdhury, Rose Flenorl (FedEx), Khalleecia Lee (Inverness, Miss.), Christiana Thomas (Isola, Miss.), and Jordan Price (Inverness, Miss.).
PHOTO BY MVSU COMMUNICATION & MARKETING.

Memorable MVSU residence hall demolished in campus transition; Delta Hall is next



PHOTOS BY Dr. G.H.M. Brown, DDG Faculty Advisor ISOR.



By Ruchawn M. Williams, *Editor-in-Chief*

MVSU Leflore Hall, a former men’s residence hall, has been demolished. This is because of long-planned campus improvements, which include upgrading the Student Union for students.

The clearing of the building began in January, with demolition commencing in early February and as of Monday, Feb.

23, all left was a pile of rubble.

Safety measures have been implemented across campus to ensure the safety of Valley residents. Fences have been installed around Leflore Hall to serve as a restricted zone for the duration of the project.

“It was a bittersweet feeling. I’ll miss the times I spent there,” said Doc Blu Sr., a former Leflore Hall resident, when

asked how he felt about the demolition. “The building was old, and it’s past time for it to come down.”

When asked earlier what he believes will be lost once the building is demolished, Blu said, “The only thing that will be lost is the physical building. The memories will always be there for those of us who called it our temporary home.”

Speaking of memories, social media

was flooded with alumni and former students’ comments about their Leflore Hall experience.

As Leflore Hall’s clearance continues, MVSU will begin demolition of Delta Hall, another residence hall.

The demolition of these buildings creates new opportunities for the university to thoughtfully redesign and repurpose campus space for the benefit of current and future Valley Scholars.

Letter to the Editor

Funding Formulas that Hurt HBCU's

Dear Editor:

Included in this letter are excerpts from a letter I sent to various Mississippi State Representatives and State Senators on behalf of Valley. The full text of the letter was reduced to meet the space requirements of this newspaper. My cover email to the legislators stated that I am requesting their support in opposing any proposed performance-based funding formulas that would negatively impact HBCUs.



McFadden

My name is Joe McFadden, a native of Panther Burn, Miss., located in Sharkey County. I am a 1986 alumnus of Mississippi Valley State University and a 1992 alumnus of Mississippi State University. Please allow me to preface this letter by saying that I value the education provided by all institutions of higher learning in the state. Through my children's participation in school activities, I was privileged to visit almost every community and senior college in the state, as well as numerous private schools. Our family has attended and/or earned degrees from several of the institutions.

I am compelled to share some concerns I have about planned proposals that will forever change the trajectory of and access to higher education in Mississippi, if passed by the Mississippi State Legislature and implemented by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL).

On Dec. 10-11, 2025, I attended hearings of the joint House and Senate Universities and Colleges Committees at the Mississippi State Capitol. During the hearings, there was much discussion about changing the funding formula for the eight state-supported institutions of higher learning. In short, a performance-based formula would reward universities with highly technical fields of study (i.e., engineering and nursing) that produce graduates with much higher-than-average salaries and penalize universities for programs they do not and cannot offer. The Mississippi IHL prohibits duplication of some programs at some universities. It should be noted that MVSU had a renowned nursing program that was taken away.

The important caveat is that Mississippi Valley State University was founded as a teachers' college to educate students in the Mississippi Delta and surrounding areas, to train educators, and to teach various trades to enhance workforce development.

During the early 1980's, MVSU lost approximately half of its academic programs due to state-mandated budget cuts. However, the state is more fiscally sound today. Although the academic programs at MVSU have increased over the years, they pale in comparison to the programs that will be rewarded at other schools under a proposed funding formula.

MVSU is the youngest HBCU in the state and nation. However, because of historical underfunding, it has the oldest

facilities of any state-supported college in the state. Such disparities in funding negatively affect student recruitment, scholarships, faculty and staff salaries, facilities, etc.

