



## Gears of Progress



### Superintendent's Message

Dr. David Daigneault

The economic forecast in Grenada looks as bright as it has in decades. Our industrial sector is busy with new construction. The Grenada Star's headlines routinely announce a new deal struck or a new factory forthcoming. Successful companies have chosen our community as the place to set up shop and expand their operations in Mississippi.

We've wasted no time getting to know our new neighbors. These are well-established, successful businesses that use state-of-the-art equipment and strategies. Their jobs demand highly skilled, motivated workers. Naturally, they look to us as the local school district to gauge the prospects of their future workforce.

At the same time, troubling statistics are being reported across the state. Mississippi is falling short on the number of skilled workers needed to fill the jobs that are here and certainly the ones that are coming. What's more, in Grenada, we lack the housing to supply the growing population that is projected for our area.

These issues are at the heart of many of our discussions with local industry leaders. We share their concern and a particular ethic: we'll find a way to create what we need, and we've got plenty of grade-A material to work with in Grenada.

The state recognizes the low-participation rate of workers in Mississippi and has shown a commitment to supporting local schools that are engaged in training students to meet the evolving challenges of the modern workforce. The state legislature recently invested in our Career and Technical Education program, and we're using those funds to make long overdue upgrades and enhancements to our 53-year-old Vocational Education Building. That support will ensure a more attractive, functional, and safe learning environment for our students and teachers.

But we're not just fixing a leaky roof or creating modern restrooms for students and staff. We'll also be improving our Automotive program, recruiting talented instructors, and beginning a major overhaul of our Carpentry program.

We've even started discussions with Mississippi State University to adapt their Tiny Houses program to bring a more relevant Building Construction Science opportunity to our area, which is in need of construction with too few carpenters, builders, and workers to facilitate it.

See "Progress" Continued on page 2

## PLTW Visits Grenada to Celebrate Impact



Photo by Jamie Kornegay

Representatives from Project Lead the Way traveled to Grenada to present a plaque and celebrate the publication of their profile on Grenada School District's success with their STEM curricula. PLTW Senior Vice President of Research Sylvia Huff (left) and PLTW Executive Vice President and Chief Impact Officer Katie Minihan (right) presented the plaque to GSD Superintendent Dr. David Daigneault during a special program. Afterwards, PLTW staff toured the STEM labs at GHS and Grenada Elementary 4-5 with business leaders and community members.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada School District (GSD) celebrated recent achievements in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education at a special event on Feb. 20. The occasion centered around the publication of "Launching a STEM Story for Every Student," a profile of Grenada's implementation of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum in grades PreK through 12.

GSD was the first district in Mississippi to establish this program top to bottom in all grades, PreK through 12, and the district's success story was shared and discussed with members of PLTW, local

industry, and community leaders.

The event began with remarks from PLTW representative Sylvia Huff, Senior Vice President of Research, who presented an overview of the company's impact profile which used Grenada's case study to illustrate the program's success. (Read more about the PLTW profile on page 3).

"One of the key takeaways is that, intentionally exposing students to STEM opportunities as early as possible results in a plethora of opportunities later in life," Huff said. "You don't have to wait until graduation to see those impacts.

One of the most eye-opening pieces that my team was able to glean from the information collected was that even when students get into middle school, they're

already speaking about their elementary experiences and how that has impacted and prepared them for their middle school courses ... Project Lead the Way and otherwise."

Katie Minihan, PLTW's Executive Vice President and Chief Impact Officer, said the company's impact profiles present the most powerful stories about how their curricula is used in education throughout the country and that Grenada's story will help other districts maximize their potential. Presenting a plaque to GSD Superintendent Dr. David Daigneault, Minihan said, "Thank you for all you do for students, [and] thank you for letting us partner with you to do that."

Daigneault accepted the plaque and spoke about how PLTW curricula has impacted not only scores as Grenada but teaching methods as well. "The techniques that we use in those (PLTW) classes have driven what happens in most of our other classes," he said.

Chris Hinton, Community Development Manager for Entergy, spoke as one of the district's industry partners. Hinton said Entergy was a big supporter of PLTW because the critical-thinking, problem-solving, and team-building skills at its core are exactly what his company is looking for when they hire new workers.

"I've had the opportunity to tour the (Grenada) schools," Hinton said. "What I witnessed was absolutely amazing, just to see the expression on young people's faces as they're figuring out things, to see them in groups working together."

Hinton said Entergy has supported PLTW and Grenada through funding for specialized teacher training for many years and will continue to support it. "The success is proven," he said. "We've seen it."

