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Welcome to our first Diversity Mississippi edition. It has been a wild ride so far this year. We held our first business diversity awards gala in the spring, and it was highly successful. Now we follow that up with this very special, and might I add, important edition.

Diversity works for Mississippi and we're happy to play a part in helping showcase how well it works. The awards gala, called ourMississippi Honors, recognized seven Mississippi corporations for their diversity practices. You'll see those in the coming pages. The highlight of the evening was being able to honor Ms. Myrlie Evers-Williams with our first ourMississippi Lifetime Achievement Award. Noted author and businessman, Stedman Graham, did a wonderful job as guest speaker. We had a crowd of nearly 400 at the event, including TV actress Cassi Davis. I'd like to thank all our great sponsors for the making of such a wonderful evening.

Thanks to: Toyota, Kimberly Clark, Caterpillar, Nissan, AT&T, Entergy, Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi Power, Renasant Bank, BancorpSouth, Van Atkins and Caesars Entertainment. Thank you for believing that diversity and inclusion makes for a better Mississippi.

Also, let me put this out there. After our event, I was diagnosed as a diabetic. I'm not at all ashamed to say it. The more research I did, the more alarmed I got of the toll this condition is taking on the citizens of this state...and predictions of the near future expect it to become an epidemic. We included a section on diabetes at the back of the magazine for readers to refer to. This is something we need to attack head on. Thanks to all of you for picking up our magazine and may God continue to Bless you all.

Wesley Wells  
Publisher

# ourMississippi

SUMMER 2014

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## ON THE COVER

Newly crowned Miss Mississippi, Jasmine Murray  
Photo courtesy of Miss Mississippi Pageant

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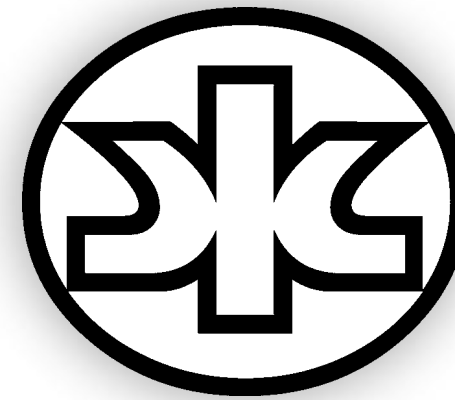
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# 1ST ANNUAL

## ourMississippi HONORS

**T**upelo, Mississippi was host to the first annual our-Mississippi Honors Gala March 15, 2014. The event celebrated Mississippi corporations for their diversity practices. An overflow crowd of nearly 400 attended the event at the BancorpSouth Conference Center.

The event also honored Ms. Myrlie Evers-Williams with its first Lifetime Achievement Award. World renowned businessman and author Stedman Graham was the guest speaker for the evening. Also in attendance was Ms. Cassi Davis, who is most known for her role in the TV sitcom, House of Payne.

Also being recognized at the gala was Donald Brown. The Mississippi State student was recently chosen as a Rhodes Scholar recipient.





# Myrlie Evers-Williams Named First Our Mississippi Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Civil rights icon, Myrlie Evers-Williams, was recently named the first Our Mississippi Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Ms. Evers-Williams was recognized at the ourMississippi Honors Gala this past spring in Tupelo, Mississippi.

"I'm almost speechless," Ms. Evers-Williams told the overflow crowd. "I don't know when I've been so moved through the years of my life as I have been this evening. A special thanks to all the people in this room, in which all of you are. Your faith in me tonight, in giving me this award, of being the first, I accept it humbly, I accept it gratefully,

and I love you all."

Naming Ms. Evers-Williams as the first recipient of the award was an easy decision said event chairman, Wesley Wells.

"That was the easiest decision we had to make regarding the whole gala," Wells said. She (Evers-Williams) has given so much of herself to make this state better, and she continues to do so. We are honored to salute her tonight."

Ms. Evers-Williams, who just recently turned 81-years old, told the crowd she will continue the fight for justice as long as she is able.

"It's been a good life. It's been a blessed life,"

she said. "Whatever time I have left, I intend to be in there fighting, scratching and kicking to helping keep all the goodness going."

## MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS BIO

*"Any serious discussion of the civil rights movement's future must deal with at least four moral and organizational imperatives – stewardship, inclusiveness, concern for the disadvantaged, and re-dedication to non-violence as both ethical and effective tools for struggle."*

It was February 1995. With these words Myrlie Evers began her legendary tenure as chairman of the NAACP after defeating the incumbent by one vote.

The NAACP was in disrepair and plagued with financial difficulties, scandal and controversy. Ms. Evers' positive reputation among civil rights activists made her election a cause for renewed optimism among NAACP supporters. Through her unwavering vision as a leader and with determined spirit, she is credited with spearheading the operations that restored the Association to its original status as the premier civil rights organization in America.

She became the first elected chairman-emeritus of the NAACP in 1998 when she retired to establish the Medgar Evers Institute, linking business, government, and communities to further human rights and equality. Today, she serves as the chairman

Myrlie Evers is perhaps best remembered as the widow of Medgar Evers, the Mississippi state field secretary for the NAACP who in 1963 was gunned down in the driveway of his home in Jackson, Mississippi. She waged a painstaking battle to keep her husband's memory and dreams alive and valiantly lobbied to bring his killer to justice. Her diligence eventually paid off when the assassin was brought to trial for a third time and finally, in 1994, was found guilty of the murder of Medgar Evers, more than 30 years after the crime.

Always a voter-registration activist, Evers became a candidate to represent the 24th Congressional District of California in 1970. She went on to become the first black woman to head the Southern California Democratic Women's Division and was convener of the National Women's Political Caucus.

Her corporate career began in 1973 with a two year term with the New York firm, Selligman and Latz, Inc. where she held the position of vice president for advertising and publicity. For 10 years Evers-Williams worked for Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO), serving first as the national director for community affairs, and later as director, con-

sumer affairs. During her tenure at ARCO she developed the concept for the first corporate booklet on women in non-traditional jobs, "Women at ARCO".

In 1988, she was the first black woman to be named to the five-member Board of Public Works by Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley, where she helped oversee a budget of nearly \$1 billion.

As an author, Myrlie Evers Williams has captured the work and historical significance of the civil rights movement through several publications chronicling the life of Medgar Evers. In 1967, she co-wrote *For Us, the Living*, with William Peters; and in 2006, with co-author Manning Marable, she penned *The Autobiography of Medgar Evers: A Hero's Life and Legacy Revealed Through His Writings, Letters and Speeches*.

In 1999, she published her personal memoirs, *Watch Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I Was Meant to Be*, which charts her journey from being the wife of an activist to becoming a community leader in her own right.

In addition to holding 16 honorary degrees from leading colleges and universities, Evers is a recipient of numerous civil rights, human rights and community awards. Her governance expertise has been recognized by national and international organizations. In 2007, as NAACP chairman-emeritus, she led a delegation to Paris France to present the Conseil Représentatif des Associations Noires (CRAN) with a recognition award in support of its efforts to achieve racial equality and social justice for black Frenchmen and women. She has been the featured keynote speaker for renowned organizations such as the Milken Institute and TEDx. Augmenting her social justice advocacy work, she remains an often sought after lecturer at colleges and universities.

In January 2012, Myrlie Evers was invited to return to the campus of Alcorn State University in Mississippi, where she is distinguished scholar-in-residence.

Balancing her passion for justice and equality with her love and training for music, her diverse talent was highlighted in a special invitational concert series at Carnegie Hall in December 2012.



In January 2013, President Barack Obama selected Myrlie Evers to deliver the invocation during his second Inauguration, making her the first woman and lay person to have the honor.

Today, Myrlie Evers serves as the chairman of the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Institute (MMEI) and continues the mission of championing civil rights with a focus on history, reconciliation, and education for a new generation of leaders. ■

# Seven Mississippi corporations Honored for Their Diversity Practices



Gunner Goad accepted the crystal award for AT&T.

"I'm delighted to accept this award on behalf of AT&T," Goad said. "The commitment to employ a diverse workforce is one of the key points to our business and the success of AT&T."



Kelisha Garrett accepted for Caesars Entertainment.

"I'm proud to accept on behalf of Caesars Entertainment," Garrett said. "One of our main initiatives is supplier diversity. I think with programs like this, and the panelists that are here, we have all shown that these are the initiatives we need to move forward with."



Roberto Ortega accepted on behalf of Caterpillar.

"I am truly honored to be able to accept this award on behalf of Caterpillar and our Caterpillar team," Ortega said. "Caterpillar strongly supports diversity."



Grover Hardin accepted on behalf of Kimberly Clark.

"On behalf of Kimberly Clark and our global company, I'd like to thank this organization," Hardin said. "We are very happy to be here and we look forward to more of these."



Jeffrey Webster accepted on behalf of Nissan.


"We are definitely honored to receive this award," Webster said. "Since 2003, Nissan has definitely been able to see the benefit and impact of a diverse workforce. We've seen that in our success as we have built vehicles here in the state of Mississippi."



Sean Suggs accepted on behalf of Toyota.

We are very, very excited to be here tonight," Suggs said. "This is an outstanding evening. At Toyota, we start every meeting with a safety commitment and a diversity commitment. We are proud to be the premier sponsor of this event. It's one of the best we've ever been to in this community. This is just the beginning. We want to continue to be a partner for diversity and help this community grow."



Cyla Clark Rome wasn't able to attend because of travel conflicts, but issued a statement for Entergy. "Thank you for this award and honor tonight. Entergy is so proud to be a sponsor of this great event. We have a mature supplier diversity program at Entergy and we are proud of the 30-plus years of making a difference in the communities we serve." 

Seven Mississippi corporations have been honored for their diversity and inclusion practices at the first annual ourMississippi Honors Gala in Tupelo, Mississippi.

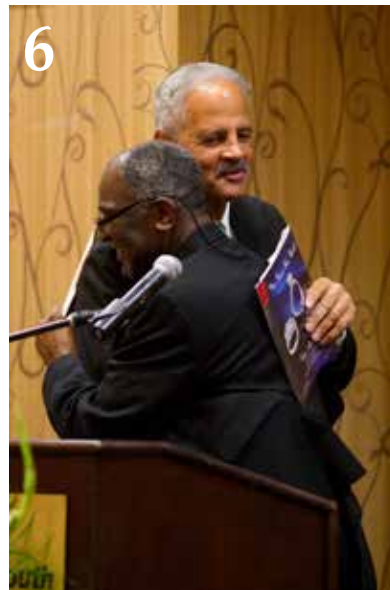
Several hundred people attended the event that was held this past spring at the BancorpSouth Conference Center.

The seven companies selected and honored were

AT&T, Caesars Entertainment, Caterpillar, Entergy, Kimberly Clark, Nissan and Toyota.

"We're proud to honor these companies," said event chairman Wesley Wells. These companies set a great example of how diversity works for Mississippi. Their hiring practices and philanthropy helps set them apart and they prove their commitment to diversity every day. We salute them and hope others will follow their lead. Diversity works for Mississippi."