As alumni, we remain committed to advocating for our cherished University because it continues to provide education to many first-generation college students, including myself. It has allowed many of us to receive a quality education and rewarding careers, thus breaking the chain of generational poverty. The return on investment is evident in the quality of alumni that MVSU has produced. We make meaningful contributions to society in vast fields, thus enabling us to become major tax producers contributing to local, state, and national economies.

During the 1985-86 school year, I served as the MVSU Student Government Association President. Valley was targeted for closure due to state budget cuts. Funding was so limited that University officials served the lowest-cost foods in our cafeteria (i.e., Vienna sausages with breakfast food, as well as pork neckbones and chitterlings as meat options for dinner). We went weeks without heat in our dormitories during the winter due to a lack of funds to repair the heating system. Toiletries were rationed to students. After heavy rains, we had to wade across a street, due to an inadequate drainage system, to gain access to the cafeteria. This might be hilarious to some, but it was our reality!

Nonetheless, we remained steadfast, endured the inconveniences because we valued the quality education we were receiving at Valley, and we believed in delayed gratification. I am eternally grateful for my alma mater, which continues to provide access to a quality education to so many. Dr. Nathaniel Bocclair, Sr., former Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Interim President of Valley, reminded us during our school closure crisis that the Latin definition of the word alma mater is "foster mother." Valley is/was truly our mother away from home.

I respectfully requested that the legislature explore what financial resources are available from the state to bring parity in funding to Valley. We are not asking for a handout, but a hand up.

In his book, "Up From a Cotton Patch", our founding President James Herbert White, stated that he "realized that only a superior education could enlarge men's freedom and create in them, both black and white, a sense of human dignity, excellence, and economic and political security."

As a reminder to the entire Valley family and her many friends, let's do what we can, individually and collectively, to ensure that MVSU remains viable for untold future generations of students.

Joe L. McFadden
MVSU 1986
Former SGA President

LOVE CONQUERS ALL.

There may be times where loving others may seem hard. But know that love is greater than hatred. We live in a world full of hatred, and it is up to us to heal this world by loving others. Remember **God is love** and because He is love, **ask Him to show you how to love.**



Ruchawn's Inspirational

the delta devils GAZETTE

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1989, 1990, 1991, 1997, 2002 and 2024 FIRST PLACE winner.
2015 THIRD PLACE winner. 2016 SECOND PLACE winner.

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MVSU GLOBAL EDITOR: Open

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Staff Spotlight:

Haley supports students with a listening ear

By Ruchawn M. Williams, *Editor-in-Chief*

This month's Staff Spotlight shines on Dr. Jocelyn Haley, Serials Electronic Resources Librarian at the James H. White Library.



Haley

Dr. Haley plays a vital role in supporting student success

and the university's academic mission. She shared that she enjoys witnessing students grow academically, professionally, and personally.

Dr. Haley's journey at MVSU began in January 2009 as a student. After graduating in May 2012, she returned in October 2014 as a professional staff member, where she describes choosing Valley was both "intentional and personal."

"Returning to serve was not simply a career decision; it was a commitment to legacy and impact," she said. "I wanted to give back to the institution that invested in me and contribute meaningfully to the growth of future Delta Devils."

When asked what Valley meant to her, she stated that Valley meant purpose.



Among her achievements, she holds a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication and a Master of Arts in Rural Public Policy & Planning from MVSU, along with a Master of Library and Information Science and a Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. She also serves as Graduate Advisor for the Epsilon Pi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

Students describe her as empathetic and supportive. "What makes Dr. Haley stand out is the fact that she's always willing to listen to students' problems," shared Terrell Booker, Mister Junior. "Not only is she sympathetic and gives great advice, but she is always smiling and has a positive attitude toward all."

Motivated by "impact, legacy, and growth," Dr. Haley draws inspiration from her family — her husband, Dr. Fortune Ojeah, and their son, Paxton

— who encourage her to lead with excellence and resilience.

Outside of work, she enjoys event planning and design, reading, research, and spending quality time with her family.

Her advice to the Valley community: "Own your growth and protect your reputation. Your time at Valley is more than earning a degree — it is building your character, discipline, and personal brand."

