JSU MISTERs Ansel Heidelberg, Malcolm Baldwin, Alexander Gatewood, and Edward Williams completed an 8 week summer internship at Clemson University over the summer. The JSU MISTERs joined MISTERs from other colleges and universities to teach in summer education programs serving elementary students in South Carolina. The MISTERs were divided into teams based on their intern sites and supervised by MISTER graduates currently teaching (continued on p.4).

As we reflect on the 2012-2013 academic year one thing is clearly evident, there was a great deal of dialogue concerning increasing the quality of teachers in Mississippi schools. In an effort to address teacher quality our state government introduced and passed legislation designed to attract more high scoring students into the field of education. The state also adopted a new more comprehensive teacher licensure examination and increased admissions requirements for candidates entering teacher education programs statewide. Here at Jackson State University (JSU), we also took action to address the issue of teacher quality in Mississippi. We partnered with Clemson University and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to establish the first Call Me MISTER® (Mentors Instructing Students Towards Effective Role Models) Program in the Deep South. We believe that this leadership development program designed to increase the number of males and the quality of education in elementary schools by investing in male students with the desire to teach young children will make a profound difference in our state. This program utilizes a cohort model, provides financial and academic support, program mentors, and professional development opportunities designed to help those with the desire to teach young children to reach their goals. In return, our MISTERs are involved in community service and service-learning projects, support each other, recruit males to major in elementary education at JSU, and commit to teaching a year in an elementary school in the state for each year that they received the scholarship.

In Fall 2012, we introduced our first cohort of five MISTERS to the state of Mississippi and in Fall 2013 we proudly introduced our second cohort of five MISTERS. Our first cohort of MISTERS interned at Clemson University over the summer and the JSU Call Me MISTER® program was also chosen to pilot the Call Me MISTER® Dropout Prevention Module developed by the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson and a Clemson University MISTER graduate. Featured MISTERs will share insights from their experiences with you in this inaugural issue and I hope that you truly enjoy it and come to expect great things from our MISTERS!
The JSU Call Me MISTER® program was chosen to pilot the Call Me MISTER® Dropout Prevention Module. This program was produced through a partnership between the National Drop Out Prevention Center at Clemson, Call Me MISTER, Clemson Broadcast Productions, and Jackson State University. Major funding for the work was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The module is based upon the work of Gayle McGrane, author of *Building Relationships With Youth At Risk*, and it consists of ten online sessions in BlackBoard designed to empower future teachers to build authentic relationships with at-risk students that will better enable them to be successful in their roles as educators. The interactive module is being facilitated by Dr. Tony Latiker, Academic Coach, and is filled with videos from MISTERS and CMM staff introducing topics, current articles, activities designed for future teachers, and other resources. The piloting process began in October 2013 and is scheduled to be completed in February 2014. The ten JSU MISTERs in cohorts 1 and 2 are completing online assignments, participating in discussions with the Academic Coach and program mentors, and will be visiting a local elementary school during the spring semester to apply concepts learned through the modules. Dr. Latiker and the MISTERS are not only testing the modules, but will be providing developers with input on the content, format, and evaluating the effectiveness of the module, which is the first in a planned series of Dropout Prevention Modules.
My First Year As A MISTER: Edward Williams

My 1st year in the MISTER program was definitely an experience. Without aspect of professional-teaching credibility, my cohorts and I were promoted as "rock stars." At every event we attended, people of prominence and distinction automatically assumed we were something serious. At meetings, we were reminded of the impact we would have on our neighborhoods. During discussions, our focus was set towards changing lives. This newfound notoriety was definitely something I was not accustomed to.