See "PLTW" Continued on page 2

## GES Red Top Celebrates 100th Day of School



Photo by Martha Liberto

GES students (l t r) Savannah Noel, Kobe Noel, Noa-Lynn Samples, Mari Holden Spencer, and Noah Herring dressed as centenarians to celebrate 100 days of school.

# “PLTW”

Continued from page 1

Wendy Clemons, Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education and Career and Technical Education for the Mississippi Department of Education, applauded the large number of females represented in the PLTW students who were present. She credited PLTW classes at the early grade levels for exposing “non-traditional” STEM students to subjects they didn’t know existed.

“Our kids can only be what we show them,” Clemons said. “And if we don’t show them the opportunities that exist, they won’t know. And so, Grenada, keep doing that. Keep partnering with your community. Keep showing our children what those possibilities are, particularly our non-traditional students. Because everybody deserves to know what opportunities exist out there for them, and then they need to be equipped to reach those.”

Two GHS alumni from the Class of 2018 rounded out the panel. Sydney Clemons Dickson spoke about being the only girl among 16 boys in the first PLTW engineering class. Concepts such as electrical wiring and building implements were foreign to her, but in time she learned to make the best of what she had and learned the value of meticulous attention to detail. Following a class field trip to local factory Novipax, she participated in summer internships four years in a row and was offered the chance to put her problem-solving skills to work in a full-time position as Corporate Continuous Improvement Specialist. Today, she helps increase productivity at Novipax by improving efficiency among

departments.

Charles Pheng took an early biomedical class at GHS, but his interest diverted to engineering when he attended Mississippi State. After graduating in aerospace, he’s now earning his master’s degree at the University of Tennessee Space Institute, researching “stuff going four times the speed of sound.” He said the lab set-ups and scientific method he learned at GHS still applies to his work today.

After the speakers’ remarks, attendees were divided into groups and toured three different PLTW labs across the high school campus.

In the Engineering Lab, Pheng shared some of his research with students while Dickson offered advice for applying their PLTW skills.

In the Biomedical Lab, visitors met with students to learn about various projects, including DNA identification and brain dissection. They also watched students demonstrate some of the high-tech equipment they’ve learned to operate.

In the Computer Science Lab at the Grenada Career and Technical Center, the Pure Imagination robotics team, along with middle school Lego robot engineers, showed off their wares and demonstrated how to program and operate robots to perform different tasks.

The tour culminated with a visit to the Discovery Lab at Grenada Elementary 4-5, a PLTW School of Distinction for five years running. The lab’s director, Devon Tipton, engaged students with his high-energy lesson on the solar system. The fourth-grade students worked together in groups to build models of the planets and also presented their work on



GHS student Emily Goss (left) demonstrates techniques learned in her Project Lead the Way Biomedical class for Executive Secretary Martha Profit of the City of Grenada. Profit and other community leaders were invited to tour the GSD STEM labs as part of a celebration to mark the release of a national profile study on the district’s success in STEM education.

written forms.

Among the visitors was Kevin Gibson, plant manager at Milwaukee Tool. Gibson was impressed by how intensely focused the students were on their project, seemingly unphased by so many adults observing them. “Milwaukee Tool definitely recognizes the importance of this approach,” he said. “It not only fosters a pathway to further education but also cultivates skilled individuals ready to contribute meaningfully to the manufacturing workforce. We’re delighted to collaborate with GSD, championing their dedication to equipping our youth and community with the skills and mindset essential for the future.”

Wendy Clemons enjoyed interacting with the students as well. “Students of all ages need to learn how to think and collaborate, and what I see here is students really thinking and problem-solving,” she said. “They are very inquisitive of one another. If someone is doing something, I noticed another student would ask why. But they were always very polite.”

Clemons added, “The fact that the (GES 4-5) has the second highest science scores in the state, their proficiency rate in mathematics is out the roof, that’s not by accident. It’s because they teach students to think ... and you can’t replace that.”

# “Progress”

Continued from page 1

The arrival of the new mobile Fab Lab (see story page 4 marks our latest step in enhancing college- and career-preparation at GSD. Several industry partners have stepped up in a big way to offer their help and resources to acquire, design, and stock this traveling classroom that will provide access to cutting-edge technology and tools. Our Fab Lab is going to empower students across various disciplines to collaborate, design, test, and bring their ideas to life. The lab will not only familiarize them with the tools used in today’s manufacturing but give them the experience and confidence to excel in the workplace.

There are many other roles to play in the future of Grenada. The gears of progress are turning here, and we’re currently developing new solutions to broaden skills for all students. Whether they’re looking for reliable, well-paying jobs in local manufacturing or have entrepreneurial aspirations to develop their own products and start their own businesses, we aim to provide the best training for all dreamers.