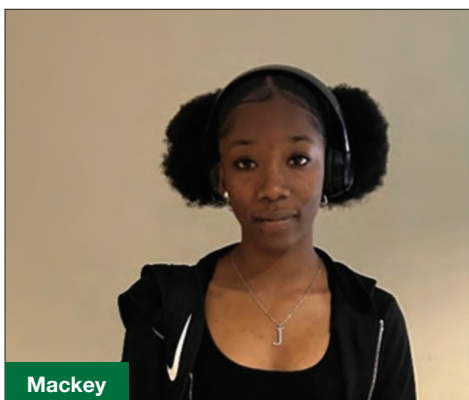
Students' Voices Question: *How Did the Ice Storm Affect You?*



My name is **Jasmine Mackey** and I am a Business Administration major. I felt affected by the ice storm because it was too cold. I am from the tropics, so I am not use to that kind of cold. There was also too much ice and we had no power for hours. Eventually, the power came back on.

My name is **Shannon Ray** and I am a Political Science major. I was affected by the ice storm, because we had lost power, the pipes were frozen, and we had a water advisory. We eventually went to Florida for a week and a half to get away from the ice. When we came back, our power came back on after 1-2 days. My mother was also out of work for two three weeks.

My name is **Khalleccia Lee**, and I am a Business Administration major. The storm caused my lights to be out for a little over two weeks, since we live in the country. We were lucky to get a generator going after about five days, but we still lost our food. Overall, I hope it doesn't happen again.



Mackey



Ray



Lee



LET YOUR VOICE BE READ!



In researching the archives of our newspaper, the *Gazette* staff discovered a very popular section in the old issues called:

"Students' Voices"

If you are interested in letting your voice be read, *The Delta Devils Gazette* invites MVSU students to share their **compliments, appreciations, concerns, constructive criticisms** and **suggestions**. (Note: Please be aware that our student newspaper is also distributed off campus). While the *Gazette* wants to be a medium for you to share your voice, there **must** be some standards/rules in which to follow. They are, but not limited to, the following:

- No profanity or derogatory comments
- Do not name specific individuals
- No libel or slandering (No defaming or making false statements)
- You must provide your name and academic major.
- You must provide to the *Gazette* a contact number to authenticate your submission. Numbers will not be published.
- The *Gazette* does not guarantee inclusion of each submission.

Please email your comment to: gazette@mvsu.edu Use the subject: **My Voice.**



Faculty Spotlight

Bailey named Humanities Teacher of the Year

By Omarion Anderson, Staff Writer

Dr. Shanell G. Bailey, instructor in the Department of English and Foreign Language, has been named the 2025-26 Humanities Teacher of the Year by The Office of Academic Affairs at Mississippi Valley State University. She has been bestowed this honor for commitment to academic excellence, student engagement, and innovative teaching practices.



Bailey

As part of her recognition, she held a lecture titled “Bridging the Literary Gap with Effective Teaching Strategies for Today’s College Students”, which took place at Cliff E. Williams Auditorium in the Business Education Building on Feb. 12, 2026. Her lecture touched upon student literacy challenges in higher education and offered practical strategies faculty can use to support



Dr. Bailey presents her “Bridging the Literary Gap with Effective Teaching Strategies for Today’s College Students” lecture. PHOTOS BY LATUNYA EVANS, MVSU COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

students across disciplines, not just in English courses. When asked about her feelings when she received the honor, she states, “I am honored to receive this award. Each year, I find new ways to improve my teaching. When my former students come back

and tell me they appreciate my classroom expectations and that I always push them to do better, I feel a sense of relief, knowing I set high standards in the classroom. This recognition is proof that hard work never goes unnoticed.” Dr. Bailey has spent the past three

years researching college students’ literacy skills. This research caused her to examine the barriers students face in reading, writing, and comprehension, and how faculty can implement effective instructional strategies to improve learning outcomes.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Johnson Participates in Dual Fellowship Programs

