FROM THE DIRECTOR

Millsaps has a long history of engaging and serving our local community, of being an oasis for open intellectual debate, and of enabling students to reflect critically on questions of meaning, purpose, and identity through their experiences in the classroom and beyond. The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement (ICPE) at Millsaps expands existing experiential learning programs to reach more students and provides the structure to coordinate these programs in ways that make specific connections to the academic environment and larger community, all while building upon the College’s distinctive mission and addressing the needs of the city, state, and region. The ICPE acts as a bridge between our campus and the community—helping our students understand better the contexts in which ideas take root in the world and enriching the broader community by helping translate Millsaps’ values to the world beyond our walls.

This inaugural ICPE newsletter includes a mix of original stories and material adapted from www.millsaps.edu. In these pages you will see a small but significant sampling of recent work undertaken by the longstanding programs of the College that now constitute the ICPE as well as the new partnerships that have been made possible through the creation of the ICPE.

One of the reasons I am so excited to lead the ICPE is that it reflects many of the most valuable and distinctive elements of the Millsaps experience. At a time when our nation is deeply divided, and when colleges are all-too-often criticized (sometimes rightly so) for not preparing students for life beyond college, the ICPE is, in the words of its mission statement, working to “build connections among the College, the capital city of Jackson, and communities beyond to provide concrete and imaginative approaches to civic and professional involvement, to facilitate meaningful dialogue that empowers students and the broader community to understand how daily work can promote flourishing communities, responsible citizenship, and thoughtfully engaged lives.”

So, the next time you or someone you know questions the value or distinctiveness of a Millsaps education, consider these three facts:

1) The ICPE at Millsaps is committed to making the most of our location. Millsaps matters to this city, state, and region, and the ICPE works to ensure that students from every academic discipline benefit from the laboratories that border our campus in every direction.

2) The ICPE at Millsaps facilitates a hands-on, holistic approach to education that stimulates the intellect, stirs the heart, and nurtures the soul.

3) Guided by our mission and heritage, and buoyed by the current divisiveness that pervades our nation, the ICPE is committed to making Millsaps a public square for Jackson, of being a place where robust and respectful dialogue takes place even among people who disagree on important issues.

I am honored, and humbled, to be leading the ICPE at Millsaps, and I hope that, after reading this newsletter, you are as excited as I am about the range and magnitude of the ICPE’s work on campus and in our community.

Kenneth Townsend
Executive Director of the Millsaps College Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement,
Assistant Professor of Political Science, and
Special Assistant to the President
WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY OF THE INSTITUTE FOR CIVIC & PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT MILLSAPS COLLEGE

WHO? The ICPE includes the offices and functions of the 1 Campus 1 Community volunteer program; the Wellspring Living-Learning Community; Community Engagement Learning courses; the Vocation, Ethics, and Society academic minor; the Center for Career Education; the Initiative for Vocational Inquiry; national fellowships; the Office of Continuing Education; church relations and the Center for Ministry; the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty; government relations; and public policy forums.

WHAT? As stated in its mission statement, “The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement at Millsaps College builds connections among the College, the capital city of Jackson, and communities beyond to provide concrete and imaginative approaches to civic and professional involvement, and to facilitate meaningful dialogue that empowers students and the broader community to understand how daily work can promote flourishing communities, responsible citizenship, and thoughtfully engaged lives.”

WHEN? Many of the functions and offices that comprise the ICPE have a long history at Millsaps, but the ICPE itself was formally launched in April 2016.

WHERE? The offices of those comprising the ICPE are scattered across Millsaps’ campus, and the work of the ICPE takes place both throughout campus and well beyond the walls of the College.

WHY? The ICPE at Millsaps emerged as one of the chief recommendations from the College’s most recent strategic plan, “Across the Street and Around the Globe: Partnerships and Influence at Millsaps College.” The ICPE was established with two overarching objectives: 1) to streamline and coordinate activities related to student involvement in civic and professional exploration and 2) to provide a new platform for establishing valuable and strategic initiatives that enhance the impact and profile of the College in the community.

THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP THE ICPE:

Kenneth Townsend  
Executive Director

Benton Brown  
Presidential Fellow

Lori Galambos  
1 Campus 1 Community Director and Wellspring Living-Learning Community Director

Nola Gibson  
Continuing Education Director

Beverley Humphreys  
Continuing Education Program Coordinator

Elyssa Klipsch  
Internship Coordinator

Maria Langford  
Continuing Education Program Assistant

Emma McRaney  
Administrative Assistant

Tonya Nations  
Center for Career Education Director and Major Experience Director

Suzi Nyberg  
Career Specialist

Shelli Poe  
Vocation, Ethics, and Society Director and Initiative for Vocational Inquiry Director

Stephanie Rolph  
Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty Academic Director and Community Engaged Learning Director

Joey Shelton  
Chaplain and Director of Church Relations

Paige Swaim-Presley  
Center for Ministry Director and Associate Chaplain

Deena Li Kam Wa  
Student Employment Coordinator

Betty Wheat  
Center for Ministry Program Coordinator
MILLSAPS COLLEGE SENIOR NOAH BARBIERI AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

Noah Barbieri, a senior at Millsaps College, was named the College’s newest Rhodes Scholar on November 18, 2017. A native of Belden, Mississippi, Barbieri is majoring in economics, mathematics, and philosophy. Already selected as one of 62 Truman Scholars nationwide in April 2017, he is scheduled to graduate from Millsaps in May 2018.

Noah plans on using his Rhodes Scholarship to pursue a Masters in Economics at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, where he plans on researching how to best address inequality. He ultimately wants to work in Mississippi and address the problems the state faces.

“I am absolutely shocked. It has been my dream to be a Rhodes Scholar since my senior year of high school,” said Barbieri. “Even though I have been working towards it for a long time, I cannot believe it actually happened. I have big dreams of making a difference in the world. I know this scholarship can help me do just that, and I am hoping to make the most out of this opportunity.”

Barbieri’s selection was celebrated across the Millsaps campus and community.

“Noah embodies the best of a liberal arts education and, by extension, the virtues for which Rhodes Scholars are known,” said Dr. Robert W. Pearigen, president of Millsaps College. “His three majors (philosophy, economics, and mathematics) span the three divisions of Millsaps (Arts & Humanities, Business, and Natural and Social Sciences), and Noah has employed each with great facility to better understand, and address, practical challenges facing his native state of Mississippi.”

Considered one of the most prestigious academic scholarships in the world, Rhodes Scholarships are awarded each year to approximately 95 students worldwide, including 32 students from the United States and its territories. The scholarship provides full funding for graduate level studies at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom.

“Noah’s persistence in the pursuit of excellence is truly extraordinary, and part of the reason he has excelled in every facet of his life is that he simply works harder than just about any undergraduate I have ever encountered,” said Kenneth Townsend, executive director of the Millsaps Institute for Civic and Professional Engagement and the chair of the College’s Committee on National Fellowships. “The education and habits Noah has cultivated at Millsaps will serve him well during his upcoming graduate studies in the UK and beyond.”

Townsend, a 2004 graduate of Millsaps, was named a Truman Scholar and Rhodes Scholar while a student at the College.

“This is such an honor, and I would like to thank my family, friends, and professors for the constant support,” said Barbieri. “I would like to especially thank Kenneth Townsend. I will never forget when Professor Townsend called me in high school and told me that he thought I would have a good shot at being a Truman and Rhodes Scholar if I came to Millsaps. Man, was he right. He took me under his wing and walked me through the process from day one.”

Barbieri has made the most of his time as Millsaps, serving as a Student Body Senator, Student Body Treasurer, and Student Body President, and he was elected by his fellow students as Student Body Leader of the Year. He has completed two honors projects, one in economics and one in philosophy, and is involved in numerous academic honor societies.

Millsaps is the only private liberal arts college in the nation to have had a Rhodes Scholar named this year and is one of only 12 colleges in the nation to have had a Rhodes Scholar two of the last three years. Noah is the seventh Rhodes Scholar in the history of the College.
Each newsletter will feature a faculty or staff member and his or her recent achievements that contribute to the overall success and mission of the Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement.