Our upcoming programs will contribute to our students’ personal and professional growth. These innovative classes will equip them with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to thrive in today’s fast-paced and constantly evolving work environment.

Amid all the excitement, attention, and innovations currently happening at GSD, which you will read about in this issue’s pages, we want students — as well as our teachers, parents, and community partners — to be inspired about our ideas for an educational future that balances academic and technical education, unites industry and community, and acknowledges the strengths of working Mississippians.

Our hope and belief is that students who are conditioned for success and involved in their community through education will feel invested enough to not only stay but to pitch in and improve Grenada.

Grenada School District  
AmeriCorps Program

# Now Accepting Applications

## SERVE and EARN

### A Living Allowance and Money for College

Service Term: September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025

Application Deadline  
**July 31, 2024**

Visit the AmeriCorps Office or Website  
253 South Main, Grenada, MS / 662-226-1606 Ext. 1016  
my.americorps.gov

GSD Website  
www.grenadak12.com

# Grenada's Impact with PLTW

## LAUNCHING A STEM STORY FOR EVERY STUDENT



Grenada Elementary 4-5 students (l to r) CJ Armstrong, Mary Mitchell Martin, Catelyn Neathery, and Swayze Allbritton grace the cover of "Launching a STEM Story for Every Student," the new educational impact profile published by Project Lead the Way. The non-profit curriculum developer of STEM curriculum spotlight Grenada School District's innovative implementation of their science, engineering, and design program through all grade levels.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada was the first school district in Mississippi to implement Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curricula at all grade levels, and now the school is the subject of a promotional and informational profile by the national education company.

PLTW — which implements cutting-edge school curricula to attract students to careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) — released the publication "Launching a STEM

Story for Every Student" in February. The new publication, which spotlights Grenada School District, serves to illustrate best practices for PLTW's more than 11,500 schools nationwide.

"Our impact profile publications are an evidence-in-action tool," said Jackie Yanchocik, PR director for PLTW. "We like to couple them with findings from some of our more traditional research studies and longitudinal studies to highlight the impact of PLTW programs. They allow us to shine national focus on some of the

districts and schools with compelling stories to tell, while truly showing the impact their PLTW programs are having on students and their school community."

The 20-page profile, available online at [grenadak12.com](http://grenadak12.com), focuses on the creative ways in which the district implemented PLTW curriculum into all grade levels to reach as many students as possible.

The report reads: "Grenada has found that intentionally embedding PLTW throughout students' academic experiences promotes well-rounded learners — and its academic growth exemplifies that in its elementary grades, where PLTW curricula helps provide students a strong foundation for future success in math, English Language Arts (ELA), and science."

The profile digs deeper into the ways that the program's emphasis on critical-thinking and problem-based learning benefited other subject areas with anecdotal as well as quantifiable evidence, drawing a compelling link between the PLTW methods and rising state test scores at GSD.

The study cites the district's academic growth in 2022-23, when Grenada Elementary ranked in the top six percent of all elementary and middle schools throughout the state on the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System.

Among the impressive statistics were fifth-grade science scores, which ranked Grenada second in the state, and fourth-grade math achievements that earned a top-five ranking in the state. The report also notes the 30% increase in fourth grade English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency since 2016 when the district began implementing the program.

The profile authors spoke with administrators, teachers, and former students at Grenada to collect anecdotal evidence that attests to the program's strengths.

Shelby Boyett, a recent GHS graduate, took her first PLTW class in middle school. "Without the eighth grade PLTW class, I don't know what I'd be doing right now," Boyett says in the profile. "When I took that class my eighth-grade year, I got really interested in science and prosthetics."

The study goes on to report that Boyett is currently studying biomedical engineering as an undergraduate at the University of Mississippi and is planning to pursue a PhD in pediatric prosthetics.

"This impact profile puts our years of work into perspective and shows that we made the right decision to implement Project Lead the Way as broadly as we did," said GSD Superintendent Dr. David Daigneault. "This program really pointed us in the right direction and started us on a path to finding more fun, creative ways to affect students in surprising ways."

Yanchocik said PLTW was happy to celebrate the publication with a visit to Grenada on Feb. 20 and that she looked forward to sharing the impact profile with their partners and other schools across the country "as a way to provide them with models and exemplars of successful STEM learning."