# ourMississippi HONORS



1. STEDMAN GRAHAM
2. DONALD BROWN
3. JACQUELINE DACE
4. WESLEY WELLS
5. MAYOR JASON SHELTON, STEDMAN GRAHAM AND LISA REED
6. STEDMAN GRAHAM, DR. DONALD COLE
7. REENA EVERS EVERETT
8. CASSI DAVIS
9. GALA CROWD
10. TUPELO MAYOR JASON SHELTON
11. MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS
12. EVENT SPONSORS
13. TABLE SETUP
14. MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS
15. SALLYE STEWART EVENT PLANNING STAFF
16. LISA REED, STEDMAN GRAHAM, JACK REED, JR.
17. JACK REED, JR.
18. STEDMAN GRAHAM
19. GALA CROWD
20. MAYOR SHELTON HANDS OUT KEYS TO THE CITY

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# What is Diversity?

BY SHAYNA RATTLER



There have been many definitions offered as to the true meaning of diversity. The term “diversity” is used broadly to refer to many demographic variables, including, but not limited to, race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, education, geographic origin, and skill characteristics. The concept is most commonly discussed in the workplace, where an attempt is made to not only diversify the employee base, but also to create a culture where everyone understands each other and gets along.

Typically, the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

In my opinion, there is a major challenge with the above definition and concept—it is implied that a change in one’s beliefs, attitudes, and actions must occur for the desired results to take place. Accomplishing this can prove to be extremely difficult, and some cases, impossible to do.

To truly embrace diversity and create real change in the marketplace and world, it

Typically, the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences.

is imperative to get connected to “why” people should change or be committed to diversity. For this to take place we must go beyond simply the right thing to do and move towards doing things right.

The statistics are clear — companies with diverse workforces and those that do business with diverse companies perform better. Bottom line. And in today’s competitive society and marketplace, that is what matters. Value reigns supreme and the true value in diversity is increased innovation and thought leadership, increased productivity and profits, increased global understanding, and increased marketing opportunities. When these things improve, society improves. We can “get along” all day long and there still may not be any real change or forward movement. We should be focusing our energies and efforts on the actions that will create massive impact. [OM](#)



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SHAYNA RATTLER, KNOWN AS THE CORPORATE ATTRACTION COACH, IS THE CEO AND FOUNDER OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY ACADEMY AND IS A LEADING AUTHORITY ON MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT. SHE PROVIDES TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT TO MWBES TO HELP THEM ATTRACT AND RETAIN THEIR IDEAL CORPORATE CLIENT. SHE ALSO PROVIDES SUPPLIER DIVERSITY TRAINING AND CONSULTING TO EMPOWER CORPORATIONS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN THEIR IDEAL SUPPLIER AND TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN. LEARN MORE AT [WWW.SUPPLIERDIVERSITYACADEMY.COM](http://WWW.SUPPLIERDIVERSITYACADEMY.COM)

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## A Major Paradigm Shift is Needed for Supplier Diversity to Survive

BY SHAYNA RATTLER

There is an interesting dichotomy in the supplier diversity industry. Small business owners want to do business with corporations and other large organizations and those organizations want, and in many instances need, to do business with small business owners. However years later, and despite great progress, what seems to be a simple equation still lacks a simple solution.

### THE ISSUE

Small business owners report that they have a difficult time getting business and beating out incumbent suppliers. Procurement and supplier diversity professionals express that they struggle to find quality suppliers who can both offer what they need AND who are “business-ready.” Each of these challenges plus many more we could add to the list create an environment that can make col-

laboration difficult, decrease the flow of innovation, and prevent all parties from reaching optimal performance.

### THE SOLUTION

So why is it so hard? It seems simple—we want to play together but can’t seem to find a way to meet in the middle of the sandbox where the toys are. In order to overcome these challenges and create an environment where everyone involved can play together well in the sandbox small business owners and procurement and supplier diversity professionals must be willing to take responsibility.

So exactly what IS the responsibility at hand? Most are familiar with the famous quote by Gandhi to be the change we wish to see in the world. In order for supplier diversity to evolve and move forward there is a responsibility to develop ourselves and there is a responsibility to be willing to develop others.

Small business owners’ responsibility is to focus on constant growth and development because it is critical to the success of business growth and sustainability. Let’s just be real, many business owners produce a stellar product or service but quite frankly most are not great CEOs.

More importantly, corporations are looking for suppliers who can grow with them and even compete globally. The only way a business can compete at that level is to strengthen the core areas of business that creates sustainable growth. There are 4 pillars of business that can be illustrated by the legs of a table. The pillars are sales, marketing, operations, and finance. If a business is not running at optimal levels in all 4 of those areas equally the table will be wobbly.

If you know there are areas of your business that need a tune up, get the help you need. Don’t go it alone or try to figure it out on your own. Consider contacting SCORE or working with a business coach. Most businesses see a 5x ROI when they work with mentors or coaches.

Procurement and supplier diversity professionals also have a responsibility to be willing to take a proactive approach to develop suppliers. Many corporations may have a mentoring program where their internal staff works to develop a handful of suppliers at a time but not much more than that. In fact, many corporations don’t feel it’s their responsibility to provide opportunities for suppliers to work “on” their business.

Question—at what point does it become your responsibility because let’s face it, if a supplier drops the ball somewhere during the process

your end customer is likely to view it as your company dropping the ball! The simple truth is many small business owners have significant opportunities for improvement that if seized would make them even more valuable partners to your organization.

Consider offering 1-day workshops where you bring in outside experts to provide opportunities for growth in business development. This can be a great add-on to a vendor fair or other event you currently put on. You can also make webinars available to your suppliers.

It can look many ways but in order to achieve maximum results it is critical that you do 3 things:

1. Don’t overlook core business development. Training on how to do business with your company isn’t enough. Neither is only focusing on quality, process and delivery improvement.
2. Have a plan to attempt to develop the majority of suppliers, not only a select few. Doing so prevents smaller suppliers from ever having an opportunity to become a strategic supplier.
3. Leave training and development to the pros. It’s likely not in your wheelhouse and how many have space for one more “thing” to be added to their plates?

In an effort to bring both sides together an action plan is required to create a solution to the problem. In looking at the challenges and responsibilities where do you see opportunity for growth and what do you most need next to make it a reality? Further, what is something you can do in the next 7 days to start the ball rolling? Do you need to get support and guidance in one of the 4 pillars of small business development or perhaps you need to implement a quarterly webinar for suppliers?

A major paradigm shift is required if the supplier diversity industry is going to keep up in this globalized economy. Additionally, corporations and small business owners alike are going to have to be willing and courageous enough to step away from “what the industry has always done,” and move forward toward “what the industry needs.” That is the only way we will achieve different results. ■



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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# Jeffrey Webster

## Nissan's Director of Diversity & Inclusion for the America's

BY REGINA EICHELBERGER BOYD, PH.D.

Jeffrey Webster is no stranger to the Nissan family; he has been with Nissan North America, Inc. for 29 years.

Prior to his current position, Jeffrey was the Human Resource (HR) Director at the Nissan Canton Vehicle Assembly Plant in Canton, Mississippi. Since April 1, 2014, Jeffrey has served as the Director of Diversity and Inclusion for the Americas Region. He is responsible for overseeing the diversity activities for the entire Americas team, which includes the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

"We not only continue to do those things that we've done in the past but also increase those ef-

forts as it pertains to Nissan and the community," Webster said, regarding diversity.

Jeffrey Webster has not always been in management at Nissan. He credits work ethics taught as a youngster and working hard as the catalyst that prepared him for his career path, which included working on the Nissan assembly line at the company's Smyrna, TN plant when he began in 1984. In addition, Jeffrey point outs that individuals have helped him to obtain varied positions as he worked his way up in the company.

"I know what it means for other people to help you and for other people to reach out to you," Webster adds.

Jeffrey calls Nissan North America, Inc. a trendsetter when describing the company's role in making diversity all-inclusive with regard to race, gender, culture, and age.

"Nissan has been a trendsetter; does that say that we're where we want to be? No!" Webster said. "We are progressing every year to show other companies that this is what you do when it comes to diversity, and this is what causes your company to grow because the same people that buy your vehicles should feel like that they are part of your company and that they see the people internal to your company as being a part."

According to Jeffrey, diversity in upper management can increase despite some critics saying that diversity fades as one moves up the corporate ladder.

"If you don't have the support and if people don't see it at the top, it's almost like talking the talk and not walking the walk," Webster said. "You can tell people all day we're a diverse organization...but if people don't see those same actions at the top, then there's a problem."

Generally, proponents of diversity and multiculturalism in corporate America say that diverse teams generate better and more innovative solutions.

"When you bring people together with diverse backgrounds and diverse ideas then you're not just putting yourself in a box; you are allowing those individuals that have differences of opinions and ideas to express themselves and to share those ideas," Webster said.

Comparatively, Nissan is one of the leading multicultural marketing companies in the automobile industry. Even so, Nissan plans to continue to grow as a more diverse corporation.

"We have a workforce here at Canton that's from all over the state of Mississippi; we've hired our employee base from here," Webster said. "For years, the Canton plant has recognized diversity through annual celebrations of Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and American Indian Heritage Month."

Webster notes that Nissan's celebration of diversity is ongoing and Nissan is committed to ensuring that its employees are educated on diversity and inclusion. In particular, one way Nissan continues to strive for diversity in the workplace and among its employees is through Business Synergy Teams (BSTs), which strive to "leverage diversity to

achieve business objectives, expand cross-functional interaction and assist with community outreach" (Nissan Motor Company Sustainability Report 2013).

Webster also noted that the Women's Business Synergy Team (WBST) is a part of the Canton facility along with the newly formed Multicultural Business Synergy Team (MBST), which targets the company's consumer-relations capabilities through cross-cultural communications and awareness.

"We have a commitment to diversity; it's more than just talk; it's putting that talk into action. We definitely have the most diverse consumer base among our competitors, and we want our employee engagement and community outreach efforts to reflect that," Webster reiterated.

Webster says Nissan's commitment to diversity is part of its overall strategy to support long-term growth. As recognition of such efforts for workforce diversity, *DiversityInc Magazine* named Nissan North America to its Top 25 Noteworthy Companies for 2014 (*DiversityInc Magazine*, April 2014).

Webster further identifies that Nissan's commitment to diversity includes its supplier base, dealer network and consumer outreach, along with Nissan's philanthropic presence. Webster lists areas in which Nissan gives back to the community to include

the areas of humanitarianism, diversity, education, and environmentalism.

"We're definitely big on education. Last year, we partnered with the Canton Public School District with a donation of a half million dollars. We want to make sure those schools, which are located within the community where we operate are successful as it pertains to education and the minority community," Webster added.

"From 29 years of experience with Nissan, this is a company that supports an employee and employees' ideas, and this is a company that's definitely an inclusive company. There are opportunities at the company. Unless you just want to sit in the same position, there are opportunities at Nissan," Webster commented.