The first Faculty Spotlight is Dr. Shelli Poe, who came to Millsaps in 2013 as a post-doctoral Teaching Fellow and taught as a visiting professor from 2014–2017. She currently serves as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies; Director of Initiative for Vocational Inquiry; and Director of Vocation, Ethics, and Society. Prior to Millsaps, she taught at the University of Virginia and University of Mary Washington. She earned her degrees at the University of Virginia, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Bethel University (St. Paul, MN).

At Millsaps, Poe serves as the Director of the Initiative for Vocational Inquiry (IVI), which is the largest academic branch of the Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement. As both a teacher and a scholar, Poe understands the connection between academia and community. Her co-edited volume, *The Key to the Door: Experiences of the Early African-American Students of the University of Virginia*, published in April 2017, sheds light on the history and experiences of black students at the University of Virginia.

“The book provides a model for other institutions to follow in documenting and learning from the history of black students on their campuses and in using those lessons as they chart the future,” said Walter R. Allen of the University of California, Los Angeles on the publisher’s website. “This volume adds to current discussions concerning access, equity, inclusion, and achievement in higher education and is particularly useful for its examination of these questions through the lived experiences of African Americans who attended one of the country’s leading public universities.”

IVI programs forge connections between Millsaps students, the Jackson community, and the communities beyond Jackson through community engaged learning; the Vocation, Ethics, and Society (VESO) minor; the Wellspring Living-Learning community; and the Center for Career Education. In the VESO minor, Poe encourages students to ask questions such as, “How are my perspectives and vocational goals shaped by my socio-economic status and culture?”, “What responsibilities do I have within my society?”, and “How will my life’s work contribute to the well-being of others?” IVI programs connect students to firsthand experiences that help answer these questions. For instance, Kelsey Stone traveled to Los Angeles, California during the summer of 2017 for an internship through the VESO minor to develop curriculum for the United Methodist Church’s Peace Camp at Echo Park. In addition to the hands-on work and experiences provided through the VESO minor, Poe’s role as a professor and active community member helps students find the answers to their questions.

Students also engage with Millsaps faculty members who struggled with similar questions about their futures through IVI Hours that Poe coordinates as IVI director. She describes IVI Hours as “one-hour sessions with invited faculty and alumni who speak with the campus community about why they do what they do, how they came to be practicing their vocations at Millsaps, and what they have learned along the way.”

The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement acts as a bridge between the campus and community, and IVI programs help students better understand the need for scholarly and community connections. Poe’s work directly contributes to these goals by connecting academic knowledge with concrete experiences to help students attain educational, vocational, and leadership goals at Millsaps.

VISIT POE’S PERSONAL WEBSITE: HTTPS://SHELLIPOE.WORDPRESS.COM/
READ MORE ABOUT IVI: MILLSAPS.EDU/IVI
READ MORE ABOUT STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN IVI: LIBGUIDES.MILLSAPS.EDU/IVI
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE KEY TO THE DOOR: MILLSAPS.EDU/THEKEYTOTHEDOOR
SHEPHERD HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM ON POVERTY COMES TO MILSAPS

Following a competitive application process, Millsaps College has been selected as the new academic home of the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty (SHECP). Established at Washington and Lee University in 1998 as the Shepherd Poverty Alliance, a poverty studies program, SHECP has grown into a nonprofit association of 23 higher educational institutions in the United States, dedicated to the goal of preparing students for a lifetime of professional, civic, and political activity that will diminish poverty.

“This is a tremendous accomplishment for Millsaps College, and we are grateful for the trust and confidence of the Consortium board,” said Dr. Robert W. Pearigen, president of Millsaps College. “The educational opportunities that come with this decision are obvious for our students, faculty, and staff, but it means so much to the greater community around us as we take a lead role in the important work of the Consortium.”

The new partnership between Millsaps and SHECP began July 1, 2017, and will run for a three-year term, through June 30, 2020.

Another key component of the agreement is that Dr. Stephanie Rolph, associate professor of history at Millsaps, took on the role of academic director for SHECP. In this role, Rolph works with the executive director of the Consortium to manage all academic partnerships and programs, including supervision of an internship director, collaboration with the Consortium board and member schools, and fundraising.

