



Press Release

Contact:

Dr. Robert Lockett, Director
Margaret Walker Center
Jackson State University
601-979-2055
robert.lockett@jsums.edu

For Immediate Release:

Jackson State University, the City of Jackson, and Jackson Public Schools to recognize “Milestones in Democracy: Thirty Years of a More Representative Government in Jackson.”

Jackson, MS—Jackson State University (JSU), the City of Jackson, and Jackson Public Schools (JPS) will recognize “Milestones in Democracy: Thirty Years of a More Representative Government in Jackson” with a reception and program, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Jackson Convention Complex on Thursday, October 29, 2015.

JSU’s Institute of Government Mike Espy Series, in partnership with the Margaret Walker Center and the Center for University Based Development, both at JSU, will lead this celebration of two major events over the last 30 years that brought “a more representative government” to the City of Jackson:

1. After years of legal confrontation, the community elected the first Mayor/Council form of government in 1985, which brought for three African Americans and three women to sit on the City Council, with Dale Danks Jr., as Mayor and Dr. E.C. Foster as Council President, and
2. In 1997, the City elected its first African American Mayor, Harvey Johnson, Jr.

“It is with these two milestones in democracy,” noted Institute of Government Executive Director, Dr. Otha Burton, Jr., “that Mississippi’s capital city and largest municipality transitioned into a more representative government after a long history of de jure and de facto segregation.”

The program will include a public reception and media interviews at 5:30 p.m., followed by an official welcome and significance of the occasion at 6:00 p.m. by Dr. Burton and JSU Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Evelyn Leggette.

At 6:15 p.m., an opening session with Mayor Danks, Dr. Foster, and the living members of the first City Council will address the change in the form of government in 1985, and, at 7:00 p.m., the second session with Mayor Johnson, current Mayor Tony Yarber, and other speakers will examine the significance of the election of the first African American Mayor in 1997.

Jackson State University, the City of Jackson, Jackson Public Schools, and the other host partners are pleased to sponsor this 30th year recognition and celebration of each elected official who was critical to this transformation.

This event is free and open to the public.

Jackson State University
Institute of Government
Center for University Based Development
Margaret Walker Center

Sponsored by
City of Jackson

Jackson Public Schools