Hence, when asked about advice he would share with incoming corporate professionals who would like to become a part of the diverse Nissan family Jeffrey suggests: "Definitely go to our website, which is [www.nissan.jobs](http://www.nissan.jobs). There are positions put on the website that will allow people to attach their resumes to those positions." ■

"When you bring people together with diverse backgrounds and diverse ideas then you're not just putting yourself in a box; you are allowing those individuals that have differences of opinions and ideas to express themselves and to share those ideas."



JACKIE HOGAN STANDING IN FRONT OF A NEWLY ROLLED OUT TOYOTA COROLLA.

# Jackie Hogan

## Talks on Being a Woman in Leadership, Education, and Toyota's Impact on Community

BY KIERRA RANSEY

She wears a lot of hats. When Jackie Hogan isn't busy being the General Manager of Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Mississippi, Inc., where she is responsible for all of the human resources functions including staffing, development, external affairs, supplier support, internal communication, among many other things, she is the wife of Bob Hogan and the mother of three children.

She'd never thought she would have made it this far though. Growing up in small-town Kentucky, there weren't many options for her to consider.

"My goals have been reached and exceeded," Hogan said in an interview. "Coming up in a small town in Kentucky, you didn't really think beyond two or three career opportunities."

Hogan is the example of the changes that can occur in a generation with education. Neither of her parents had an education above an 8th grade level; however, her and all of her siblings have attained success beyond what their parents imagined or expected.

"It really is amazing [how many changes occurred] in one generation from the poverty level to the education level," Hogan said. "How often does that happen and in how many countries do you have the opportunity to make that change. It's education."

Even though her parents didn't have much of an edu-

cation, they encouraged their children to pursue their dreams. They wanted their children to do what made them happy even if it didn't include a formal college education.

"They always wanted us to do what made us happy," Hogan stated. There was never a push for us to go to college, but that is what they wanted."

Hogan's parents weren't the only people who had an impact on her life. Many people in her community had a hand in shaping who she has become, from schoolteachers to local politicians.

"The mayor of our very small town was one of the people that saw something in me and helped me get summer jobs," Hogan reminisced. "We had no political affiliations whatsoever, but he just helped me."

Hogan also attributes her present success to a love of reading. She fell in love with the world of books after people read Bible stories to her and she hasn't escaped that world.

"When you have a love for reading and you instill that in a child very early, it makes a difference in how they do in almost everything for the rest of their lives," Hogan explained.

Because of a strong community and family unit, Hogan rose from a small-town Kentucky girl to a woman who is one of the managers of a corporation. Being a woman in an industry dominated by males doesn't intimidate her; it



HOGAN GIVES SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS TO AN EMPLOYEE.

makes her work tougher.

"Most of my career, there have been a lot of times where I am the only woman in the room," Hogan said. "I've never really paid much attention to that, I just try to do a good job on whatever I'm working on. The guys around here will tell you that I don't back down from much."

Hogan's role in Toyota and the community has given her a level of influence among many women, young and old. Women who once felt limited by glass ceilings look to Hogan to show them that there really are no limitations. She doesn't take her responsibility as a role model lightly, but she actively engages in mentoring and advising women on how to survive and thrive in the business world.

"I never thought to myself 'Wow I really want to be a role model' but it at some point dawned on me that whether you want to be or intend to be a role model you are," Hogan said.

Whether she is indirectly modeling behavior through her actions or directly mentoring women as the advisor of Toyota's women's leadership forum, Hogan knows the impact she has on the woman surrounding her.

#### IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

Hogan is just one of the examples of how Toyota has impacted the entire area of North Mississippi. Toyota has been an asset to North Mississippi, not just financially, but culturally as well.

"When most people think of Toyota, they think of those jobs and the financial impact that the payroll has had on the community, but we want to be known beyond that," Hogan stated. "We want to be known not just for having good jobs, but we want to influence the culture of the community as well."



"One of the things that I hope we are doing for this area is raising the profile of the community as a good place to do business and a place where you have a good work force, a place where you are very business friendly."

The company has impacted the community in many different ways both directly and indirectly. One of the things that Toyota wants to do is make North Mississippi more business-friendly.

"One of the things that I hope we are doing for this area is raising the profile of the community as a good place to do business and a place where you have a good work force, a place where you are very business friendly," Hogan said. "Whether it's direct or indirect I hope we change [the community] in growth, in the standard of living, our employees, and continuing to bring more and more jobs into this community."

#### DIVERSITY

Toyota is also working very hard to indirectly influence diversity in the community. They make sure that every employee has diversity training. They also make the people in supervisory positions go through extra diversity training. Hogan hopes that the training will not only affect the employees, but she hopes that the education will trickle out into the community.

"When folks are exposed to different cultures internally and they are exposed to the education of diversity and inclusion with the training and other opportunities, and partnering groups, they are able to take that back into the community. That can

be a driving force for changing their outlook on life," Hogan said.

Both Toyota and Hogan promote the idea that there are no limitations. Children growing up in the community can look at both Hogan and her place of employment and see that opportunities are limitless.

Hogan has proved that glass ceilings and limitations can be shattered..

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— Mayo Flynt, President, AT&T Mississippi

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— Haley Fisackerly, President and CEO, Entergy Mississippi, Inc.



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## Tracey Morant Adams: Renasant Bank's Senior Vice President

BY REGINA EICHELBERGER BOYD, PH.D.

**T**racey Morant Adams joined Renasant Bank the Fall of 2013 as Senior Vice President and Small Business and Community Development Director.

She shares that with her position, Renasant is branching out in a new direction to broaden its community outreach and to build a platform for community development within all of the various neighbors and communities that they serve.

"Renasant remains very committed to small business, and community development growth. This commitment has flourished more significantly in recent years, but has been a guiding principle for the bank throughout its 110 year history," Adams said. "As the company has grown, more specifically within the last seven years, it has sensed the need to put very direct and intentional focus around community development. So, I joined the Remnant seven months ago to lead that effort corporate-wide."

Tracey received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business from the University of Montevallo in Montevallo, Alabama and a Master of Business Administration from Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. She also studied quantitative economics at Temple University in Philadelphia. Tracey started out in banking with AmSouth Bank, which is now Regions Bank, in the Management Associates Program immediately following business school in the early '90's.

Tracey's career path led her in another direction within the public sector that included working in utilities with BellSouth Telecommunication, then AT&T, after which Tracey began as the Director of Economic Development for the City of Birmingham. Tracey credits her time while working with the city of Birmingham in economic development as contributing to her current position.

"My role with the City of Birmingham really served me greatly as the business liaison handling business recruitment, and business retention for a public entity. I feel that it specifically positioned me for re-entry into the private or corporate setting," Adams said. "Coming to Renasant, allowed me to marry both the private experiences and the public experiences that I've had in my career nicely; this will benefit greatly my success here at the bank, where I will be focused on community development and investment." From prior career experience and in her current position as Senior Vice President and Small Business and Community Development Director, Tracey has learned that there is good business everywhere.

"We, as companies that are sincerely and passionately concerned about helping those businesses grow, recognizing that as they grow our communities grow; we have to be embrace of all businesses, all good quality businesses to see if there is a way that we can help them to be successful in their business venture." Adams expounded.

Hence, to further small business and community development at Renasant Bank, Tracey has initiated a theme of

Recruit, Respond, and Retain.

"We want to recruit small businesses; respond to their needs recognizing that everybody's needs may not be the same, and as a good corporate citizen, we have to individualize sometimes in order to help a business." Adams explained. "Once we have an established relationship with a business and they believe in our sincerely to help them be successful, then we can retain that business relationship for many years to come."

When speaking on diversity in the boardroom, Adams stated that Diversity is critical to business success in today's workplace.

"We must recognize the fact that a diverse workforce drives economic growth," Adams stated. "It is vitally important that we embrace all ideas, all cultures of people in order to show that our boardroom looks like the populations that we serve; because, our population is diverse."

Generally speaking, proponents of diversity and multiculturalism in corporate America say that a diverse workforce is integral to a strong economy. Tracey supports this concept as it relates to diversity in business ownership, particularly among women of color.

"I think it relates very well, and it's true. It should not be a barrier, your ethnicity, nor gender should not be a barrier to the growth of your business, and it should not be a barrier to the growth of the economy," Adams pointed out.

Tracey highlights that a part of her role is to bring a framework of consistency around all those activities, "So that we can be very intentional in identifying areas that specifically need more of our help, and we can be of a service to those areas as volunteers, as community servants within our schools, within our churches, and rebuilding communities that have gone through tragedies, that have gone through storms, flooding, and in need of revitalization."

Tracey is passionate about her family and her family ties. Tracey is married to her "wonderful, wonderful husband, [her] best friend and life partner," Jeffery Adams. They have one son, Jeffery Jr. Tracey is the daughter of Mrs. Callie Morant, a "spry" retired educator and the late Rev. John H. Morant. Tracey has one brother, Blake Morant and sister-law, Paulette. Her hobbies include traveling to warm spots, reading and giving time to various civic organizations. Tracey is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Also, Tracey is a member New Pilgrim Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL, The Links, Inc., and a former member of The Junior League of Birmingham. In addition, she serves on a number of boards and agencies including The Talladega College Board of Directors, The United Way Board of Central Alabama and The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham. She is very passionate about the rights of women and children and, therefore commits herself to offer service through organizations focused on meeting their needs. Tracey and her family reside in the metro area of Birmingham, Alabama. ■■■



## From meter reader to mentor

### *Mississippi Power's Frank Magee inspiring new generation*

When it comes to energizing young people about the future, Mississippi Power's Frank Magee hopes to give others just a bit of the inspiration given to him. Magee is the president of Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE), a group made up of energy professionals who encourage and mentor colleagues and students to pursue the education and training needed to land good jobs in the energy industry.

The Gulf Coast AABE chapter will celebrate its 10th anniversary later this year. Magee is proud that the group has connected with hundreds of high school and college students through career fairs, scholarships and mentoring programs.

"The kicker for me is reaching kids. They see someone who



*Magee speaks to members at a Gulf Coast Chapter AABE meeting.*

looks like them, who came from the same neighborhood and doing something," Magee said. "Some of these kids don't see someone dressed in a suit to go to work. They may see someone in a suit at church on Sunday, but to see someone dressed for professional setting and a corporate environment is eye opening and inspiring."

Inspiration and mentorship have guided Magee throughout his nearly 15 years at Mississippi Power. At 22 Magee left college and took a temp job as a meter reader. After just a few months,

he became an apprentice lineman. It wasn't long before Magee was back in college.

"I wanted a future in a solid industry," Magee said. "I was encouraged to go back to school and earn my degree. I went to night school and then doors began to open."

Magee has opened many doors to a variety of different jobs. Now a senior community development representative, Magee uses his experience to promote AABE programs that bring energy professionals into classrooms across the 23 counties served by Mississippi Power.

"I've had the chance to do a lot of different things, but it all started reading meters and having people who believed in me," Magee said.

For more information about AABE, go to <http://aabe.org/gulfcoast>.