At the time of the announcement Amy DeHart, director of internships for SHECP said, “I look forward to Stephanie’s leadership and expertise. Together we will enhance the internship opportunity and reach many more students and agencies across the country.”

“We are thrilled that Millsaps College will take on the leadership for the education dimension of the Consortium, and I look forward to working closely with Dr. Rolph,” said Harlan Beckley, SHECP founder and current executive director.

Rolph echoed Beckley’s excitement about the new partnership. “Millsaps’ membership in SHECP and its engagement with institutions across the country has ensured that our mission in Jackson, Mississippi, is situated within a national commitment in higher education to serious considerations of poverty, its causes and consequences,” Rolph said. “I’m looking forward to collaborating with our colleagues across the country, learning from their successes, and sharing our own. Millsaps’ new role within the Consortium is an incredible opportunity for the College, for Mississippi, and for our students.”

Dr. Jay Barth of Hendrix College, chair of the SHECP Governing Board, emphasized the high quality of Millsaps’ proposal to serve as academic host for the program. “In its written proposal as well as in follow-up conversations, the leadership at Millsaps showed a deep dedication to the important work that SHECP is doing to try to transform the role of higher education in aiding students’ understanding of poverty and honing their abilities to reshape our responses to poverty in the generations ahead.”

The SHECP program operates under the structure of the College’s Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement, established in 2016 to facilitate student development along a continuum of engagement from living and learning communities, in-depth student research projects, and study abroad to co-curricular service projects and professional internships.

“This partnership with SHECP aligns perfectly with the mission and strategic goals that Millsaps envisioned when the Institute was founded,” said Kenneth Townsend, executive director of the Institute. “We have so many opportunities to effect important and profound change through students, faculty, and communities across the country.”

Other member institutions in the Consortium include Baylor University, Berea College, Birmingham-Southern College, Bucknell University, Centre College, College of Wooster, Elon University, Furman University, Hendrix College, John Carroll University, Juniata College, Lynchburg College, Marymount University, Middlebury College, Niagara University, Ohio University, The Cleveland Clinic Lerner College, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Notre Dame, University of Vermont, Virginia Military Institute, and Washington and Lee University.
CHISM STRATEGIES STATE OF THE STATE SURVEY

Mississippi voters are uncertain about the direction of their state, wary of insufficient public school funding and overall quality, and open to considering new funding streams to provide for public education. These findings and more are detailed in the results of the first ever Millsaps College-Chism Strategies State of the State Survey.

Administered through a partnership between Millsaps College and Chism Strategies, the State of the State Survey was designed to gauge how Mississippians assess key actors and institutions in state government, where they would like to see the legislature focus their energy during the 2018 session, the state of public schools locally and across the state, and the public’s receptiveness to generating new education revenue.

“The findings of the State of the State Survey may help inform policymakers in the weeks and months ahead in their efforts to tackle critical issues impacting our state and our citizens,” said Dr. Nathan R. Shrader, assistant professor of political science at Millsaps. “Among the main lessons learned from this survey are that Mississippians are concerned about the state of public education and that nearly 60% believe that funding is currently too low. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, voters do not reflexively reject options for raising revenue to address the problem.”

The survey finds that a plurality of Mississippians—40% overall—believe that the state is on the wrong track. The survey, which assessed job performance of three state-wide elected officials, showed strong majorities approve of the job performance of Governor Phil Bryant and Attorney General Jim Hood while there is more uncertainty among the public regarding Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves and significant disapproval of the State Legislature. Although voters are somewhat divided on what they see as the top priority facing the legislature, nearly 30% want to see an emphasis on fixing roads and bridges.

The survey, which involves a partnership between the Political Science Department and the Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement at Millsaps and Chism Strategies, looks to become a regular fixture of political discourse in the state.

“Millsaps has always played an important role in our state’s civic culture and we are delighted to aid the College in promoting informed discussion about key public policy matters,” said Brad Chism, senior partner at Chism Strategies. “We want this polling series to become a benchmark for all who are trying to better our state. We are confident in the survey methodology and representation of voters by age, gender, ethnicity, and partisan affiliation, and look forward to the broader exchange of ideas that arise from this effort.”