Read the full profile here:

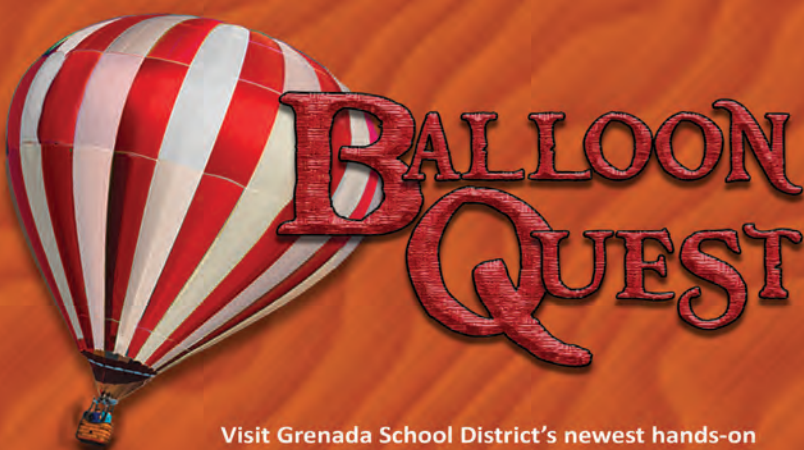


## Culinary Class Christmas Cookie Lessons



Photo by Meg Newcomb

GCTC Culinary students Emma Simpson (left) and Harmony Taylor (right) help GES Elementary student Jakayla Westbrook make Christmas cookies during a visit to the culinary lab for a holiday treat. Elementary students visited the GCTC to make cookies with Culinary Arts and crafts with the Teacher Academy before their holiday break.



Visit Grenada School District's newest hands-on learning facility — a science-based, escape-room-style museum.

Escape a tornado, take a virtual whitewater rafting adventure, create a tsunami, and discover the hidden room!

Work in teams to search for clues and use science knowledge to advance through different ecosystems.

To reserve an experience for your group, contact us.



Director: Tammie Cavanaugh  
Phone: 662-307-4546

Email: [balloonquest2022@gmail.com](mailto:balloonquest2022@gmail.com)  
Web: [bit.ly/balloonquest](http://bit.ly/balloonquest)

Location: 1779 Jackson Ave. Grenada, MS

A JOURNEY OF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

# Grenada Unveils New Mobile Fab Lab



Photo by Jamie Kornegay

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

A visit from a Gulf Coast school administrator and conversations with local business leaders turned a “fab” dream into a reality for the Grenada School District in a matter of six months.

On Feb. 20, the district unveiled its new Mobile Fab Lab at a showcase event highlighting Project Lead the Way’s impact profile on Grenada (see story page 1). The new lab is the result of a collaboration of Grenada School District with the Grenada Public Education Foundation and local industry.

The eye-catching, 38-foot trailer and F-450 Ford towing pick-up, donated by Kirk Auto Group, was wrapped by

Scott Lovelace with a design from artists at many of the sponsoring businesses. Milwaukee Tool, which is preparing to open a new manufacturing plant in Grenada, made a generous donation for state-of-the-art fabrication equipment and tools to make the rolling classroom a training ground for students and community members interested in joining the growing local workforce.

The idea for the Grenada Fab Lab started with a visit by Dr. John Mundy, manager of the Fab Lab program through Jackson County Schools near Ocean Springs. He brought the district’s mobile lab to Grenada late last summer and showed off the high-tech fabrication equipment, including a laser engraver, a computer numerical control (CNC)

router, a vinyl cutter, and 3D printers.

Mundy spoke to administrators and business leaders about how the mobile lab helped students learn the engineering design process and allowed them to practice on actual industry tools. He said that in the seven years that Jackson County has had the Fab Lab, 75,000 students and teachers across the Gulf Coast have seen it. “It has allowed us to motivate students and show them what’s available in STEM careers,” he said. “I truly believe a Fab Lab will make a difference in an area where people have access to it.”

For Grenada, the Fab Lab helps address the growing workforce shortage in Mississippi by introducing students to modern tools and strategies prevalent in industries setting up operations in the

state.

“The workforce is changing rapidly, and we’ve known that we have to quickly adapt our educational strategies to prepare students for the specialized skills and knowledge required to compete for jobs,” said GSD Superintendent Dr. David Daigneault. “We’re lucky to have access to people at local industries like Milwaukee Tool, Modine, ADP, Novipax, Entergy, Resolute, and others to keep us up-to-date on these fast-moving changes. The Fab Lab will be an excellent way to quickly develop, showcase, and give students access to this new training.”

**See “Fab Lab”  
Continued on page 8**

PRIORITY  
DEADLINE  
**APRIL 1**  
GRADUATE  
PROGRAMS

# KEEP TEACHING KEEP LEARNING

*Ole Miss* | Grenada

Classes offered on campus and online.  
Programs include:

- M.Ed. in Elementary Education Curriculum & Instruction
- M.Ed. and Ed.S. in Educational Leadership (K-12 Administration)
- M.A. in Teaching
- M.A. and Ed.D. in Higher Education
- M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education
- Ed.S. in Counselor Education

Partial tuition scholarships available for graduate students who attend on campus at the Grenada Center.