By Omarion Anderson, Staff Writer

Dr. Shequite W. Johnson, Assistant Professor of Rural Public Policy and Planning, has recently been selected for two fellowship leader programs: the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Leadership Network and the Delta Leadership Institute. Both of these prestigious fellowships have been created to recognize leaders who advance community development, economic equity, civic engagement, and regional collaboration. This dual fellowship experience will allow Dr. Johnson to engage with regional and national leaders to strengthen cross-sector partnerships and expand her

work focus on rural policy, leadership development, and community-centered solutions for the Mississippi Delta and beyond. When asked about being selected for both fellowships, Dr. Johnson states, “I am honored to be selected as a Fellow for both the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Leadership Network and the Delta Leadership Institute. As an Assistant Professor at Mississippi Valley State University, I am deeply grateful for the support of my institution, colleagues, and community as I continue to work rooted



Johnson

in leadership, equity, and service.” In addition to her faculty role, Dr. Johnson serves as the Graduate Council Coordinator for the Rural Public Policy and Planning program, where she provides leadership in graduate curriculum oversight, academic standards, and student success initiatives. Dr. Johnson emphasizes that the fellowship will directly enhance student learning and engagement at MVSU. When asked about how this will enhance student learning and

engagement, she states, “I see this as an investment in my students, allowing me to bring expanded leadership, policy, and community development insights directly into the classroom and provide learning experiences that go beyond theory through engagement who have real-world experience.” Her selection and participation in both fellowships proves her dedication to her work, research, and service to the community and will enhance her contributions to MVSU by creating new opportunities for graduate student engagement, experimental learning, and community-centered impact.



WINTER STORM IMPACT

Winter ice storm leaves Greenville grocery shelves bare

By Jameshia Attaway, Student Writer

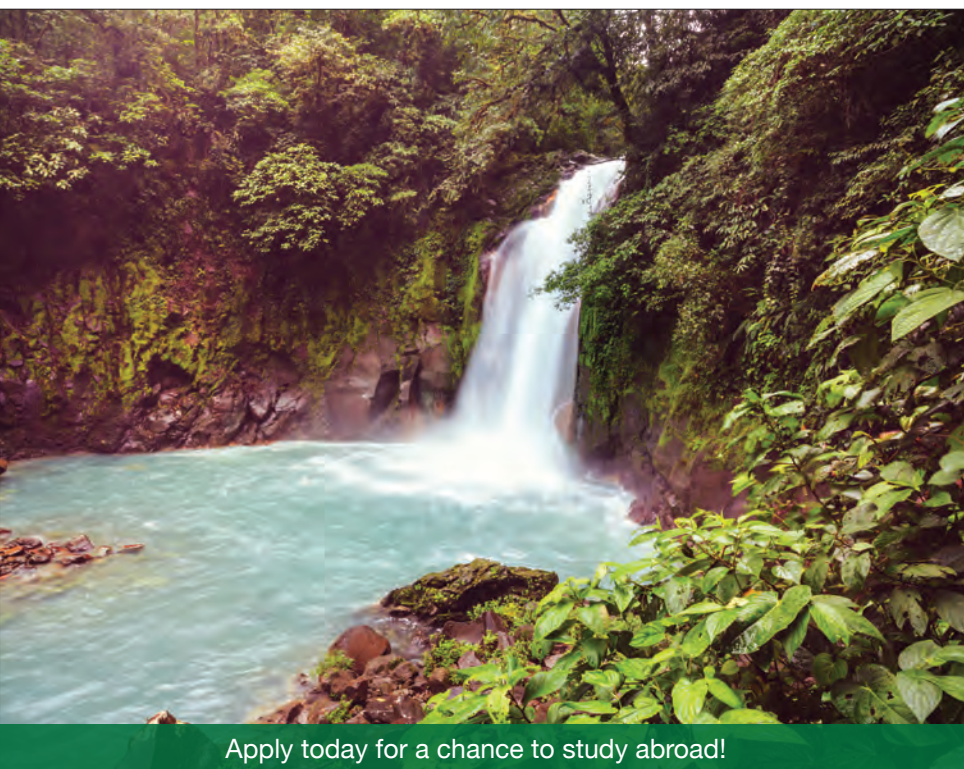
GREEVILLE, Miss., Jan. 31, 2026 — A rare winter ice storm swept through the Mississippi Delta, bringing not only icy roads and school closures but also empty shelves at several local grocery stores. Residents who ventured out after the storm were met with sparse selections in the dairy and egg aisles. Refrigerators that normally hold gallons of milk and cartons of eggs were nearly empty, with only a handful of items remaining. In some stores, entire sections labeled Eggs, Milk, and Creamer stood nearly bare. Store managers say the shortages were caused by a combination of pre-storm panic buying and delayed deliveries. Once the weather forecast aired on local news stations, stores experienced an immediate rush, with customers purchasing multiple gallons of milk and