The survey was conducted September 14–18 with a sample size of 509 with 32% cell phone interviews. Results were weighted to reflect 2015 general election turnout for age, race, gender, and partisanship with a margin of error of 4.4%.

FULL RESULTS CAN BE VIEWED AT MILLSAPS.EDU/2017CHISMSURVEYRESULTS
SUMMARY ANALYSIS CAN BE VIEWED AT MILLSAPS.EDU/2017CHISMSUMMARYFINDINGS

MILLSAPS PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Millsaps College Presidential Fellow Benton Brown founded the Millsaps Pathways to Success (MPS) program in 2015. Brown envisioned the program to “promote the benefits of personal development, academic support, networking opportunities with the guidance of a personal mentor,” and to help ensure success for African American students at Millsaps College.

Early in the fall 2017 semester, MPS sophomore students engaged in a professional development class hosted by the ICPE’s Center for Career Education. Tonya Nations, director of the Career Center, helped facilitate the event, and MPS member Zaria Bonds said, “It was a huge success and the sophomore class gained so much knowledge! We are excited to watch them execute these skills in the real world and in the following years!”

Student organizations, such as Millsaps Pathways to Success, regularly attend ICPE sponsored events to connect to the community through continuous civic and professional engagement.

MPS was inspired by the College’s Strategic Plan entitled, “Across the Street and Around the Globe: Partnerships and Influence at Millsaps College” to create their E3 initiative, which is a community engagement initiative with local Jackson high schools designed to encourage, expose, and ultimately enroll more Jackson Public School students in post-secondary education. The E3 initiative works to accomplish these goals by informing students about college possibilities, creating college-going cultures at their respective schools, and facilitating opportunities for students to explore Millsaps.

FOLLOW PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS ON FACEBOOK TO LEARN MORE.
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MILLSAPSRETENTION.ADVOCATES.7
MILLSAPS COLLEGE PARTNERS WITH GERMAN CONSULATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSION

The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement (ICPE) in cooperation with the International Perspectives Program (IPP) partnered with the Atlanta-based German Consulate and the Ecologic Institute US to host a one-day conference entitled “Global Climate Action: Sustainable investment in Germany and the United States” on November 2, 2017.

“This was an incredible opportunity for Millsaps to host an important dialogue about the issues of climate change and how they impact the way international business is managed here in Mississippi,” said Kenneth Townsend, executive director of the ICPE. “Everyone gathered benefited from the timely and meaningful discussions on this critical global issue.”

Speakers at the conference included Detlev Ruenger, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany’s Atlanta Consulate; Dr. Dominika Parry, President and board member of 2°C Mississippi; Max Gruenig of the Ecologic Institute in Washington; Dr. Bill Storey, professor of history at Millsaps and IPP Faculty Fellow; and representatives of Continental Tire, Siemens USA, Feuer Powertrain, Entergy, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Consul General Ruenger stated that Millsaps’ size and commitment helped make the conference a success. “The conference turned out to be a valuable tool in the transatlantic dialogue, and hosting it on the Millsaps campus was a great choice. It is not always the largest institutions that showcase important topics but often the smaller ones with heart and dedication. We have certainly been able to experience this first hand.”

Storey said the timing of the conference paired well with the 12 Millsaps students who have been selected as Davis Fellows for the IPP, as they have been focusing this fall on climate change in preparation for a conference they will present in the spring semester.

Institutions were selected based on competitive applications submitted to the AAC&U. Criteria for selection included, according to the AAC&U, an institution’s “ability to create positive narratives about race, identify and examine current realities of race relations in their communities, envision communities without entrenched racial hierarchies, and pinpoint levers for change and key individuals to engage.”

“In the aftermath of the horrific, heartbreaking events in Charlottesville, we must not be silent. Instead, we must harness our collective intellectual, social and financial resources to transform words into action,” said AAC&U President Lynn Pasquerella. “AAC&U is thrilled to partner with these first ten outstanding institutions on our way to establishing 150 centers across the country to ensure that higher education is playing a leadership role in promoting racial and social justice.”