1060 Avent Drive in Grenada, on the Holmes CC-Grenada Center campus

For more information, contact Associate Director Jessica Coker-Hughes by phone at (662) 227-2348 or by e-mail at [jlcocker3@olemiss.edu](mailto:jlcocker3@olemiss.edu)

**OUTREACH.OLEMISS.EDU/COMMUNICATOR**



**SHUNTA NOEL  
FROM GRENADA, MISS.**

UM-Grenada Class of 2020  
First grade teacher  
at Grenada Elementary

# New Leadership at GMS



Photo by Jamie Kornegay

The Grenada Middle School administrative team for the 2024 spring semester includes (l to r) 6th Grade Principal Becky Bloodworth, Principal Jamie Harrison, Assistant Principal Angela Cooley, and Assistant Principal Jason Matthews.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

After seven and a half years as principal at Grenada Middle School, Marshall Whittemore retired in December. The new administrative team, led by new principal Jamie Harrison, continues to build on a strong foundation by listening to teachers and getting to know students.

Principal Harrison came to GMS the same year that Whittemore took over and served as assistant principal. Before that, he was principal at Charleston Middle School for two years. His first job in education was at French Camp, teaching Social Studies, coaching high school boys basketball, and assistant coaching softball and girls basketball.

The transition in leadership has been smooth sailing for Harrison, who took over in January.

“The first thing we did was start a leadership team,” Harrison said. The team is comprised of the four

administrators along with one teacher from each grade, a counselor, and an inclusion teacher. The group’s first order was to consider responses from a staff survey to determine what was going right and what needed improvement at GMS.

“We’ve taken their suggestions and already rolled out a couple of new ideas,” Harrison said.

For starters, the sixth grade now has its own class schedule. “It’s a lot better for them, not being in the hallway with the older students,” Harrison said. “Teachers love it. Tardiness and discipline issues are down too.”

In fact, discipline referrals are down across the school, and Harrison credits the leadership team’s decision-making with these improvements.

An ongoing focus at GMS is facilitating the transition between fifth and sixth grade.

“It can be a rough transition,” Harrison admitted. “They’re coming into sixth grade from the elementary

school, into a bigger school where they have more freedom, more frequent class changes, and they’re walking the halls without a teacher by their side every step. All of that on top of the fact that they’re going through other changes as well. So that’s why our biggest focus will continue to be helping them through this time and providing the things they need to be successful.”

Harrison said sixth-grade teachers have adapted instructional strategies that students are familiar with from elementary school, including learning centers and group work, to ease the transition to the middle-school environment.

In the end, Harrison believes it’s all about fostering good relationships with the students. At the semester’s first faculty meeting, he and the administrative team made that a central point of conversation. “We told teachers, let’s make sure the students know we love them and care about them, that we’re here for them,” he said. “If

a child acts out, and the teacher or administrator has a good relationship with that child, it’s easier to talk to them, address the root of the problem, and fix it. It curbs discipline issues, and it just generally enhances individual student performance.”

Harrison shared a motto he uses every day — Inspect what you expect.

“If I ask students to stay to the right in the hallway, then I’m going to be in the hallways myself making sure it happens,” he said. “You can’t throw out expectations and just hope it gets done. Whatever my expectations are for everybody, we’re going to check up on it as an administrative team.”

The presence of all four administrators in the halls and classroom is an effective strategy, according to Harrison.

“Among all of us, I’d say we visit every classroom in the building every day. And it’s so students can see us, they know we’re around. If a student needs to talk to us about something, they all get that opportunity.”

The three administrators working with Harrison on the team are assistant principal Angela Cooley, 6th grade principal Becky Bloodworth, and a new addition, Jason Matthews.

Matthews recently retired as South Panola High School’s principal. Harrison said he moved that school to an A grade and came to Grenada to help following Whittemore’s retirement. “Everything that has come up in the past several weeks, he’s seen it at some point in his career,” he said. “Every piece of advice he’s given has helped. Having his experience and knowledge is extremely valuable.”

Harrison is a native of Jackson and graduated high school from Northwest Rankin in Brandon. He attended the University of Mississippi, where he earned his undergraduate degree and a master’s degree in educational leadership. His wife Keisha teaches at Grenada Elementary’s Red Top, and they have two children, David, a third grader, and Caroline, an eighth grader.