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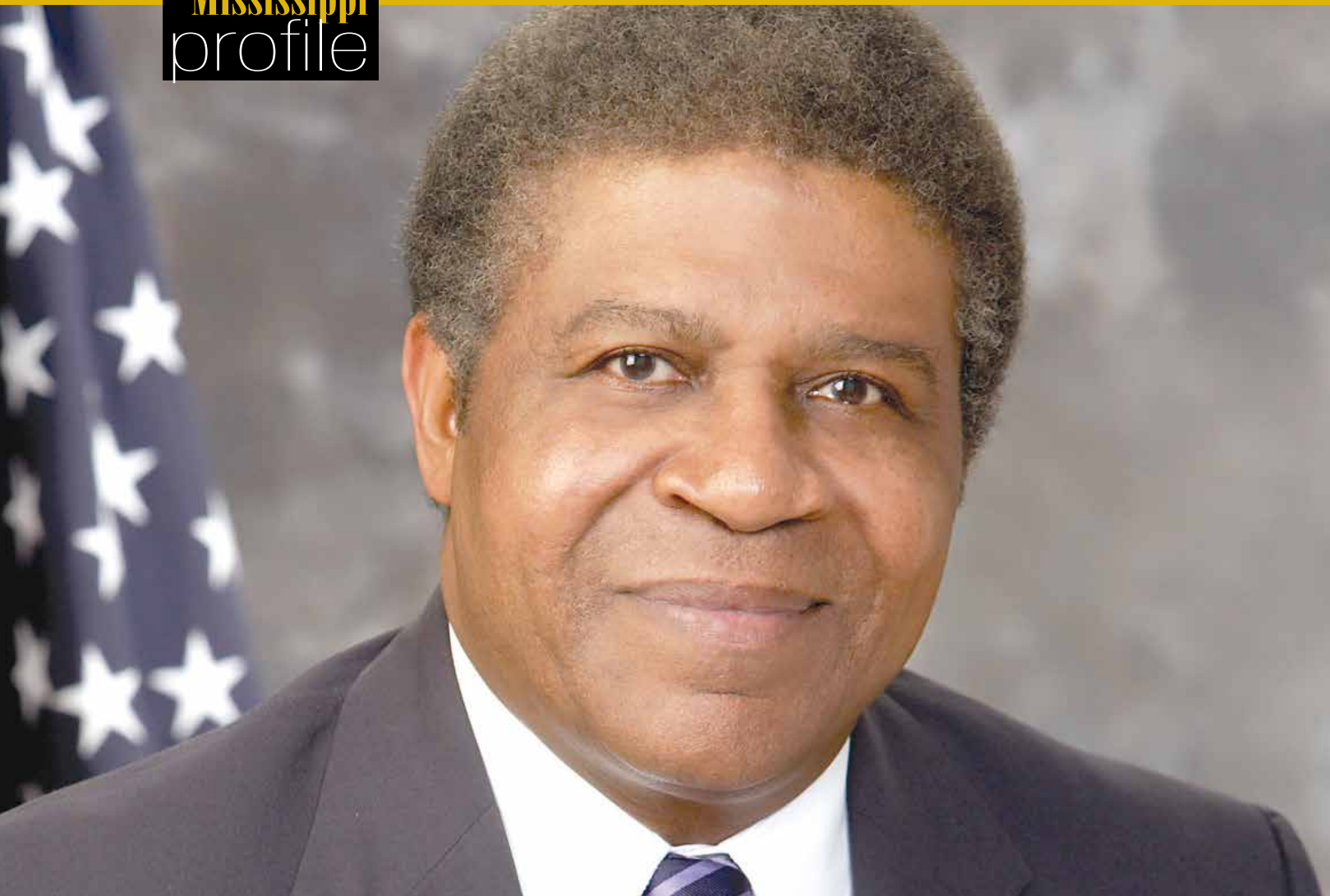


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# Bob Covington Helps Small Businesses Thrive

BY KIERRA RANSEY

**F**or the small, minority or female business owner who has questions: Bob Covington is the person with some of the answers.

Covington is the director of the Minority and Small Business Development Division (MSBDD) of the Mississippi Development Authority. He has been in that position since February of 2010. As the director, he is in charge of making short-term and long-term plans to assist minority business owners

throughout the state.

"[We] emphasize the minority part of the Minority and Small Business Development Division because of our mission as the state's advocate for minorities and women owned businesses," Covington said in an interview.

The businesses that Covington and the division provides resources and assistance to are numerous and diverse.

"These businesses range from beauty salons,

convenience stores, day cares, and go across the whole range of small businesses just like the national trend data," Covington stated.

Covington offers the owners of these small businesses several resources to assist them as they make the transition from surviving to thriving in the business world. Because Covington's division serves the entire state, they alone can only offer limited resources; however, they often partner with other organizations and manage to offer numerous resources through those relationships.

"We piggyback with a lot of resources," Covington stated. "We work with the Small Business Administration (SBA), Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Planning and Development District Offices (PDD's), and a lot of non-profits and professional service providers (consultants) that do some of the same things we do, and from time to time help us carry out parts our mission and objectives."

Covington believes that small minority businesses not only affect the state's economy, but they affect the communities they serve as well.

"Typically minority businesses hire other minorities," Covington said. "Therefore, obviously, minority business development is a key economic driver in those underserved and socially disadvantaged communities."

Although Covington's office provides assistance to minority and women business owners, his office is not limited to those demographics only. They also have programs to help all small business owners regardless of gender and ethnicity. The Mississippi Procurement and Technical Assistance Program (MPTAP) is a bureau of the MSDB division. It provides technical assistance to the state's small business owners interested in procurement opportunities with federal, state and local units of government. Local PTAC offices can be found in various cities throughout the state.

The Minority and Small Business Development Division takes pride in the fact they take a personal approach to each business owner. Although there are goals and objectives, we concentrate on the quality of each encounter as we counsel with every business owner.

"We are very passionate about what we do and have approached this a little bit differently than the typical approach," Covington said. In our advocacy role and we're trying to create additional opportunities by providing information and trying to build capacity in those communities and in those businesses so that they can compete."

Covington does this by connecting small business owners to resources and opportunities that they might not have known about.

"I found that gaining access to those opportunities [are useful] because [the businesses we serve] sometimes do not have the business infrastructure and they might not be connected with a lot of the civic groups and professional

organizations where a lot of announcements or activities are first heard," Covington said.

Covington sees his organization as an ambassador trying to provide information to the small businesses lacking membership or association with civic groups and professional organizations.

"We try to tie [small-businesses] into those resources so that they will have access to them and they can build their businesses and they can direct their resources in the right direction," Covington said.

Covington advises people who are thinking of starting a business to do their homework. His division has people there to assist business owners with that aspect of starting a business as well.

"We have an Entrepreneur Center at MDA which serves the entire state and it has a lot of research information and a very capable staff of individuals that can do professional counseling," Covington said.

In addition to the MDA Entrepreneur Center, Covington's office also directs potential entrepreneurs and established business owners to others avenues where they can get assistance.

"There are numerous other resources throughout the state," Covington continued. "Each community college typically has a small business development center (SBDC) that gives one free access to information and things such as entrepreneur's tool kits that will help you in devising your own business plan."

In addition to offering resources to business owners and potential business owners, Covington and his office also have training programs to empower entrepreneurs and make them competitive.

"We provide credit repair workshops, we provide training on setting up accounting systems, and we have been sponsoring other training programs in all geographical regions throughout the state about every year," Covington said.

Although the country is emerging from a deep recession right now and has affected small business regionally, Covington thinks that now is the perfect time to prepare for the coming recovery.

"We know that the economy will eventually fully recover and there will be additional opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs," Covington stated. "Now we are preaching that it is time to start preparing for those opportunities. Now is the time to prepare and now is the time to get your business ready for the eventual end of the recession and the recovery is in full bloom."

Covington believes that his office is contributing to the growth of diverse businesses throughout the state. He is helping get socially disadvantaged business owners into the mainstream and that will benefit both the economy and image of Mississippi. ■■■



# Diversity more than a Black and White issue

## Israel Martinez Speaks on Multi-Cultural Businesses in Mississippi

BY KIERRA RANSEY

COURTESY PHOTO

In Mississippi, the issue of diversity is no longer a black and white issue. That is one thing that Mexican business-owner Israel Martinez proves.

At 28-years-old, Martinez is the owner of a computer service and a language school that teaches Spanish and English to the local and immigrant community. Martinez started both businesses because he saw the need for them in his community.

Even though being his own boss brings its own set of challenges, Martinez enjoys the freedom that being an entrepreneur has.

"There are many great benefits in working for yourself," Martinez said. "You have the freedom to make decisions. You aren't working under somebody, and if you fail it is your responsibility."

Martinez represents the epitome of the American Dream. Although he has attained a level of success now, that hasn't always been the case.

"I am originally from Mexico," Martinez stated. "I came to the states when I was 17-years old with my family and I worked for two businesses before I started my own company."

Martinez spent the formative years of his life in Veracruz, Mexico. He described Mexico as a mix-up of situations. There were some cities that were safe and other cities that were not.

"There are areas [in Veracruz] that are extremely dangerous and other areas that are peaceful and beautiful and it is a good life," Martinez said. "Where I grew up, there was no major crime or things like that, but lately we are having those situations and several areas are dangerous."

Upon coming to the United States at 17, Martinez found that there were more opportunities

"There are more opportunities here, particularly in business," Martinez stated. "The corruption is also different here than in other places. There is more security and people have a better income and they can purchase [my] products and services."

Even though he was not raised in America, he has similar traits to other successful business people, proving that success isn't relegated to one specific culture.

"I have confidence and I work towards my goals without giving up," Martinez said. "I also work with different people and learn from them. I have several friends who are business owners and they provide me with advice. I look at different success stories and learn from them."

In his experience in Mississippi, Martinez has experienced

the subject of diversity being talked about in terms of black and white.

"I love Mississippi and I am a positive person," Martinez started. "But everybody knows that Mississippi is black and white on many things including the fact that we talk diversity in Mississippi in terms of black and white."

Martinez stated that he saw more separation when he first arrived around 2005, but as time went on he began to see more cultures in Mississippi such as Asians and Hispanics.

"It's changing," Martinez said of diversity in Mississippi. "But it's not everywhere. When we go to the rural areas, it is still black and white."

He wants to bring awareness to the fact that there are more people here that can't be fit into specific categories.

Martinez is the Vice President of Laba Link, the Latin American Business Association.

According to the website, Laba Link is "is the newest and most active, culturally-diverse organization that brings people and businesses together."

"We created [Laba Link] because we saw the need for an association," Martinez said. "Whenever anyone comes to the United States and they want to start a business,

people have no idea about the legal steps. So we gather with several business owners and help each other with our experience and help the new people with their ventures."

In addition to meetings, Laba Link also host several events for professionals to network, have fun, and experience different cultures.

"We have a rich culture and we did not have events or festivals where we could enjoy and attend and have some fun time," Martinez said. "We mentioned the goals and came up with the Latin Fest which is a Latin Festival."