The other institutions selected as TRHT Campus Centers include Austin Community College (Texas), Brown University (Rhode Island), Duke University (North Carolina), Hamline University (Minnesota), Rutgers University (New Jersey), Spelman College (Georgia), The Citadel (South Carolina), University of Hawai’i, and University of Maryland Baltimore County.
STORYCORPS AND THE AMERICAN PILGRIMAGE PROJECT

National Public Radio's StoryCorps and the American Pilgrimage Project visited Jackson on October 13–14, 2017, to record a series of one-on-one, open-ended conversations focused on religion in the American South. The conversations, which featured a number of people with deep Millsaps ties, were recorded in the Millsaps-Wilson Library and facilitated by the Millsaps Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement. Millsaps was chosen as a select location in one of ten cities to participate in this project so far.

StoryCorps was founded in 2003 by Dave Isay with the mission to “preserve and share humanity’s stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world.” Since beginning in a storybooth in Grand Central terminal in New York City, StoryCorps has reached over a quarter million people by increasing understanding of others and reminding listeners of their shared humanity. Personal interviews are the heart of StoryCorps, giving Americans of diverse backgrounds a chance to record stories about their lives to leave for generations to follow. While these interview sessions create an archive for future generations, they also develop connections between people and teach the value of listening.

The American Pilgrimage Project, a partnership between Georgetown University and StoryCorps, is devoted to gathering and sharing the American people's stories of religious beliefs and the role their beliefs have played in their lives. In speaking of the visit to Jackson, Paul Elie, Director of the American Pilgrimage Project and author of *The Life You Save May Be Your Own: An American Pilgrimage*, expressed particular interest in “capturing the complex and diverse ways that religion shapes people’s lives in the American South. One of our goals is to allow the rest of the country to have a more complete and nuanced understanding of religion in the South.”

The conversations of October 13–14 will be archived in the Library of Congress and considered for broadcast on NPR. Among the 13 conversation pairs were a number of names familiar to the Millsaps community, including Rev. Ed King with Bishop Clay Lee and Dr. T.W. Lewis with Rev. Heather Hensarling.

The conversations also provided opportunities for finding common ground across difference. Rev. David Strain of First Presbyterian (PCA) recorded with Millsaps alumnus Rev. Rob Lowry of Fondren Presbyterian (PCUSA). After the conversation, Rev. Lowry reflected, “We think it is the first time the pastors of our two churches have sat down for a conversation in 25 years or so. We laughed a lot, shared stories of ministry, found a lot of common ground, and agreed to sit down again soon. All in all a small but important step for our traditions.”

Karam Rahat, a Millsaps senior and president of the Muslim Student Association at Millsaps, took part in a conversation with a military chaplain and Trump supporter Rev. Marty Fields, and Michele Schipper, Chief Operating Officer of the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute for the Study of Southern Jewish Life, spent an hour talking with Emad Al-Turk, the President and CEO of the International Museum of Muslim Culture.

Similar to StoryCorps, Millsaps has developed its own Oral History Program that gives students practical experience as historians in the classroom and in the field. The Millsaps program uses an iconic Airstream trailer as a mobile recording studio, available to record stories at museum openings, legislative sessions, and events around Mississippi and the southeast.

TEDx COMES TO MILLSAPS COLLEGE

Millsaps hosted the inaugural TEDxMillsapsCollege event on September 30, 2017. Millsaps sophomore Vajresh Balaji organized the event as licensor and curator with assistance from the Millsaps Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement (ICPE).

The program’s theme was “Movement,” and the day-long event hosted 14 speakers on various topics such as startups and entrepreneurship, education, health and medicine, artificial intelligence, law, and music.

Featured speakers included Qasim Rashid, National Spokesperson, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA; Jason Rosenberg, Millsaps Visiting Assistant Professor and Experimental Musician; and Chokwe Antar Lumumba, Mayor of Jackson.

TEDxMillsapsCollege partners included Bradley Law Firm, Dale Partners, Cooke Douglass Farr Lemmons Architects & Engineers PA, Mantle, and Wier Boerner Allin Architecture.