When school finally let out, we had little time to rest. We traveled to Clemson University to complete a teaching internship in communities in South Carolina. Clemson not only impacted me, but it also changed my life forever. I found trust and confidence in the MISTER brotherhood. My limits were pushed each and every day. For instance, at my school, Blue Ridge, my site supervisor gave us weekly guidelines and instructions that HAD to be met. He critiqued our lesson plans and pushed us to give our absolute best. Parents, as well as children, were persistent with challenges that I had not been exposed to before. I found myself very frustrated. I wanted to quit. "Is this really what teaching is about: headaches, stress, and frustration?" Nevertheless, those who were experienced MISTERS were there for me. They gave me the support and assistance that I needed. As I stuck with it, I witnessed a complete turnaround in the process. My students eventually grew to love learning. I saw improvements not only in their academics, but their character as well. They enjoyed my class and left the summer camp full of energy. I realized the impact an authentic teacher makes on the world is first found within self. My students made me a better instructor and person.

Wearing the MISTER logo on my chest has reinvented Edward Williams. I am confident. I am a young man of distinction. As a college sophomore, I have already gained a tremendous amount of teaching experience. When I am unconfident amongst my peers, I remind myself of the MISTER statement, "When you address me, please verbalize my destiny. Do not call me by my first name; call me in reference to my great vision. Call me MISTER."

Beginning My Journey As A MISTER: Devonte Stewart

As a high school student, it was stressed that we should know exactly what we wanted to do with our lives. I knew from the time that I stepped foot in my high school’s doors that I wanted to teach. I did not quite know where I wanted to attend college, but I knew what I wanted to do. There was something inside of me that said to teach the next generation. I’m following that small voice by majoring in Elementary Education K-6.

Originally I was on track to attend Tennessee State University. I was a part of student orientation and ready to start school. The school sent me a bill in the mail for over $10,000. I did not want to pay that for my education, so I canceled my registration. That did not stop me on my path to becoming a teacher. I searched diligently for schools with scholarships in my field.

After it seemed as if all hope was lost, I received a call from Jackson State University about a program that I could be selected for because of my major. I applied to the program with the mindset of acceptance. I interviewed and I was accepted into the program.

Due to my late admittance to Jackson State University another road block came up during my processing. I had no where to live on campus. This year was the highest in Jackson State University's history for enrollment. The school was simply over populated. The board of the Call Me MISTER program worked hard to find me a place on campus to reside. After only a couple of hours I received my room assignment and roommate. The people here at Jackson State University are a delight to work with. Everyone is extremely pleasant and caring. I am truly glad to be a MISTER and I believe that I made the right decision of coming to this institution.
In the middle of my fall semester, I became a member of the first cohort of the Call Me MISTER program at Jackson State University. Coming into the program was very new and surprising to me, because I didn’t have a full understanding of what the program was or the seriousness of it. That all changed when I got the call that the remainder of the cohort and I had to attend a press conference, and we were put on the news. The seriousness of the program hit me at that moment.

For the remainder of my freshman year, the program helped me with all of my classes and had a major impact on how I presented myself. Our advisors made sure we understood how serious the program is, but they made it clear that we will spend our entire summer understanding what the program is and how much of an impact it will have on lives. We spent close to two months in Clemson, South Carolina at Clemson University, which is the founding place and headquarters of the Call Me MISTER program. During that time, we completed an internship where they put us in classrooms and made us responsible for educating children. This gave us all experiences that we will never forget, and could possibly use when we begin our career in the field of teaching. Evaluations were given on our lesson plans, classroom management, and how we handled situations in the classroom. After receiving the evaluation, it helped me grow as an educator, and gave me notice on what I need improvement on.

During the internship, we had multiple sessions on the history of the program, and MISTER graduates came back to answer any questions the undergraduate MISTERs might have. Each one of them gave a small lecture on how this program makes a major impact on our lives and our students’ lives. After hearing their lecture, I then gained a full understanding of what the Call Me MISTER program is about, and it makes me proud that I can be apart of this life changing program.

My first year experience of being a MISTER changed the way I think, speak, and carry myself in a positive way. I know now that I will play a major role in children’s lives, and lead them down the right path. With that being said, my first year experience taught me that Call Me MISTER is not just a program. It is a lifestyle.