With the monies that they raise from the Latin Festival, Laba Link plans to hire an Executive Director of Laba Link and open up an office that performs the same functions that a chamber of commerce does.

Laba Link not only helps Latin American business owners, however they are also changing attitudes about race and ethnicity in their community.

"We are a bridge," Martinez stated. "Local businesses want to do business with the immigrants. When we work in groups we are more powerful and can do better things than just working by ourselves."

Martinez anticipates a future where it will be a common thing to see different races and ethnicities in public and in restaurants. ■■■





## Meet Shellie Michael

### Chief Executive Officer, Mississippi Minority Business Alliance, Inc. (MMBA)

**O**ur Mississippi Magazine spoke with Shellie to get her views on the organization.

**OUR MISSISSIPPI: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI MINORITY BUSINESS ALLIANCE?**

**Michael:** The MS Minority Business Alliance . . . known to many as the “MMBA” . . . primary mission is to enhance opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses. Our goal is to expand and/or create mutually beneficial relationships between minority owned businesses, suppliers and service organizations throughout the state of Mississippi. As the only statewide minority business alliance, MMBA advocates, facilitates and brokers for the advancement of minority businesses.

**OM: HOW LONG HAS THE MMBA BEEN AROUND?**

**Michael:** MMBA was created to thrust minority businesses into the maximum of business and commerce in MS. The founders felt this goal could only be achieved if a critical mass of minority businesses in the State united to work toward the common goal of providing greater customer satisfaction to enhance market share, profitability, and growth. The founders also realized the pivotal role major institutions (e.g. corporate, educational, financial and governmental) can play in the success of minority businesses. So, in March of 1997, minority businesses and corporate representatives from across the state met in Jackson and, as a result of the meeting, the Mississippi Minority Business Alliance, Inc. (“MMBA”) was formed.

**OM: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WITH AND WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITH THE ORGANIZATION?**

**Michael:** I have been with the organization for 2 ½ years. I am responsible for the provision of leadership and advocacy of minority business development; implementation and evaluation of programs to increase and/or enhance opportunities for MBEs; day to day operations; increasing corporate, government and MBE membership; develop annual and long range goals and objectives; prepare annual budget for operations; and implement special events and programs.

**OM: WHAT OUTREACH (COVERAGE AREAS) DOES THE ORGANIZATION HAVE?**

Some of my immediate goals: Adequate funding, more staff, staff development, board development, technology support, marketing, grow membership and mentor businesses to become more successful, and making minority businesses more competitive.

**Michael:** The MMBA is headquartered in Jackson, MS and the entire state of Mississippi is our service area.

**OM: WHAT IS THE MAKEUP OF THE ORGANIZATION?**

**Michael:** The MMBA governing body consists of fifteen (15) individual Directors. Eight (8) members from the corporate membership; four (4) MBE members; and three (3) members from the non-profit and governmental entities.

**OM: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE GOALS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE FOR THE ORGANIZATION?**

**Michael:** Some of my immediate goals are as follows:

Adequate funding, more staff, staff development, board development, technology support, marketing, grow membership and mentor businesses to become more successful, and making minority businesses more competitive.

**OM: HAVE YOU SEEN THE ORGANIZATION MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS THOSE GOALS OVER THE YEARS?**

**Michael:** YES. I have seen progress; but, there needs to be more traction.

**OM: WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES AND HOW DO YOU OVERCOME THOSE CHALLENGES?**

**Michael:** One of the biggest challenges we face is access to capital to sustain the organization and assist the minority businesses in their growth and development.

More corporate sponsorship and government commitment is needed to meet these needs for the clients that we serve. In addition, one of our immediate needs is to access state and federal resources. There is a need for regional inclusiveness

**OM: WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE ORGANIZATION IN 10 YEARS?**

**Michael:** I would like the MMBA to be the premier business development organization in the Southeast. The goal is to be a one-stop organization that provides complete business development services. However, when all is said and done, the ultimate goal is the development and quality of life for the businesses that we serve. We want to be that organization that other entities, seeking qualified minority businesses for their projects, will come to.

*The Mississippi Minority Business Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contact Shellie Michael at (601) 965-0366 or email [smichael@mmba.us](mailto:smichael@mmba.us) for additional information.*



COURTESY PHOTO

# The Sky is Not The Limit for Che Clay

BY KIERRA RANSEY

“Failure is not an option,” Che Clay stated matter-of-factly. That is her motto. The people who work with her laugh because she says it often; but those aren’t just words to her. Success is and has always been a way of life for Clay.

That motto mixed with Clay’s strong work ethic catapulted her from a bank teller in Sulligent, Alabama to the Senior Vice President & Chief Compliance Officer of BancorpSouth.

“I have a very strong work ethic,” Clay said. “It was instilled in my from a very young age by my grandmother, Alean Stewart.”

She certainly needs a strong work ethic to thrive in her work environment. As the Chief Compliance Officer of a bank that serves eight states, she interacts with everyone at the bank from tellers to the Board of Directors as she coordinates and oversees regulatory compliance. There is not a typical day in her field, but that is what she loves about her career.

“I like a challenge. I feel like what I’m doing makes a difference,” Clay said. “I constantly learn on this job. I learn so much about the company and our people.”

When she began her career as a bank teller in 1993, she had no clue how far she would rise in the banking industry. She didn’t even think she would stay in banking. She left the position as a bank teller because she felt as if she hit a glass ceiling and she did not look back until she started at BancorpSouth in 2001.

“Even though I have not always been in banking, every job I have ever had in my life prepared me for the next job,” Clay said.

Clay owes her current professional success to her family and upbringing. Even though she grew up in small-town Sulligent, Alabama and didn’t have many material possessions, she still felt complete.

“We didn’t have much, but I never felt like I was missing anything,” Clay reminisced.

Even though Clay’s mother never graduated high school, she pushed Clay to get an education. Clay remembered a time when her mother wouldn’t let her get a factory job even though people around her were working there.

“She absolutely forbid me [to get that job],” Clay said. “She said that she was afraid that if I started working full time and making money, I would pass on my education. I didn’t understand it then, but I understand it now.”

She also received many of the traits that made her successful in her career from her mother and grandmother. Clay’s mother taught her how to be independent and self-sufficient. She didn’t want her child to be dependent on anyone. Her grandmother taught her about the value of work. Her grandmother got Clay her first job cleaning houses.

“I couldn’t even drive,” Clay said, speaking of her first job. “My grandmother took me to and from work. She taught me how to work, earn, and how to take away

all excuses.”

Clay has come a long way from cleaning houses and none of it has been linear or traditional.

“I was really good at math, so I thought that accounting was a natural course,” Clay said. “After two years as an accounting major, I decided that I didn’t want to be an accountant. I had no clue what I wanted to do. I went to work at a small law firm years later and had a ‘eureka’ moment.”

After marrying Darrell Clay and becoming the mother of two children, Darrell and Jasmine, she decided to return to college to get a Bachelor’s degree so she could attend law school.

So Clay went to law school as a wife, a mother, and employee. Even though the three years she spent in law school were difficult, the law degree introduced her to many opportunities that she would have never been exposed to. Surprisingly, a lot of those opportunities that opened weren’t in a law firm, but at BancorpSouth.

“I learned that there was so much I could do with a law degree and being at BancorpSouth exposed me to those opportunities,” Clay said.

So now she is the Senior Vice President of a large corporation. She is one of the few females and minorities who hold such a high position; however, she refuses to be limited by her race and gender.

“I have not put myself in a box of being a woman in a position or a minority in a position,” Clay stated. “I would not want to limit myself in that way.”

Even though she is aware that some aspects of her job are challenging; she refuses to let those challenges overwhelm or stop her.

“I don’t discount that it is challenging to be a female in certain careers,” Clay said. “I refuse to allow myself to use it as an excuse for anything. Someone else may want to create a stumbling block, but I refuse to let someone else’s problem become my problem.”

Clay started at BancorpSouth as an employee in the Central Loan Operations area and her education and hard work elevated her to the role of Senior Vice President. Her story is the epitome of BancorpSouth’s dedication to diversity.

“We want to make sure that we are not only recruiting in a diverse manner, but we are also interested in the career development of the people we hire,” Clay said. “We want to make sure that we have a well-qualified, diverse workforce.”

Clay did the hard work and went to school, but the management team of BancorpSouth introduced her to the new opportunities that were open to her once she increased her education. Clay is definitely a success story in BancorpSouth.

Clay has no idea where her path is going to end at, but one thing that BancorpSouth has taught her is that the opportunities are limitless.

“I don’t know where I’ll end up,” Clay said. “I don’t feel like I have any limitations. ■■■



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## Q&A with Teresa Baker Chairperson of the Minority PUL Alliance

### OUR MISSISSIPPI: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MINORITY PUL ALLIANCE AND HOW DID IT COME INTO EXISTENCE?

**Teresa:** The Minority PUL Alliance's (MPULA) focus is to increase the region's awareness of minority-owned businesses, bridge the gap in relationships with major corporations by accelerating the growth and capacity of minority businesses, and enhance development in the form of jobs, entrepreneurship, and financial resources. The MPULA

came into existence when the collaboration of the Northeast Mississippi Minority Leaders and businesses caucused and agreed that a minority business development organization was mission critical to meet the needs of minority contracting and procurement needs for area business and industry.

OM: How long has the MPULA been around?

Teresa: The Minority PUL (Power, Unity, Leadership) Alliance was established as a non-profit orga-

nization, May 15, 2007 and chartered by the state of Mississippi, November 27, 2007 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.

### OM: WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A LIVING AND HOW DOES IT TIE IN WITH THE ORGANIZATION?

**Teresa:** I am the Owner/President of Baker & Associates Consulting, Inc. and a Registered Financial Representative of Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial. As the President of Baker & Associates Consulting, I assist minority-owned businesses on how to properly position their business to meet the necessary requirements to connect with corporations through taking a review of their business structure, providing a sound business plan, and review or create a working budget. As a Registered Financial Representative, I go a step further into introducing and educating the small minority business owner on the importance of protection of their business, sustainability for the future of their business and personal retirement planning. Without a solid foundation and thorough financial capture of your business, it can be difficult to connect in the industry. A solid overall foundation is important to the success of any business.

### OM: WHAT OUTREACH (COVERAGE AREAS) DOES THE ORGANIZATION HAVE?

**Teresa:** The MPULA's primary target area is small minority-owned businesses and individuals in the Northeast Mississippi region. This region consists of 17 counties throughout Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Clay, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Lowndes, Marshall, Monroe, Oktibbeha, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union.

### OM: WHAT IS THE MAKEUP OF THE ORGANIZATION?

**Teresa:** The Minority PUL Alliance is governed by a board representing the 17 counties in which it serves. The Board of Directors consists of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Administrative Assistant and a makeup of private businesses and industries. The organization also has a Program Coordinator and a seven member Corporate Board.

### OM: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE GOALS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE FOR THE ORGANIZATION?