several cartons of eggs. Delivery trucks were slowed by icy highways across the region, which extended the shortage. The Mississippi Department of Transportation reported slick conditions on several major routes, making it difficult for suppliers to reach stores in a timely manner. For many families in Greenville, the shortages have meant not having enough to eat and making do with what’s available. Some residents reported visiting multiple stores in search of basic food supplies. Local grocers expected supplies to return to normal as road conditions and delivery schedules improved. In the meantime, store officials encouraged customers to purchase responsibly to ensure everyone in the community had access to necessities.



Photo Credit: Jeriah King

Gilman Scholarship application is now open



Apply today for a chance to study abroad!

By MVSU News

Attention scholars! Are you interested in studying or interning abroad during Summer or for a regular semester?

The MVSU Office of International Programs can help you Study Abroad in great places such as Costa Rica, England, France, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Germany, Scotland, Spain, South Korea, South Africa, and other countries of your interest.

Are you worried about the costly fees for travel and tuition? Look no further for there are Study Abroad scholarships to help.

The U.S. Department of State's



Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program (Gilman Program) provides up to \$5,000 in merit-based scholarships to Pell grant-eligible

American undergraduate students to pursue credit-bearing academic studies and career-oriented internships abroad. Award amounts can be up to \$5,000 (with the opportunity to receive the supplemental Critical Need Language Award of up to \$3,000 and/or the STEM Supplemental Award of up to \$1,000).

Please visit <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/> and create an account to start your application. Applications are due March 5, 2026.

Gazette has opening for MVSU global editor position



ADDG Staff Report

Hello, MVSU community! The Delta Devils Gazette has the MVSU Global Editor position available. We are looking for an international student or a willing student to take on the role. You will be responsible for our Global page. The duties consist of keeping up with international news across campus and within our community and writing

about news or events we could feature in our paper. The only things required are your determination and willingness to take on the role and dedication to write. If you are interested, please contact the Editor, Ruchawn Williams, at ruchawn.williams@mvsu.edu or Dr. Gail Brown at gail.brown@mvsu.edu for more information.



Opening doors abroad: Students complete passport applications through IIE grant

By Ruchawn M. Williams, Editor-in-Chief

The Department of International Programs hosted a Passport Application Completion Session on Feb. 10, 2026, to support 25 approved students in receiving their passports for international opportunities. These students have been approved to receive the IIE American Passport Project Grant, a significant initiative that helps cover the Passport costs.

During the session, Executive Director of International Programs, Dr. Lokesh Shivakumaraiah explained to the students the proper way to fill out the application, emphasizing the importance of not leaving any fields blank.

“Our goal is to encourage more Valley students to take advantage of Study Abroad scholarships funded by the U.S. Federal Government to pursue their dream of studying abroad. This will help our students to learn about other countries, increase cross-cultural sensitivity, and develop global skills needed in today’s workplace,” he said.

One of the participants, Tynilya Watkins, Miss MVSU, shared how the program has impacted her.

“This program has provided meaningful financial support by covering the cost of my passport for exchange programs,” Watkins said. “Having one major expense taken care of significantly reduces my financial burden and gives me one less thing to worry about. Receiving



my passport felt like an exciting and empowering milestone.”