The talks were recorded for consideration by the official TED Talks YouTube channel, and plans are already in motion for a second TEDxMillsapsCollege in the fall of 2018.
MILLSAPS COLLEGE FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH FREEDOM SUMMER COLLEGIATE

The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement (ICPE) at Millsaps College announced in summer 2017 the formation of a partnership with Freedom Summer Collegiate.

Drawing inspiration from the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer, the Freedom Summer Teaching Fellowship works towards educational equity by collaborating with partner programs to bring the nation’s most promising future academics to underserved students. Through the program, doctoral candidates from the nation’s top universities come to Mississippi for the summer to provide transformative college-level summer seminars for high school students, most of whom live in the Mississippi Delta.

Through the partnership, high school students who take these college-level courses will receive college credit, which can then be applied toward a bachelor’s degree at Millsaps or transferred to another college. Kenneth Townsend (C’04), executive director of the Millsaps Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement, led Millsaps’ efforts to develop the partnership but credits other faculty and administrators for their commitment to making the project work: “All of the many people involved in developing this relationship recognized that this presented an exciting win-win opportunity. Millsaps is helping make college more accessible for talented, underserved populations while also exposing those same students to Millsaps early in their college searches—all of which is being done without burdening the College’s existing resources or infrastructure.”

Andy Donnelly, the executive director of Freedom Summer Collegiate, is currently a PhD student in English at Harvard University and is pleased to have developed a relationship with Millsaps. “We knew Millsaps was the right college for this partnership because of its commitment to service and excellence in education on campus and beyond,” Donnelly said. “We are excited that our students will earn credit hours this summer for the academically rigorous work they do in our Freedom Summer Collegiate courses.”

This summer’s Freedom Summer Collegiate curriculum includes thirteen courses, which are offered in Sunflower, Rosedale, and Meridian, Mississippi, as well as in Eudora, Arkansas. Each course is taught by an accomplished PhD student and includes 10-15 students. Examples of courses eligible for Millsaps credit include “Criminal Justice in the US,” taught by Kaneesha Johnson of Harvard University’s Government Department and “Why Haven’t We Cured Cancer Yet?,” which is being offered by Marina Watanabe of the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences Department at Harvard University.


SOUTHERN DOCUMENTARY PROJECT

The Millsaps Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement (ICPE) partnered with the Southern Documentary Project, an Institute of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, to screen a new documentary film on the state flag on November 6, 2017, in the Gertrude C. Ford Academic Complex. Rex Jones’ film, “Flag Flap Over Mississippi,” explores tensions around the divisive Mississippi state flag. A discussion of the film followed with moderator Kenneth Townsend, executive director of the ICPE, and panelists State Senator John Horhn and State Representative Kathy Sykes, joined by film director Rex Jones.

“Flag Flap” includes interviews with Mississippians who discuss the state’s continued use of a flag that includes the Confederate battle emblem. While the Legislature selected the design in 1894 at the height of white supremacist violence and the codification of Jim Crow, some consider it a symbol of pride in the sacrifice of ancestors who fought in the Confederate army. The film explores these perspectives within the context of the current political environment.

The film includes interviews with several Mississippians, including Bertram Hayes-Davis, who is the great-great-grandson of Jefferson Davis; local Civil War historian Starke Miller; attorney and Judge Carlos Moore; artist Laurin Stennis; Episcopal Bishop of Mississippi the Right Rev. Brian Seage; and DeBorah Simpson, a flag activist.

Students, faculty, staff, and community members filled the lecture hall for the event. Jeff Davis, a law enforcement official and current state flag supporter featured in the film, attended the screening and engaged in a spirited, but civil, discussion with the audience, including with Millsaps freshman Emily Hines. The audience asked panelists about a range of issues pertaining to the flag, including questions related to heritage, education, and policy.

Millsaps hosted the second documentary screening and discussion of “Flag Flap” following its debut a week prior at the University of Mississippi.

VIEW A TRAILER FOR THE FILM AT HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/233884994, AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FILM AT FLAGFLAP.COM.
MILLSAPS ARTS & LECTURE SERIES CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

The Millsaps Arts & Lecture Series is celebrating its 50th anniversary during the program’s 2017–18 season as the oldest continuously generated program of its kind in the capital city area.