## GCTC Health Sciences Visits Providence Assisted Living



(photo left) The Grenada Career and Technical Center Health Science classes visited Providence Assisted Living for Valentine’s Day. (l to r) GCTC Health Instructor Mallory Lester, Addyson Elliott, Trinity Lane, Abigail Crouch, Miriam Allen, Justiz Davis, Melayna Kimble, and Moriah Barnes

# Grenada Elementary 4-5 Hosts Math Carnival Night



Photo by Mary Claire Jacks

Students at Grenada Elementary 4-5 enjoyed a night of carnival-themed fun as they participated in math games at the Green Top's Math Carnival Night on Feb. 15. Students posing in the illustrated backdrop include (l to r) Sims Conley, Bella Cruz Gober, and Sam Housel.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada Elementary School 4-5 brought back its popular Math Carnival Night event for students and parents on Thursday, February 15.

The school lobby was transformed into a red- and white-striped tent with colorful lights and balloons, and the gymnasium was lined with games and concessions like a carnival midway.

Math teacher Erica Conley, who spear-

headed the event, said the special night builds excitement for math with students. "We try to make math as fun as possible because we want our love of math to spread to the kids and their parents."

Students and their parents form groups and convene in classrooms, where they play games with dice, a deck of cards, and dominoes. The games promote math fluency, but it feels more like a communal family night.

"Afterwards, we give them the cards, the dice, the dominoes, and the booklet

that goes with it so they have all the things they need to play math games and build that fluency at home," Conley said. "It helps the parents know, this is what my child is learning in fourth and fifth grade and this is how I can help them at home."

Students earned tickets for chances to win prizes and snacks at the carnival booths in the gymnasium. The midway was complete with knock-down cups, popcorn, cotton candy, face-painting, balloon darts, and a dunk booth.

Dr. Lyle Williams, Administrative Academic Officer for the district, volunteered to play ringmaster for Carnival Night. Donning his cape and top hat, Williams was able to help spread his love of math, which he taught for 16 years before becoming a top administrator at GSD.

"I think you have to teach math so that it applies to students," he said. "A lot of times they look at the x, y's and z's and freak out, but if you can tie it to a real life problem that they care about, then it means more to them and they're able to focus a little more."

The Carnival Night event is the latest in a series of themed night events, including Mad Science Night and Home for the Holidays literacy event, which combine daytime academic lessons with night-time family fun. It's all part of the Green Top's philosophy of making education more playful.

"We want them to love to come to

school," Conley said. "We want them to love learning, and that's just a tool that teachers have in our pocket to help with that."

Conley thanked Etta Jennings, Lindsey Leggett, and the math team for grades four and five who helped organize, decorate, and run the games. She also recognized the community sponsors who lent their help and donations to the popular event.

Sponsors included Harrell Metal Works, Snap Fitness, Harlow Law Firm, Milwaukee Tool, Emmanuel Baptist Church, and the law firm Horne, Gore, Kilpatrick, and Dambrino.

Grenada School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, veteran status, or other characteristics protected by law in any of its policies, practices, procedures or program operation. Grenada School District is an equal opportunity employer. For inquiries regarding this policy on discrimination contact: Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Tina Herrington; ADA/504 Coordinator, Dr. Lyle Williams; Grenada School District, 253 S. Main, Grenada, MS 38901; 662-226-1606

MARCH 22, 2024 | APRIL 19, 2024  
MCDANIEL AUDITORIUM ON THE GOODMAN CAMPUS

Holmes  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BIG  
Audition

2024

IT'S TIME TO AUDITION for The Holmes Connection! Show Choir, Coachman Singers & Concert Chorale. Everyone auditioning should be ready to sing a few warm-up exercises. Those auditioning for The Holmes Connection! or Coachmen Singers should prepare a pop vocal solo of his/her choice and Connection! auditionees should also bring a change of clothing for dance auditions. There are opportunities for scholarships and a guarantee of fun!



To fill out a Holmes Connection! Interest form, scan the QR code to the left. Or, for more information, please contact:

Mike Yates  
Director, The Holmes Connection!  
& Coachmen Singers  
(662) 472-9061 | myates@holmescc.edu

Drew Trautman  
Choir Director & Instructor, Concert Chorale  
& Coachmen Singers  
(662) 472-9056 | dtrautman@holmescc.edu

# GHS Students Learning on the Job



Photo by Michael Sanford

Grenada High School senior Quaniya Willis (far left) is the first student at Grenada to participate in an internship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Grenada. Joining Willis to commemorate her first day on the job is (l to r) GHS Career Coach Tiffany Reed, Grenada Career and Technical Center Director Barry Rogers, and Health Science instructors Kristi Winter and Mallory Lester.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

February 15, 2024 — a landmark date not only for Grenada School District but also for GHS senior Quaniya Willis. It was the start of a promising new internship program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center - Grenada (UMMC). For Willis, it was her first day on the job in a new medical career. Willis completed the Health Science classes at Grenada Career and Technical Center and said her teachers, Shuffield and Wells, piqued her interest in pursuing a career in the medical field. “I knew nursing was what I wanted to do,” Willis said. “Now getting this experience, it’s

like living out my dream.”