She also credited Dr. Lokesh for making the process smooth.

“He is very hands-on and works diligently to ensure we stay engaged and complete our applications successfully,” she said. “His guidance has made the entire experience much easier and more encouraging.”

During the session, the students were attentive. They were assisted by

Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants (Shubhrika Pansari, Abuther Alothman), International Student Ambassadors (Carolina Lopez, Faezah Fathi), and visiting faculty (Dr. Vikas Kadam, Dr. Vivek Singh) who volunteered to help during the passport session.

The students were split into three groups. These groups will be taken to the Passport post office on different days. They were highly informed to bring important documents with them including



their ID cards, birth certificate, and most importantly, the application form.

This initiative will help students gain more opportunities.

“I would like our Mississippi Valley State University students to graduate with a degree in one hand and a passport in the other hand. Both a Degree and a Passport mean opportunities. It will give an opportunity for Valley students to participate in Study Abroad, Internship Abroad, and Work Abroad opportunities,” Lokesh said.

Below are the important dates for each group:

IMPORTANT DATES

- Group 1 February 19, 2026
- Group 2 February 25, 2026
- Group 3 March 3, 2026

MVSU Mass Communication department opens Spring 2026 Speakers series with Delta Mayors

ADDG Staff Report

Mississippi Valley State University's Department of Mass Communication launched its Spring 2026 Speakers' Series with a Mississippi Delta Mayors Roundtable in the Cliff E. Williams Auditorium in observance of Black History Month.

Centered on the theme "Local Power. Delta Voices. Student Impact," the discussion engaged students in timely conversations on disaster preparedness, the digital divide, and the importance of telling the Delta's story. The event underscored MVSU's commitment to experiential learning by connecting classroom instruction with real-world civic leadership.

District Attorney Scott Colom of Mississippi's 16th Circuit District served as moderator.

The event received great reviews. "I've received calls urging us to do a Mayors Roundtable Part Two," said Acting Department Chair Carolyn L. Gordon.



From left to right: The Honorable Mayors Alfonzo White (Duckhill), Kenneth Featherstone (Indianola), Dr. Mary Tyes-Williams (Itta Bena), Lesia Williams-Hemphill (Vaiden), and Kendrick D. Cox (Greenwood). PHOTO BY DONELL MAXIE, MVSU COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

Student Spotlight

Building a legacy at MVSU: Chris Soeder's college experience

James Snipes, Staff Writer

It's easy to wonder how to take advantage of this stage of life called college. A lot of people are unsure on how to make the most of it. While there are so many ways to handle college and to use it as a benefit, look no further for an example than Chris Soeder.

Soeder, a graduate student currently in the process of earning his Master of Business Administration degree in May, is from Sarasota, Fla. and has been here at Mississippi Valley State University for his fifth year now.

A baseball athlete here for the university since his enrollment in the Fall of 2021, Soeder has dealt with several different long-term injuries during his



Soeder

time here. Even through the tough times of rehab and watching his team compete without him at times, his exceptional leadership and ability to be a positive teammate led to him being a captain of the baseball team for the last two years.

Initially his journey began here because of baseball, but he has managed to make his Valley career mean so much more than just his contributions on the field.

Just this past year, Soeder was able to secure a remote internship with the MLB through an On Deck Sales Program from January-March. Through this program, he was able to develop strong client relationships, resulting in a 15% increase in ticket sales through targeted outreach and follow-up strategies. This experience also allowed him to collaborate with industry professionals to enhance sales techniques and customer engagement.

After the conclusion of that internship during the summertime, Soeder turned his attention to New York where he worked as a US Growth Strategy Intern. When asked about his experience there Soeder reflected that "as a US Growth Strategy Intern at Marsh McLennan, I gained valuable insights into the insurance and

consulting sectors while honing my analytical and strategic thinking skills in a dynamic, fast-paced environment." At the conclusion of this internship, Soeder accepted a full-time position and will begin in Atlanta following graduation!

In his graduate years, Chris has been the Business Department's graduate assistant, only furthering his experience and boosting his resume while he is at it.

