

## *JSU Civil Engineering Students Win Important Awards in the Deep South Concrete Canoe Competition*

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Jackson State University, American Society of Civil Engineers (JSU ASCE) student chapter had a very successful presence in the 2013 ASCE Deep South Regional Student Conference held in Baton Rouge from March 21 through March 23, 2013. This conference features the annual concrete canoe and steel bridge competitions, as well as other competitions related to civil engineering discipline. Twelve universities from, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and Arkansas with about 350 civil engineering students, practitioners, and faculty participated in this year's conference. This is the third year in a row JSU has won several awards in the competition. The concrete canoe team captured five awards in different categories including the third place overall in the competition.



The concrete canoe is the most visible and challenging of the competitions held at the annual Deep South Conference. This is because of the fact that the use of concrete to make a canoe is unusual and challenging. The idea is to successfully construct an 18-22 ft long canoe with a structural mix that has a unit weight less than water and is able to float and carry 4 people safely. The JSU Canoe team consists of 14 student members. Mr. Samuel Rhoads and Chris Herron from the Civil and Environmental Engineering Dept masterminded the project as they secured 2<sup>nd</sup> place for their excellent presentation skills.

The canoe competition consists of four parts: a design paper, an oral presentation, the overall aesthetics and a series of races to measure its performance on water. The JSU

concrete canoe, named “Sweetness” to honor late decorated athlete Walter Payton, won in five categories. In the men’s sprint event, Jonathan Atkins and Ennis Crosby competed and finished 3rd. In the women’s sprint event, Kameron Boggan and Christine Edwards competed and finished 2nd. In the Co-ed sprint event, Samuel Rhoads, Jonathan Atkins, Naomia Briggety, and Christine Edwards competed and finished 2nd. Overall, as a final product, which is a very prestigious award, JSU canoe “Sweetness” secured the third place. This is the first time; JSU has secured a place in this category. Other student members such as, Ammanuel Kebede, James Fairly, Ennis Crosby, Chris Herron, Ashlee Ingram, Alesha Jackson, Ibrahim Hinds, and Michael Gray-Lewis worked diligently on the actual design and construction.

This is the fourth year in which JSU has attended the competition. The ASCE student chapter at JSU is currently advised by Dr. Himangshu S. Das, Assistant Professor of the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department who oversees all activities of the chapter. Through hard work, preparation and creativity, JSU’s civil engineering students were able to establish a high standard in this competition and look forward to further improve results in future. The chapter has already started working towards the next year’s competition and plan to possibly participate in the steel bridge portion of the competition, as well as compete in the concrete canoe again. By competing in all of the events, JSU will be eligible to proceed from the regional competition to the national level with a first place finish, giving the JSU Civil and Environmental Engineering Dept. national recognition. Credit goes to the leadership demonstrated by Mr. Samuel Rhoads, currently serving as a President and Donald Hendon, serving as a Secretary, for their leadership and hard work in fund raising and managing day to day activities of this very active student chapter. “The third place overall as well as other awards are really important achievements by our students since this is only the fourth time for JSU to participate in the competition.” Says Dr. Farshad Amini, Professor & Chair, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering.



*This year’s concrete canoe “Sweetness”*