**Teresa:** To see the disadvantaged or disenfranchised minority-owned businesses confidently and strongly participate in the economic growth development within the NE MS Region by meeting all regulatory requirements and become competitive entrepreneurs in their field of endeavors.

To see an increase in young minority entrepreneurs on the rise and more educated in their field of what to expect or challenges faced when trying to connect with major corporations.

To see the MPULA excel into a position where its name is associated with producing a group of highly successful minority business owners generated from the

resources, education and high profile networking offered through its services.

### OM: HAVE YOU SEEN THE ORGANIZATION MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS THOSE GOALS OVER THE YEARS?

**Teresa:** Yes, we have had several successful experiences with our women and minority-owned businesses.

The Minority PUL Alliance (MPULA) and the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (MCC) joined forces to conduct a mentoring program for minority businesses in the 17 county area served by the MPULA. In its first effort, the program was designed to serve 15 minority businesses who had volunteered to be part of the six-month long mentoring program. The program had a kick-off orientation session in April of 2012 at the Belden Center of Itawamba Community College. A closing session was held at the Belden Center in which recognitions of completion of the program were given.

The MPULA currently has an established working alliance with various local and state high profile organizations such as: Mississippi Corridor Consortium (MCC); Mississippi State University; Mississippi Development Authority; Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing; North Mississippi Health Services; Magnolia Automotive Services – The James Group; Baptist Memorial Hospital – Union County; BancorpSouth; Innovate Mississippi; Small Business Administration; Community Development Foundation; Jesco, Inc; Three Rivers Planning and Development; Diversity-Vuteq; and Blue Springs Metals. All of who supports the MPULA's mission, this regional economic development initiative, and minority entrepreneurship development to ensure contract opportunities for minorities.

### OM: WHAT HAS BEEN SOME OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES AND HOW DO YOU OVERCOME THOSE CHALLENGES?

**Teresa:** The biggest challenges the MPULA has seen would be the dependence on funding and improving the knowledge and skill level of its members. The nature of the industry is constantly changing and with those changes are new innovative technology, business requirements and increases in capital demands. The MPULA will continue to maintain its strong relationships with the various organizations that have the advanced connections and resources to offer to the organization to better its members' stability in the industry. The MPULA will always be searching for more innovative, thriving organizations who share in the same mission and like-minded goals to build strong relationships.

### OM: WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE ORGANIZATION IN 10 YEARS?

**Teresa:** In the next ten years I would like to see the Minority PUL Alliance financially solvent, having its own corporate office head quarters to expand in the entire Northern part of Mississippi, and fully staffed to include an Executive Director, Membership Director, and Financial Director to secure perpetual existence. ■■■

# FIND YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

## Who Says Dreams Don't Come True?

As a little girl, Jasmine Murray envisioned walking the runway as Miss Mississippi. Even when the top five eluded her in last year's pageant, she held tight to her goals.

Today, Mississippi State joins Jasmine in celebrating a dream come true. Recently crowned Miss Mississippi, the MSU sophomore will represent the Magnolia State in the Miss America pageant in September.

Congratulations, Jasmine. We applaud your accomplishments and send encouragement as you prepare for Atlantic City.

**Keep on Dreaming!**



Mississippi  
cover



COURTESY PHOTOS

# Jasmine Murray Crowned Miss Mississippi

*MSU students take top honors at Miss Mississippi Pageant*

BY ALLISON MATTHEWS

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LEFT TO RIGHT: MISS DEEP SOUTH, CAROLINE CONERLY, 3RD ALTERNATE, MISS MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY, LAURA LEE LEWIS, 1ST ALTERNATE, MISS MISSISSIPPI 2014, JASMINE MURRAY, MISS HISTORIC SOUTH, RANDI-KATHRYN HARMON, 2ND ALTERNATE, MISS NORTH CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI, JESSICA TERRELL, 4TH ALTERNATE

Four of the Top Five Miss Mississippi contestants this year are affiliated with MSU.

Mississippi State students gave a strong representation for the university during the 2014 Miss Mississippi Pageant in Vicksburg July 12.

Jasmine Murray, a sophomore communication/broadcasting major from Starkville, took the crown and will represent the Magnolia State September 14 at the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Murray, who competed as Miss Riverland, reached the Top 10 in 2013 as Miss MSU.

This year's Miss MSU, Laura Lee Lewis, earned first alternate. Lewis is a junior elementary education major from Brookhaven.

"Laura Lee was a very strong competitor and showed a lot of grace and integrity the entire

week," said Amelia Treptow, MSU assistant director for student activities. "We could not be prouder of her and the way that she has represented this great university. We also want to wish Jasmine Murray the best of luck at Miss America in September."

Second alternate in the competition was Randi-Kathryn Harmon, an MSU senior communication/public relations major from Amory who competed as Miss Historic South. Fourth alternate Jessica Terrill is a 2013 magna cum laude graduate of MSU with a major in communication/broadcasting. She also is a former Miss MSU.

Third alternate Caroline Conerly is a student at the University of Mississippi.

"We are so proud that the ladies from MSU have competed with confidence, beauty and intelligence in a way that has served them well individually in pursuit of their goals. It is a point of pride



"We are so proud that the ladies from MSU have competed with confidence, beauty and intelligence in a way that has served them well individually in pursuit of their goals. It is a point of pride for the university to have our institution represented so well during Miss Mississippi"



for the university to have our institution represented so well during Miss Mississippi,” Treptow said.

She said seven Miss MSU’s have been named Miss Mississippi over the past several years, with one going on to claim the Miss America title in 1980.

Additionally, three MSU students who competed with different titles were named Miss Mississippi in recent years.

“All total, that is five MSU students named Miss Mississippi out of the past nine years,” Treptow said.

Treptow said the experience helps young ladies gain confidence, as well as display and develop personal talents. She added that winning a title gives a young woman a platform to voice issues that are important, as well as an opportunity to serve others.


This year’s Miss Mississippi and first alternate, Murray and Lewis, both promoted platforms related to the importance of young women having positive role models in their lives.

“Because they’ve been given a great opportunity to become role models themselves, and



both Jasmine and Laura Lee have been impacted by role models, they each developed platforms which speak to the importance of mentoring,” Treptow said.

Lewis’s platform is called “Mentoring Matters.”

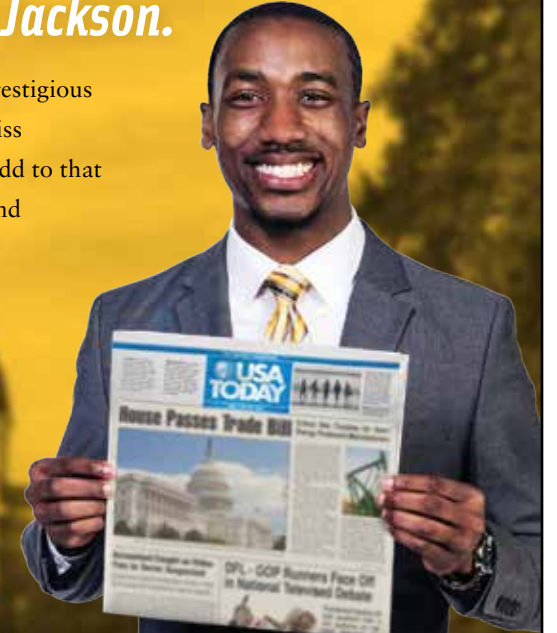
Murray will continue promoting her “13 Going On 30” program which encourages girls not to grow up too quickly. The new Miss Mississippi already has held motivational camps and public speaking tours to reach hundreds of young girls with messages about how to handle peer pressure and bullying. 

# TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

...at Southern Miss student, Wilton Jackson.

Not only was Wilton one of only 20 American students selected for a prestigious internship with *USA Today*, but he is part of a student body at Southern Miss representing every region of the United States and 67 *foreign countries*. Add to that his recent **study-abroad experience** with our Caribbean Studies program, and you’ll find that Wilton has developed the global competence needed to succeed after college.

As this broadcast journalism major bursts through the doors of his future, he is proof that *international experience can be gained close to home*.



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FREEDOM SUMMER VETERAN CHARLES MCLAURIN OF INDIANOLA, CENTER, RECOUNTS HIS EXPERIENCES DURING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI WITH SOUTHERN MISS PROFESSORS DR. LOUIS KYRIAKOUCES, LEFT AND DR. SHERITA JOHNSON AT THE UNIVERSITY'S FREEDOM SUMMER CONFERENCE JUNE 20-21 ON THE HATTIESBURG CAMPUS.

## Freedom Summer Conference Participants Recount Pursuit of Justice

BY DAVID TISDALE

**P**aul Terrell was a 21-year-old college graduate when he came to Mississippi in the summer of 1964 to help African-Americans register to vote. In the face of state and local governments committed to upholding segregation by any means – including with violence – it was a daunting task.

But like many Americans, young and old, Terrell was inspired to help bring justice to a state considered then one of the most ardent in its opposition to equal rights for blacks. “I knew I wanted to do something useful for the country,” he said of his decision to go to Mississippi.

After being trained in Ohio for voter registration work, Terrell was assigned to Hattiesburg to help canvass neighborhoods to register black residents

to vote. “Everyone got really quiet in the car carrying our group when we reached the (Mississippi) state line,” he said.

Last week, Terrell returned to Mississippi for the first time in 50 years to attend The University of Southern Mississippi’s Freedom Summer Conference June 20-21. The conference included presentations and discussions about the experiences of those who came to the state in June 1964 to help break the stranglehold of segregationist law, popularly known as Jim Crow law, in the state and across the country.

It was while he was in Hattiesburg that the murders of three civil rights leaders in Philadelphia, Miss. occurred. “I didn’t get to see much of Hattiesburg when I was here before, except for the

neighborhood where I lived for two months,” Terrell said. “It wasn’t safe for us (voter drive workers) to go into town.”

He praised those who opened their homes to him and other Freedom Summer workers, as they worked together to break down racial barriers and gain access to political power for those marginalized through racial segregation. “They put their own lives at risk doing that, yet they did it. They stood up,” Terrell said.

The conference featured many veterans of the civil rights movement who stood up in the face of beatings, arrest, and murder in their pursuit of justice through marches, sit-ins and attempts to register to vote. They recounted their experiences during a series of roundtable discussions and workshops held at the Thad Cochran Center on the university’s Hattiesburg campus.

Panelists included Hattiesburg natives Dr. Anthony Harris, a Southern Miss alumnus and former university administrator who participated in Freedom Summer as a teenager; Irene Williams Jones, director of the Hattiesburg Public School District’s Harper-Wallin Family Education Center; Stephanie Hoze, executive director of child nutrition for the Hattiesburg Public School District; Hattiesburg city councilwoman Debora Delgado; and Charles McLaurin of Indianola, famed for his work with Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

Other guests at the conference included Hattiesburg na-

tives Peggy Jean Connor and Dorie Ladner, considered by many as icons of the movement and Freedom Summer.

Irene Williams Jones talked about the challenge of being around people like Terrell and other white Freedom Summer workers who “treated us (blacks) like we were real people.” “It was the first time we had been around whites in a capacity that wasn’t ‘yes ma’am, no ma’am,’” she said.