Entering college anywhere can be daunting for some, but knowing that there are opportunities to build out your resume, network with people, and learn new skills that will guide you through your career can and should give people the confidence to take full advantage of what MVSU has to offer. Chris Soeder did it, and so can you!

Congressman Thompson presents funding boost to the university

By MVSU News

Mississippi Valley State University has been awarded \$425,000 in federal funding through the 2025-2026 Community Project Special Appropriations for facilities and community revitalization.

Pictured with the ceremonial check is Congressman Bennie G. Thompson, whose continued advocacy supports investments that strengthen MVSU and the communities we serve. Representing the University was Dr. Jacqueline Gibson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

This funding represents a meaningful step forward in enhancing campus infrastructure and advancing the University's mission. PHOTO: MVSU Communication and Marketing



A BLACK HISTORY MONTH SALUTE: CIVIL RIGHTS ICON THE REVEREND JESSE LOUIS JACKSON (October 8, 1941 - February 17, 2026)



Rev. Jesse Jackson spoke to a group of citizens at New Zion Baptist Church in Greenwood during his first presidential race in 1984. Reporter Rob Jones and Al White covered the event for WABG-TV Channel 6. PHOTO PROVIDED BY AL WHITE

Johnson connects social statistics to workforce development at MVSU

By Jameshia Attaway, *Student Writer*

Holmes County Supervisor and former Southern Echo Executive Director Leroy Johnson brought decades of leadership, advocacy, and lived experience into the classroom when he spoke to students in Dr. Shequite Wilson-Johnson's Social Statistics course at Mississippi Valley State University on Feb. 11, 2026. His visit demonstrated how social statistics extend beyond theory and play a critical role in workforce development, public policy, and community advancement.

Johnson spoke candidly with students about the importance of using data to drive meaningful policy changes rather than relying solely on popularity.

"Stop making elections popularity contests and base them on people who can work to make policy shifts," Johnson said, emphasizing the need for leadership grounded in knowledge, accountability,



Leroy Johnson presents to attentive students. PHOTO BY AL WHITE.

and measurable impact.

Throughout the presentation, students completed guided reflection worksheets designed to help them connect course concepts to real-world applications. The worksheets encouraged students to analyze how empirical data, census participation, and demographic information influence workforce

opportunities, infrastructure, and funding decisions.

Johnson explained that accurate census data directly affects how communities receive resources, including funding for education, healthcare, job training programs, and infrastructure. His experience using cartography and demographic analysis to support fair

redistricting and equitable funding demonstrated the practical role of social statistics in workforce development and economic growth.

"When we give accurate data, it allows us the chance to get more resources and funding," said student Johterrian Evans. "Knowing that he can have a greater impact on his community has strengthened his engagement." Evans noted that Johnson's work illustrated how statistical participation empowers communities to advocate for themselves and access opportunities.

"As young people, we have to get more involved and stay more vigilant," Evans said.

Dr. Wilson-Johnson designed the Social Statistics course to bridge theory and lived experience, ensuring students understand both the technical and human dimensions of data.

PROMINENT FIGURE OF BLACK HISTORY:

Dorothy Height: A leader for equality in times of injustice



Dorothy Height was a major leader in the Civil Rights Movement and a strong supporter of women's rights. She was born in 1912 in Richmond, Virginia, and later grew up in Rankin, Pennsylvania.

From a young age, she believed in the power of education and community involvement. Height spent much of her life working to improve opportunities for African Americans, especially women.

She served for many years as president

of the NCNW. She helped create programs focused on education, job training, and community support.

During the 1950s and 1960s, she worked alongside well-known civil rights leaders and helped organize important events and campaigns, even though she often stayed out of the spotlight. Dorothy Height's dedication to equality and leadership continues to inspire people today.

"Greatness is not measured by what a man or woman accomplishes, but by the opposition he or she has overcome to reach his goals."