Willis may be the first, but she’s not the only GHS student to start a medical internship this year. Three other students have been lined up for positions at UMMC in radiology and patient care. There are also positions for high school students in technology and skilled labor, a total of six openings at the local hospital.

“Now we can say to our top students from the allied health program who are going into the medical field that they could possibly have a paid internship and get real-world experience in a hospital before graduating from high school,” said Tiffany Reed, Career Coach at GHS.

“These students are not just observ-

ing, they’re actually taking care of real patients. They go through the same protocol as a real employee, including acquiring licenses in BLS (basic life support), First Aid and CPR.”

Reed has also worked closely with local dentist offices, including Horan Family Dental and Ware Family Dental, to place students for internships. Next up are internships with local lawyers (Carlos Moore Law Group) and manufacturing companies (Grenada Stamping and Milwaukee Tool).

The arrangements and payments for these high school internships are offered through Three Rivers Planning & Development District by way of funding from AccelerateMS, the state’s workforce development partner. Reed, who works directly in GHS through Three Rivers, meets with students one-on-one to build career skills such as crafting a resume and developing interview skills. She helps students determine their career interests, and if the student’s school schedule lines up with the needs of the host business, they may be offered an internship position for up to \$12 an hour.

“Businesses looking to come to Grenada look at our school system, which plays a big role in whether our town gets new industry,” Reed said. “When students hear that, it really gets their attention. There’s a buy-in from our students, and we want them to know that you can keep your gifts and talents here in our community.”

Reed said part of her mission is to help students realize they can earn a good

living in Mississippi. “I tell them, your dollar goes a lot further in Mississippi than in bigger, more expensive places like Texas, California, and New York.”

No matter a student’s interest, Reed said she works with a growing network of local partners to pair them up with the job that’s right for them.

“We had an NJROTC student who was interested in aviation,” Reed said. “Through our partnership with the City of Grenada, the student was granted a position at the airport so he could be around the planes and experience the mechanical and service aspects of flying.”

Reed said GSD has been working for years to get students into UMMC, so the new hospital internship is a major boon for her program. “It’s good for Mississippi too because we’re currently experiencing a nursing shortage, so it’s a great opportunity to get students interested in the industry.”

As for Quaniya Willis, she said she plans to attend Southern Mississippi next fall to start her path toward being a registered neonatal nurse.

Reed believes the hands-on work at places like UMMC gives students a head start on their working life. “The experience will help them determine if this is indeed the right fit for them,” she said. “Even if, at the end of the internship, they say, ‘You know, I’ve changed my mind,’ that’s still a win for us because they’ve been exposed to that potential work environment, and now they have a better idea of what they want to do, or not do, with their lives.”

# VEHICLES FOR LESS?


# KIRK CAN


GRENADA • GREENWOOD • VICKSBURG  
BATESVILLE • CLEVELAND

# WWW.KIRKCAN.COM

# GHS Baseball 2024

By **Jamie Kornegay**  
GSD Reporter

Spring baseball is gearing up, and like the start of last fall's football season, fans are eager to see how this year's Chargers will perform under the guidance of a new head coach.

Justin Flake took over Grenada's baseball program last summer. After months getting to know the players, learning their strengths, and challenging their weaknesses, he's been eager to finally take the field in competition.

Flake developed a successful strategy at his previous schools, including DeSoto Central and Heritage Academy in Columbus, where his team achieved the first 20-win season in school history, the first district title in seven years, and the school's first-ever state championship.

Flake credits his winning mindset to the power of positive leadership. "The thing I've learned everywhere I've coached is to make sure the players know that you enjoy what you do," he said. "If I bring positive energy day in and day out, it filters over to them, and then they start pouring positive energy into the program, which filters over to the stands and school and community."

The coach insists that it's important to remain cool under pressure. "Coaches are thermostats, not thermometers, so we set the temperature by demonstrating that everything's cool," Flake said.

In addition to skills work, Flake said the staff regularly preaches mental toughness and even brought in a sports psychologist to teach players how to handle adversity. "We're just using all the resources we have to help them how to stay calm under pressure, how to handle it when things don't go their way," Flake said. "That's a big part of this sport, where you fail more than you succeed."

Flake praised his coaching staff for fostering a close-knit environment. This year's staff includes CJ Hodges, the pitching coach and associate head coach; Michael Cox, who came over from the middle school program, providing continuity with the younger players; and district newcomer Collins Brown, who works with catchers and leads the middle school program.