Fifty years ago, Millsaps president Benjamin Graves envisioned Millsaps becoming the “Little Athens of the South” by creating a program that would enable the College to connect with and enrich the broader community. Mrs. Hazeline Graves, the president’s wife, followed this vision and, with the help of her closest friends, organized the first Arts & Lecture season in 1967. Magnolia Coullet agreed to serve as Executive Director, followed by Dot Taylor, who ran the program out of the trunk of her car. Additional founders included Dr. Raymond Martin and Posey Smith.

At the time of the Series’ founding, few opportunities for cultural events in Jackson existed except for large-scale programs hosted by the City Auditorium. This dearth of programming inspired the development of the Arts & Lecture Series, which aimed to provide a venue for artists and lecturers who reflected the various dimensions of the cultural needs of Jackson citizens.

During its fifty years, the series has hosted well known performers such as the Vienna Boys Choir, Harlem Boys Choir, and Luther College Nordic Choir along with many distinguished authors including Eudora Welty, Clyde Edgerton, David Halberstam, Beth Henley, Willie Morris, Larry Brown, Stephen Ambrose, and Shelby Foote. Other programs have focused on southern writers and political topics.

Dr. Nola Gibson is the Executive Director of both the Series and Continuing Education at Millsaps College. She is joined in the department by Bev Humphreys, Program Coordinator, and Maria Langford, Program Assistant. Nola served on the Arts and Lecture Board for ten years before the office became part of her duties in the Continuing Education department in 2009. After describing the board’s activities and responsibilities, Nola reflected, “It’s an honor to work with such a talented and dedicated board!” Previous Arts & Lecture Series Executive Director Luran Buchanan shared, “I have enjoyed the Millsaps Arts and Lecture Series so much—for many years it has fulfilled so well its mission to bring Millsaps College and the Jackson community together—to bring Jacksonians onto the campus to see the unique and the excellent offerings for themselves. From my time as board member, as President, as Executive Director, and now as Advisory Committee, it has been a joy to me and, and I think, a continuing tribute to Millsaps College.”

TO VIEW THE FULL 2017–18 ARTS & LECTURE SERIES SCHEDULE, VISIT MILLSAPS.EDU/ARTSANDLECTURE.

THE DIVIDED STATE OF AMERICA: HOW CAN WE GET WORK DONE EVEN WHEN WE DISAGREE?

Americans are increasingly divided, yet many Americans believe that civic leaders can and must find ways to address pressing public issues that affect the future of the nation. Toward this end, the Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement at Millsaps College and the Stennis Center for Public Service Leadership convened a student forum at Millsaps to explore the divided state of America and deliberate on this question: How can we get work done even when we disagree?

The forum held at Millsaps on November 28, 2017, featured a diverse mix of student leaders. Brother Rogers, Director of Programs and Communication at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, moderated the dialogue and guided participants in a discussion of several ways to work together in an atmosphere that encouraged respectful sharing of differing perspectives. After the discussion, Brother said, “The students at Millsaps modeled how to have a civil discussion and respect different views – in short, how to be good citizens.”

Director of the Stennis Center Rex Buffington stated, “The quality of the dialogue among Millsaps students and the character and intellect the dialogue revealed is a source of encouragement for any of us concerned about the future of American democracy. The Millsaps students showed a willingness to listen to different perspectives and a commitment to find a way forward. The level of engagement and awareness they demonstrated, and their commitment to work together through differences to reach consensus, bodes well for our future.”

This “Divided State of America” project was developed by the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress (ACSC) in collaboration with the Kettering Foundation. The forums are nonpartisan and do not advocate a particular perspective or solution to any public issue. Instead they allow diverse groups of citizens to determine together what direction they want to take, what kinds of actions and policies they favor or oppose, and what they are able to do, individually and as a community.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE PROGRAM CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT WWW.CONGRESSCENTERS.ORG.
The Institute for Civic & Professional Engagement at Millsaps College builds connections among the College, the capital city of Jackson, and communities beyond to provide concrete and imaginative approaches to civic and professional involvement, and to facilitate meaningful dialogue that empowers students and the broader community to understand how daily work can promote flourishing communities, responsible citizenship, and thoughtfully engaged lives.