— Dorothy Height



CANNON

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The best sound of spring: The crack of the bat is back

By James Snipes, *Staff Writer*

Through a joyous fall semester here at Mississippi Valley State University, the men and women of the baseball and softball teams, respectively, have been working tirelessly to prepare for the 2026 season. Finally, two of the best words in sports are here: “Play ball!”

Over on the baseball side of things, the Delta Devils have kicked off a 52-game season that will continue deep into May. The team is bringing back 15 returning players from last season. This provides a sense of continuity that they will look to combine with 24 players coming in from a mixture of high school guys, junior college transfers, and transfers from other division-one schools.

The squad will look to get big-time contributions from Tanner Aoki and Eric Williams, who look to compound another great season after fantastic 2025 seasons. Aoki, the Perfect Game Preseason All-Conference infielder, batted .354 with 19 stolen bases and an on-base percentage of 48.5% in the 2025 season.

Williams led the team in doubles while hitting to the tune of .344 and will look to maintain this offensive production while switching positions to the outfield this season.



Group photo of the Delta Devilettes' Softball team; PHOTO BY JAMIYAH GARY



Group photo of the Delta Devils' Baseball team; PHOTO BY PARK ROEDER

Jace Jones, a team captain and senior, when asked about his feelings towards the season, said that “we have the squad we have been looking to build, and we

are ready to put Valley back on the map. This year is a redemption tour.” Be sure to support the team at Magnolia Field as they search for their first playoff berth since 2018!

Over half of softball’s roster is returning from the previous season and is setting out to improve after a year of ups-and-downs. The Delta Devilettes will look to get contributions from incoming players like Jamiyah Gary (incoming freshman) and Marika Bonner (transferring from Coahoma Community College), as well as returning players such as Ashtyn Clark (sophomore) and Taniya Partee (junior).

Pondering the challenges of the new season, Gary remarked that “I am looking forward to getting to display our hard work, and to continue to push the standard and raise the expectations for our program.” After a round-robin tournament of five games at the Skyhawk Invitational at the University of Tennessee-Martin on the 13th of Feb., the girls will play a season with over 40 games.

They will look to build momentum heading into conference play and finish off with a conference tournament berth for the first time since the 2018 season. Make sure you make it out to the 14 home games that they compete in to give the home team a boost!

Girl power at MVSU women’s basketball game



By Hillary Victor, *Staff Writer*

On Feb. 5, 2026, Mississippi Valley State University celebrated National Girls and Women in Sports Day with a spirited “Girl Power – Parade of Champions” held before the women’s basketball game against Alcorn State University.

The pregame ceremony honored female athletes from various sports, including volleyball and softball. Participants walked around the court holding photos of both current and former MVSU women athletes, recognizing their dedication and achievements.

“As a female Director of Athletics at Mississippi Valley State University, I am incredibly proud to sponsor the ‘Girl Power – Parade of Champions’ in celebration of National Girls & Women in Sports Day,” said Alecia Gadson. “Our mission in The Valley is to foster an environment of excellence, and this event directly highlights the strength, dedication, and leadership of our female

student-athletes. By honoring these trailblazers—past, present, and future—during our women’s basketball game against Alcorn State, we are not just celebrating wins; we are advocating for equity and inspiring the next generation to break ceilings in sports and in life.”

Students in attendance also appreciated the recognition. “It was nice to see the school celebrate its female athletes,” said Madison Wesley.

Following the celebration, the MVSU Devilettes went head-to-head against the Alcorn State Lady Braves. Despite a strong performance, MVSU fell just short in a 75–72 loss. The game remained competitive, with both teams exchanging leads and keeping fans engaged until the final seconds.

The evening served as a powerful combination of recognition and competition. Honoring the accomplishments of women in athletics while delivering an exciting game.



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OCT 17 BETHUNE-COOKMAN

OCT 24 BYE WEEK

OCT 31 ALCORN STATE

NOV 7 AT JACKSON STATE

NOV 14 AT FLORIDA A&M

NOV 21 ALABAMA A&M

DEC 5 SWAC CHAMPIONSHIP



MVSU FOOTBALL 2026 SCHEDULE