## "Fab Lab"

Continued from page 4

Grenada's Fab Lab project has brought industry partners from different disciplines to work together and help GSD design the look, layout, and select equipment that will be featured in the Fab Lab.

Sherry Worsham, Director of Program Development at GSD, said, Fab Labs are meant to be collaborative spaces where community members, students, and DIY enthusiasts learn and acquire new skills related to digital fabrication.

After installing equipment and training instructors, the district plans to organize workshops and training sessions to teach individuals across the schools, businesses, industries, and the community how to use the equipment and software available in the Fab Lab.

"If everything moves forward according to plan, we hope to pilot a workshop

Looking at the team's potential, Flake said Grenada's bullpen should be deep this season. He and Hodges opened the door for any player who felt they could contribute on the mound. "In our first two jamboree games and our season opener, we threw four arms every game," Flake said. "Nobody's carrying the load. Everybody's getting the opportunity and experience. And they're performing."

Senior and Hinds Community College signee Jude Westmoreland is the team's leading pitcher, but there are more than 20 other players with Ps by their name who are ready to take the mound.

Freshmen and sophomores make up more than half the team with many adept at various positions and skills. Among the pre-season standouts were Dylan Black, voted senior team captain by his peers; junior Preston Downs, a staple behind the plate; and sophomore Drew Klinck, the best all-around player.

Flake said athleticism and speed is one of the team's biggest assets. "If we get guys on base, we can do some things, like scoring from first on a ball hit in the gap," he said. "Our team speed's gonna allow us to score runs and put pressure on the opponent."

One aspect of the game that's often overlooked is baseball IQ. Flake said the coaches emphasize situational awareness, review film, and generally try to help the boys mature mentally as baseball players. "We want to make sure they're thinking like coaches when they're playing so that they're prepared enough during a game to just play," he said. "We're there to help if they need it, but ultimately players win games, not coaches."

At press time, the team had proven themselves early. Their pre-season jamboree at South Panola on Feb. 10 pitted them against Water Valley and the top 5A team, Lafayette. The Chargers were down early in both games, but they hung in and pulled out a pair of wins — 4-3 over Lafayette and 5-3 over Water Valley.

"Leaving there, I felt good that our kids could take a punch and get right back into it," Flake said.

The team's season opener against Starkville Academy was played at Holmes Community College on Feb. 13.

or two this summer or, at the latest, in early fall," Worsham said.

The district plans to make the Fab Lab available not only to Grenada students but to community members and students in neighboring districts.

"It's amazing how quickly this project came together, and it's all thanks to our partners in business and industry," Daigneault said. "They recognize the need for robust workforce development, and we're honored that they see us as willing and capable partners in helping make that happen in Grenada."

Businesses that sponsored the Fab Lab include Kirk Auto Group, Milwaukee Tool, ADP, Entergy, Modine, Novipax, and Resolute Forest Products.



Photo by Jamie Kornegay

**GHS Chargers new head baseball coach, Justin Flake (right), advises his ace pitcher, Jude Westmoreland, as the team prepares for the spring season. Flake said the team has a deep bullpen and great speed on the bases, among other positive attributes. The Chargers' first home game is Feb. 27 against Water Valley.**

The pitching was strong, and the defense remained consistent, giving the Chargers a 2-0 shutout.

Assistant Athletic Director Chip Foster was impressed by the team's opening performance. "There were no walks," he said. "In high school baseball, if you can pitch a game with no walks, you're bound to win."

Local fans will have their first opportunity to see the Chargers at home on Feb. 27 when they play Water Valley. What can fans expect to see?

"I feel like they'll see a team that plays the right way and that represents Grenada the right way," Flake said.

"They're gonna play hard til the last out, no matter what the scoreboard says. We've got the speed to be aggressive on the bases. Our guys do a good job at the plate, and our pitchers are going to throw strikes."

Flake added, "And anyone worried about the game dragging out, you may get to go home early. Because when your pitchers are throwing strikes, and you're making plays, it won't take long to get a baseball game in."



Julia Criss Tartt



## Criss Office Supply

- Custom Forms • Custom Stamps • Banners
- Educational Books • Julia's Jelly & Jams
- Car Magnets • Flyers • B&W or Color Copies
- Business Cards • Yard Signs • Window Decals
- Nic-Naks Pottery • Essential Oils • Local Honey
- Teaching Supplies • Janitorial Supplies
- Lions Club Pecans • Lamination Services
- Send/Receive Faxes • Invitations
- And So Much More!

**2245 Commerce St. - Hwy. 51 South**  
**FREE DELIVERY • Call (662) 226-1901 or (662) 307-2394**  
**Mon.-Fri. 8-5 & Sat. 9-12**