Each internship site differed. Some MISTERS were assigned to public schools, private schools, and/or other types of summer programs. Each MISTER was responsible for developing lesson plans, teaching students, working as a part of a collaborative team, and managing classrooms. The MISTERS also received professional development, participated in team-building exercises, and attended the Leadership Development Institute held at Clemson University each Summer.
My First Year As A MISTER: Cortland Moten

My first year as a MISTER, I can honestly say was very challenging for me. I felt this way because I didn’t have any type of reliable transportation. I was going back and forth from Florence to Jackson State everyday and there was a point in time where that was not working out for me. Being a Freshmen in college, I didn’t know what to expect because honestly my mind was not focused on the right things in college. I thought I could not go to class and still get good grades, but I learned that I couldn’t just do my work and not go to class the hard way. Being the only MISTER who did not go on the trip to Clemson University in South Carolina really put me back on track as a college student. Instead of enjoying an educational experience at Clemson University, I had to go to summer classes to stay in the Call Me MISTER program. Now, I feel that I am more prepared on what is expected of me and more focused too. Being a sophomore I have to set an example for the new cohorts as they go through their freshman year of college. I plan on going to Clemson this summer with my brothers and enjoying this educational experience that can help me build on my characteristics as a young African American male teacher.

“\nIn life you get so many opportunities to do special things. The Call Me MISTER program gives me a reason to strive to be a successful teacher of young children. ”

MISTER Fredderick Murray

What Has Gotten Me Here:
Deon Holder

What has gotten me to the point where I am now? There are many people who have given me a push. I have had many mentors who instilled some of their wisdom and knowledge into me so that I may one day succeed. There are also those people whom I have met but once, and impacted me for the rest of my life. There are those people who have disciplined me in one fashion or another, that I disliked at that particular point in time. Then there are my parents. They have probably had the most profound impact upon my life, not just because they are my parents but because of how they lead their lives. Reflecting on all of the people who have sown a seed in my life still does no justice to the question at hand. The real and only answer from which the umbrella extends is God’s will.

I have frequently heard the statement that the African American male is a hot commodity in today’s world. I believe the stage is steadily being set for me to make a difference in this world and accomplish my dreams. My question now is, how will my experience here at Jackson State University contribute to my answer the next time I am posed with the question, “What has gotten me here?”

Upcoming Issue: Spring 2014

- JSU MISTERs Present Presidential Creative Awards Research at National Conference
- Spotlight on JSU CMM Program Mentors
- Spotlight on Community & Service-learning Projects
- More feature stories on “My First Year as a MISTER” and “Beginning My Journey as a MISTER”
Each applicant must meet the following criteria to be eligible for consideration for JSU Call Me MISTER:

- Be a graduating senior in high school applying to Jackson State University or be accepted to attend Jackson State University;
- Complete online application including 1 page entitled, “Why I Want to Teach” and a 1 page essay entitled, “How I Believe the Call Me MISTER Program Will Benefit Me as a Student”;
- Submit two letters of recommendation (online process), one from an educator and one from a person of the applicant’s choice;
- Submit a copy of high school diploma and final transcript or General Equivalence Diploma (GED).

Online Application and Recommendation forms may be completed at the following website:
http://www.jsums.edu/mli/MISTER/
Or simply send an email requesting an application to:
tony.t.latiker@jsums.edu or cmm2012@jsums.edu

Call Me MISTER Rights & Responsibilities

- Major in Elementary or Early Childhood Education
- Maintain a 2.75 G.P.A. during first 60 hours
- Be enrolled for at least 16 hours
- Adhere to attendance policies
- Not drop any classes without advisement from Academic Coach
- Take Praxis CASE by the end of Freshmen year
- Satisfy all requirements for Admission into Teacher Education at JSU
- Attend all scheduled seminars & activities
- Teach 1 year in Mississippi for each year funds were received.
- Conduct self in a manner that exemplifies a positive role model
- Reside on campus and not engage in outside employment that will impair effectiveness in meeting academic and program requirements
- Adhere to grievance policies of JSU
- Develop a plan of action with the Academic Coach to assist in academic success