In addition to helping register adults to vote, the Freedom School volunteers taught young children from the black neighborhoods about subjects they weren’t learning about in the “separate but equal” schools they attended. “They would teach us music, algebra, debate, public speaking, things we didn’t get in school. They instilled in us a love for reading. We ate it up,” Jones said.

“They taught us we could do anything. And I knew this (experience) would impact my life forever.”

Dr. Sherita Johnson, director of the university’s Center for Black Studies and one

of the lead organizers of the conference, was inspired by the Freedom Summer participants who came back to Hattiesburg for the conference. “It was also a great opportunity for educators who attended to include what they learned here, including some stories from the movement that we haven’t heard before, in their curriculum focusing on the history of the civil rights movement,” she said.

Dr. Emily Crosby, a professor of history at State University of New York, Geneseo, served as keynote speaker for the conference. Crosby spent part of her youth growing up in Claiborne County and learned firsthand from local people about their impact on the civil rights movement in the state.

While recognizing the powerful impact that better-known civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. had on the movement, Crosby said it was important to learn the story of those who worked at the local level to bring about change. “Looking at the civil rights movement from the bottom up forces us to reconsider it from a different perspective,” she said. “Without knowing this aspect of the movement, we miss out on knowing the power and potential of ordinary people.”

Now a professor emeritus at his alma mater, the University of California, Berkeley, Terrell said he’s impressed at how far Mississippi has come. “After I left that summer, I never really thought of coming back,” he said. “In terms of race relations (the progress) is wonderful to see.” ■



## Construction Continues on Mississippi Museums

Museum of Mississippi  
History and Mississippi  
Civil Rights Museum



COURTESY PHOTOS

Since construction of the museums began in December, 120,000 cubic yards of dirt have been removed, retaining walls built, and foundation work completed. While only the top two floors of the four-story 2MM building will be visible from North Street, all four will be seen from Jefferson Street. The underground floors will house collection storage and exhibit work space. Concrete pouring began in May with the basement floors and will continue as masonry work for both museums begins in July when workers begin building exterior walls and closing in the perimeter of the entire building.

The museums are scheduled to open in 2017 as the centerpiece of the state's bicentennial celebration. To learn more visit [2mississippimuseums.com](http://2mississippimuseums.com).

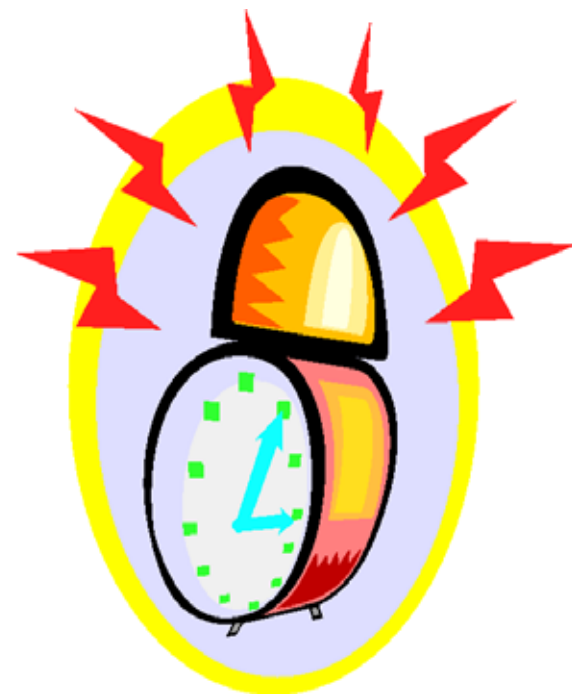
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SPECIAL SECTION:

# Diabetes





# Insulin for Type 2: 9 Things to Know

## Myths and fears about insulin abound. Here's a quick look at the truth

BY ERIKA GEBEL BERG, PHD

**I**a food we eat into the energy that's needed to survive. Type 1 diabetes targets for destruction the cells that make insulin, and so the disease absolutely requires that insulin be taken as a medication. The relationship between insulin and type 2 diabetes is more complicated. People with type 2 can make some of their own insulin, but it's not enough to maintain normal blood glucose levels.

Type 2 diabetes can be treated with medication in several ways: encourage beta cells in the pancreas to make more insulin, help the body be more responsive to the insulin that's there, or deliver more insulin by injection or pump. Without question, the last option is the right call for certain people with type 2 diabetes. Are you one of them? There are a lot of myths about insulin, leading some to view the medication with suspicion. It's time to clear up what's insulin fact, what's fiction, and what's not necessarily so.

### 1. ONCE YOU START, YOU CAN'T STOP (FICTION)

Insulin has gotten a reputation for being an "end of the line" medication for type 2 that once started, can't be stopped. "Patients ask if this is the rest of your life," says Luigi Meneghini, MD, MBA, director of the Kosow Diabetes Treatment Center at the

University of Miami Health System. Once glucose levels are controlled and lifestyle changes are in place, people may be able to use oral meds instead of insulin or reduce multiple daily injections to once daily.

### 2. INSULIN MEANS YOU FAILED AT CARING FOR YOUR DIABETES (FICTION)

In a large study that explored people's beliefs about insulin, "some patients saw insulin use, or the need to start insulin, as a personal failure," according to Andrew Karter, PhD, a researcher at Kaiser Permanente. It's not. Type 2 diabetes is a progressive illness, which means that over time the body makes less and less insulin. Even people without diabetes produce less insulin as they age.

### 3. INSULIN CAUSES DIABETES COMPLICATIONS (FICTION)

While it may be true that people with type 2 diabetes who use insulin tend to have more diabetes-related complications—such as heart, eye, and kidney disease—this is a good example of an association that has nothing to do with cause and effect. The link exists, says Karter, because insulin users have had diabetes longer on average than those who take other medications. Having diabetes for a long time, even when it is controlled,

makes some types of complications more likely. Plus, doctors may tend to prescribe insulin for people who are having trouble getting blood glucose under control. Uncontrolled blood glucose levels can raise the risk for complications. Insulin helps bring blood glucose to target, which can prevent complications, not cause them.

### 4. INSULIN IS ONLY FOR PEOPLE WHO'VE HAD DIABETES A LONG TIME (FICTION)

Sometimes insulin is the right choice for a person newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, says Meneghini, particularly if blood glucose levels are very high at diagnosis. "There are studies that show an intensive insulin approach for six months or a year tends to be more successful at preserving [insulin production] than oral medications," he says. After blood glucose levels are under control, he adds, it may be possible to reduce or stop insulin and use another type of diabetes medication.

### 5. ORAL MEDICATIONS ARE SAFER (NOT NECESSARILY)

It's true that too much insulin can cause blood sugar to go too low (hypoglycemia), but it is otherwise quite safe and has no adverse effects on the heart, kidneys, pancreas, or liver, as do some other diabetes medications. "Insulin can be thought of as a clean medicine," says Meneghini. That's good news for people with liver or kidney problems, who may not be able to take diabetes medications that are processed through these organs.

### 6. INJECTIONS HURT (NOT NECESSARILY)

Insulin has to make its way under the skin to work, and for that you need a needle. Some people may experience discomfort when injecting insulin. However, today's insulin needles are short and very thin—about the same thickness as three hairs laid side by side—making injections less painful than they once were. To help put his patients with new insulin prescriptions at ease, Meneghini injects himself with an insulin syringe containing saline a few times in the office before his patients leave. "They either think I'm completely crazy or that it doesn't hurt so much," he says. If concerns about pain are keeping you from trying insulin, talk to your doctor about testing a needle during a visit. You may be pleasantly surprised.

### 7. INSULIN WILL LEAD TO WEIGHT GAIN (NOT NECESSARILY)

Insulin helps the body absorb the calories from the foods you eat, so weight gain is a risk. When starting insulin, you can take steps to avoid packing on pounds. The obvious strategy is to eat less and exercise more. Yet there are other approaches to preventing weight gain. For example, "there is evidence that if you take insulin with metformin, then there is less weight gain," says John Buse, MD, PhD, of the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill School of Medicine. Some studies have also shown that using an injectable incretin mimetic, such as exenatide (Byetta) or liraglutide (Victoza), and insulin may also prevent weight gain.

### 8. INSULIN CAN CAUSE HYPOGLYCEMIA (FACT)

The occasional low may be hard to avoid when taking insulin, but people with type 2 diabetes who take only long-acting insulin are less likely to have hypoglycemia than those taking multiple daily shots of mealtime insulin. "That first episode may be scary," says Meneghini, but he tries to get patients to come around to the idea that the unpleasant symptoms are actually a good thing. "That's your body telling you that your blood glucose is too low and you need to eat something," he says. Before you start a new exercise routine or change your eating plan or if you experience lows, talk to your doctor about a dose adjustment.

### 9. TAKING INSULIN IS HARD (NOT NECESSARILY)

You may associate insulin with testing blood glucose, carbohydrate counting, and other tasks. Some insulin users do benefit from these activities, but not everyone will need to do the extra work. For example, most people with type 2 diabetes who take insulin use a fixed dose of long-acting insulin, so they may not need to count carbohydrate grams, which is a strategy for adjusting mealtime insulin doses. Whether blood glucose testing is needed is more complicated. The jury is still out on who benefits from blood glucose monitoring, says Meneghini, though he encourages self-checks by people changing or adjusting medications, food, or exercise. Blood glucose measurements tend to be useless, however, without instructions on how to use the information, he says: "The frequency of testing and when you test are dependent on what you are going to do with that result."

### TYPES OF INSULIN

The body makes just one type of insulin, but scientists have developed a variety of insulins that can be taken as medication. The goal with insulin given as medication is to mimic how the body adjusts insulin levels automatically. In the absence of diabetes, the body produces low, steady insulin levels between meals and produces rapid, high peaks of insulin at meals to "match" how much food is eaten.

**Long-acting insulin** begins to work several hours after injection and lowers blood glucose levels somewhat evenly over a 24-hour period.

*Types: Insulin detemir (Levemir) and insulin glargine (Lantus)*

**Rapid-acting insulin** begins to work 15 minutes after injection, peaks in one hour, and is effective for two to four hours. It's used in insulin pumps and for mealtime injections.

*Types: Insulin glulisine (Apidra), insulin lispro (Humalog), and insulin aspart (NovoLog)*

**Other insulins** include regular or short-acting insulin (Humulin R, Novolin R); intermediate-acting insulin, or NPH (Humulin N, Novolin N); and premixed insulins, which combine fast-acting and longer-acting insulin. ■

Source: American Diabetes Association.

# Diabetes Superfoods

Ever see the top 10 lists for foods everyone should eat to superpower your diet? Ever wonder which will mesh with your diabetes meal plan? Wonder no more. Your list of the top 10 diabetes superfoods has arrived.

As with all foods, you need to work the diabetes superfoods into your individualized meal plan in appropriate portions.

All of the foods in our list have a low glycemic index or GI and provide key nutrients that are lacking in the typical western diet such as:

- calcium
- potassium
- fiber
- magnesium
- vitamins A (as carotenoids), C, and E.

There isn't research that clearly points to supplementation, so always think first about getting your nutrients from foods. Below is our list of superfoods to include in your diet.



and potassium.

They are considered starchy vegetables, but ½ cup provides as much protein as an ounce of meat without the saturated fat. To save time you can use canned beans, but be sure to drain and rinse them to get rid of as much sodium as possible.

## DARK GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES

Spinach, collards, kale – these powerhouse foods are so low in calories and carbohydrate. You can't eat too much.



## CITRUS FRUIT

Grapefruit, oranges, lemons and limes. Pick your favorites and get part of your daily dose of soluble fiber and vitamin C.

## SWEET POTATOES

A starchy vegetable packed full of vitamin A and fiber. Try in place of regular potatoes for a lower GI alternative.



## BERRIES

Which are your favorites: blueberries, strawberries or



another variety? Regardless, they are all packed with antioxidants, vitamins and fiber. Make a parfait alternating the fruit with light, non-fat yogurt for a new favorite dessert.



## TOMATOES

An old standby where everyone can find a favorite. The good news is that no matter how you

like your tomatoes, pureed, raw, or

in a sauce, you're eating vital nutrients like vitamin C, iron, vitamin E.

## FISH HIGH IN OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Salmon is a favorite in this category. Stay away from the breaded and deep fat fried variety... they don't count in your goal of 6-9 ounces of fish per week.



## WHOLE GRAINS

It's the germ and bran of the whole grain you're after. It contains all the nutrients a grain product has to offer. When you purchase processed grains like bread made from enriched wheat

flour, you don't get these. A few more of the nutrients these foods offer are magnesium, chromium, omega 3 fatty acids and folate.



## NUTS

An ounce of nuts can go a long way in providing key healthy fats along with hunger management. Other benefits are a dose of magnesium and fiber.

Some nuts and seeds, such as walnuts and flax seeds, also contain omega-3 fatty acids.

## FAT-FREE MILK AND YOGURT

Everyone knows dairy can help build strong bones and teeth. In addition to calcium, many fortified dairy products are a good source of vitamin D. More research is emerging on the connection between vitamin D and good health.

Some of the above list can be tough on the budget depending on the season and where you live. Look for lower cost options such as fruit and vegetables in season or frozen or canned fish.

Foods that every budget can live with year round are beans and rolled oats or barley that you cook from scratch.

Of course, you probably don't want to limit yourself to just these items for every meal. **DM**



Source: American Diabetes Association.



## BEANS

Whether you prefer kidney, pinto, navy, or black beans, you can't find better nutrition than that provided by beans. They are very high in fiber, giving you about 1/3

of your daily requirement in just a ½ cup, and are also good sources of magnesium



# DIABETES RECIPES



## BAKED CINNAMON STUFFED APPLES

Fruit dishes like these Baked Cinnamon Stuffed Apples can make a wonderful, healthy dessert. The smell of these apples baking in the oven will have your mouth watering.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 1/2 apple

- Calories 145
  - Carbohydrate 26 g
  - Protein 1 g
  - Fat 5 g
  - Saturated Fat 0.9g
  - Dietary Fiber 3g
  - Cholesterol 0mg
  - Sodium 25mg
- This Recipe Serves 4

### INGREDIENTS

4 large McIntosh or Golden Delicious Apples, cored  
½ lemon, juiced  
¼ cup + 2 tablespoons Splenda® Brown Sugar Blend  
¼ cup oatmeal  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 tablespoons trans-fat free margarine  
¼ cup pecans, finely chopped

### INSTRUCTIONS

Prep Time: 10 minutes

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Drizzle lemon juice over apples.
3. In a small bowl, mix together remaining ingredients. Stuff each apple with approximately ¼ cup oat mixture.
4. Place apples in an oven safe baking dish and bake for 25-30 minutes.

**MAKE IT GLUTEN-FREE:** If you have celiac disease and your doctor has approved consumption of gluten-free oats, then you can buy certified gluten-free oats for this dish and make it gluten-free. Verify the pecans are gluten-free (and not cross contaminated) too.



## BARBECUED ROSEMARY CHICKEN

Try this classic dish that's been spiced up with some fresh rosemary. You can pair it with this month's Roasted Asparagus Salad if you'd like!

Prep Time: 10 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 3 ounces chicken + 2 tablespoons sauce

- Calories 235
  - Carbohydrate 17g
  - Protein 24g
  - Fat 7.0g
  - Saturated Fat 1.4g
  - Sugar 13 g
  - Dietary Fiber 0g
  - Cholesterol 65mg
  - Sodium 390mg
- This Recipe Serves 2

### INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
1 medium garlic clove, minced  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
2 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (about 4 ounces each), all visible fat discarded  
Cooking spray  
3 tablespoons barbecue sauce (lowest sodium available)  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
1 teaspoon honey

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a nonmetallic bowl, stir together the oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Add the chicken, turning to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes to 8 hours. If marinating for more than 30 minutes, turn several times.
2. Lightly spray the grill rack with cooking spray. Preheat the grill on medium heat.
3. Grill the chicken for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, or until no longer pink in the center. (The internal temperature should reach at least 165 degrees F). Transfer to plates.
4. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, whisk together the barbecue sauce, vinegar, and honey. Cook over medium-low heat for 3 to 4 minutes, or until heated through, stirring occasionally. Spoon the mixture over the cooked chicken.



## BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

Serve this pizza with a big garden salad drizzled lightly with low-fat Ranch dressing. It's a quick, easy, and budget-friendly meal!

Prep Time: 25 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 1/8 of pizza

- Calories 155
  - Carbohydrate 22g
  - Protein 11g
  - Fat 3.5g
  - Saturated Fat 1.4g
  - Sugar 4g
  - Dietary Fiber 0g
  - Cholesterol 20mg
  - Sodium 315mg
  - Potassium 190mg
- This Recipe Serves 8

### INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray  
½ pound boneless skinless chicken breast  
¼ teaspoon salt (optional)  
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper  
¼ cup sugar-free apricot preserves  
¼ cup barbecue sauce  
½ teaspoon hot sauce  
1 (12-inch) pre-packaged whole wheat Italian pizza crust  
½ medium red onion, thinly sliced  
½ cup reduced-fat shredded Italian Style cheese  
½ teaspoon dried oregano

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Season the chicken with salt (optional) and pepper on both sides.
3. Place the chicken on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 25 minutes or until the juices run clear. Remove the chicken from the oven and chop into half-inch pieces.
4. In a small saucepan, combine the sugar-free apricot preserves, barbecue sauce, and hot sauce. Bring to a boil.
5. Spoon the sauce over the pizza crust. Top the crust with cooked chicken, sliced onion, and cheese. Sprinkle the cheese with the dried oregano.
6. Bake the pizza for 20-25 minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbly.



## BEEF STROGANOFF

Here's a diabetes-friendly version of classic beef stroganoff. Save yourself prep time with this recipe by buying pre-sliced mushrooms.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 1/5 of recipe

- Calories 275
  - Carbohydrate 29g
  - Protein 23g
  - Fat 7g
  - Saturated Fat 2.3g
  - Sugar 3g
  - Dietary Fiber 4g
  - Cholesterol 50mg
  - Sodium 250mg
  - Potassium 265mg
- This Recipe Serves 5

### INGREDIENTS

5 ounces uncooked Ronzoni Healthy Harvest Whole Grain egg noodles  
2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 pound boneless beef tenderloin tips, sliced into 2-inch strips  
1 ½ cups sliced mushrooms  
½ cup minced onion  
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour  
½ cup dry white wine  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1 14.5 ounce can fat-free, low-sodium beef broth  
½ cup fat-free sour cream  
¼ teaspoon salt (optional)  
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook noodles according to package directions, omitting salt.
2. Add oil to a large sauté pan over high heat. Add meat and sauté for about 3 minutes. Remove meat from pan. Add mushrooms and onion and sauté for 5 minutes or until beginning to brown.
3. Add flour and cook for 1 minute. Add wine to deglaze pan; cook for 2 minutes. Add Dijon mustard and beef broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Add beef and any juices back to broth and simmer for 3 more minutes. Add sour cream, salt (optional), and pepper; simmer for 30 seconds.
5. Serve over whole-grain egg noodles.



## BLACK BEAN BROWNIES

You'll never know the difference between these brownies, made with protein-rich black beans, or the traditional chocolate treat. Made without flour, they're also a great gluten-free option.

Prep time: 10 minutes Bake time: 35 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 1 brownie (1/16th of recipe)

- Calories 100
  - Carbohydrate 12
  - Protein 2
  - Fat 5
  - Saturated Fat 1
  - Sugar 8
  - Dietary Fiber 1
  - Cholesterol 25
  - Sodium 95
  - Potassium 10
- This Recipe Serves 16

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained  
1/2 cup Domino® Light Sugar & Stevia Blend  
1/4 cup canola oil  
1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce  
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 large eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease an 8x8-inch baking pan with cooking spray and line with parchment paper. Grease top of parchment. Set aside.
2. In a bowl, beat black beans using an electric mixer until smooth. Add Domino® Light Sugar and Stevia Blend and remaining ingredients, except for the chocolate chips. (Do not over mix.) Scrape down sides of the bowl. Fold in chocolate chips. Pour batter into the pan and bake 30 – 35 minutes until the brownies begin to pull away from the side of the pan. Cool and cut into 16 squares.



## BERRY CRISP

This delicious and mouth-watering dessert is full of antioxidant rich berries, vitamin C and fiber from the oatmeal.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

### NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving Size: 1/8 of recipe

- Calories 210
  - Carbohydrate 28g
  - Protein 3g
  - Fat 11g
  - Saturated Fat 1.8g
  - Dietary Fiber 4g
  - Cholesterol 0mg
  - Sodium 50mg
- This Recipe Serves 8

### INGREDIENTS

Cooking Spray  
1 pound strawberries, sliced  
1 pint blueberries  
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons Splenda® Sugar Blend  
1 ½ tablespoons corn starch  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
For the Crisp Topping:  
1 cup oatmeal  
1 tablespoon Splenda® Sugar Blend  
3 tablespoons Splenda® Brown Sugar Blend  
½ cup pecans, chopped  
4 tablespoons trans-fat free margarine, diced

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a 9-inch pie pan with cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl combine the berries, lemon zest, lemon juice, 2 tablespoons Splenda® Sugar blend, corn starch and cinnamon. Mix well and pour into pie pan.
3. In another medium bowl, place all crisp topping ingredients (oatmeal through margarine). Work the margarine into the dry ingredients with your hands until it is crumbly.
4. Sprinkle the crisp topping mixture evenly over the berries. Bake for 55 minutes or until the top is brown and the fruit is bubbly. Serve warm.

**MAKE IT GLUTEN-FREE:** If you have celiac disease and your doctor has approved consumption of gluten-free oats, then you can buy certified gluten-free oats for this dish and make it gluten-free.

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