



## At Home Among the Best



### Superintendent's Message

Dr. David  
Daigneault

Congratulations to Visions! The high school's show choir recently had the honor of performing on the hallowed stage of the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, where some of the biggest names in American music have played.

This year marked the choir's third appearance at Show Choir Nationals, and while Visions always gave it their best effort, the group was never able to outscore the top choirs from the Midwest and Southeast to place among the top six finalists.

But this was a special season for Visions. Not only did the choir make finals this year, they placed second among 11 top-ranked show choirs! No other choir from Mississippi — a state known for its first-rate show choirs — has ever placed so high at this elite festival.

In addition, senior AJ Benford was named Best Male performer out of all groups. These great achievements contribute to an already stellar competition season that led Visions to two Grand Champion trophies at competitions throughout Mississippi.

The choir's director, Jenni Winter, says this great feat was the culmination of years of hard work and effort, which built a tradition of excellence that manifested in this year's disciplined and highly motivated group. With their outstanding finish at Show Choir Nationals, Visions takes their earned spot among the top choirs in the southeast, a recognition that further spreads word of the talented, hard-working young people we have in Grenada.

For those who didn't know Grenada was home to one of the South's top show choirs — or even what show choir is — you should really make a point to see these students perform when they host their spring show at GHS Auditorium on April 18 or 19.

Show choir is a creative mix of story and song. It incorporates choral singing, pop music, high-energy dance, and dramatic acting. Visions is known for its entertaining, emotional, and innovative shows to match bold song choices and dazzling choreography. The amount of work these students and instructors put into their show is remarkable. They work every bit as hard as any team or group at Grenada High School, putting in long hours after school and often on weekends during competition season.

See "Best"  
Continued on page 2

# Show Choir Wrap Up 24



Photo by Martha Liberto

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada High School's Visions show choir capped off a stellar season with the biggest prize ever received by the program — a second-place trophy from the Show Choir Nationals competition at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tenn.

The competition, held March 22-23, traditionally hosts the best high school show choirs from the Midwest and Southeast. Grenada had never placed among the top six choirs until their two performances, which earned them first runner-up status.

Grenada's show choir program has built a reputation for excellence over the years, and Director Jenni Winter believes the "work in progress" has finally earned

its due. "This is what we've been working for," she said. "I've had a few alumni send messages, telling me how proud they were. I told them, 'You're part of this. You might not have been on that stage, but thanks to the hard work hours you put in, you helped build this.'"

Those years of hard work reached a pinnacle this year, Winter said, as this group's work ethic is the best she's ever seen. "They really bought into it this year," she said, "and I firmly believe that made all the difference."

It didn't hurt that some of those alumni — including Matthew Murphy, Claire Barker, and Trip McCrory — helped design a show that excelled in choreography, story, song choice, and entertainment value. Among the selections were popular

(Photo left)

Members of Grenada High School's Visions Show Choir — including (foreground, l to r) Naima Reed, Elle Lucius, Kate Cobb, Shelbie Woodall, Emma Pitcock, Bay Kornegay, AJ Benford, and Trinity Davis — perform their competition show, "Ugly." The choir captured two Grand Championships and a handful of category awards at Mississippi festivals this winter, as well as an historic second-place finish at Show Choir Nationals at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tenn. this March.

songs by Taylor Swift, Fleetwood Mac, Silk Sonic, Billy Joel, and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

The show, "Ugly," is a creative reimagining of the fairy tale "The Ugly Duckling." Senior Anna Herring starred as a meager duck that finds her way out of the pond, encounters friends and foes in the form of other birds, and ultimately rises to claim her inner beauty. In addition to Herring, the show features solos from Braley Carnathan, Kyler Pittman, Hannah Palazzolo, Naima Reed, and A.J. Benford, who won Best Male Performance honors among all the choirs in Nashville.

See "Choir"  
Continued on page 3

## 2024 Beauty Review



Photos by Torrance Studios

GHS Most Beautiful 2024 winner Michaela Raymond (9th grade) and Most Handsome Jekerious Williams (12th grade)



Most Beautiful and alternates include (l to r) Elyse Dorris (Fifth Alternate), Emma Pitcock (Third Alternate), Abigail Crouch (First Alternate), Michaela Raymond (2024 Most Beautiful), Haylee Jones (Second Alternate), Brooklyn Hardwick (Fourth Alternate), and Rylee Ryals (Miss Congeniality).



Most Handsome and alternates include (l to r) Shane Rosenthal, 2024 Most Handsome Jekerious Williams, Drudarius Barnes, and Preston Smith.

# 21st Century Skills Classes



Photo by Melissa Taylor



Photo by Melissa Taylor

Students (left) Gabbie Cadena and (right) Aaliyah Smith made wind chimes in the 21st Century skills pottery class.



Photo by Robbte Buchanan

Photoshop students (front, l to r) Emily Wilson, Catherine Neeley, and (back) Lillian Leggett used recycled glass to form Christmas trees on canvas.



Myesha Cotton (left) shows off the sublimation pillowcase she designed, and Ty'Tyana Steele (right) displays her name on a magnet created in Photoshop and cut on the laser.



By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

The Grenada School District's after-school skills and tutoring program, funded by the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant, wraps up its spring session this April. The grant provides for Grenada students in PreK-12 to brush up on their classroom lessons and learn new skills, as well as offers educational services to participating families.

"People in the community know this program, and they depend on it," Program Director Lynne Russell said. "It helps a lot of parents because it provides a safe place for kids to be after school four days a week, and it introduces students to new activities and possible jobs later in life."

Tutoring classes meet Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Middle and high school teachers mentor students who need help in English, algebra, biology, and history, as well as ACT prep. The small class settings provide the extra attention students need to improve their grades and comprehension.

Skills classes are available to students at Grenada Elementary PreK-3 (Book Club, PE, STEAM, and Music) and Grenada Elementary 4-5 (Discovery Lab, Music, Math, Book Club and PE). Middle School students meet at the Grenada Career and Technical Center and can choose from Robotics and Computer Coding, Photoshop and Media Design, Podcasting and Music Production, Pottery and Ceramics, Urban Ag and Archery, and Weightlifting. High School students may take the same classes in addition to Automotive, Building Trades, Culinary Arts, and Welding.

In addition to the skills and tutoring classes, the 21st Century grant helps fund the Parent Resource Center at 423 S. Line St. in the old Lizzie Horn school building. The center provides parents with resources to help kids at home, including supplementary material for home-tutoring, reading and math instruction, and assistance with college submissions.

Russell said both elementary and middle/high school teachers are planning for a summer session, which runs June 3-28. Students interested in skills classes can request from the list of current elementary, middle and high school subjects. The summer classes will run from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Parents interested in enrolling their child in the summer session should contact their school office after April 22, 2024. Principals will decide which students are eligible to enroll in tutoring classes.

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## "Best"

Continued from page 1

The members who make up Visions represent a broad, diverse sampling of the student body. These students are not only proficient singers and dancers, they also excel in academics, band, cheerleading, and football. It's a mix of boys and girls from all walks of life and all ages. In fact, most of Vision's rival choirs use only top junior and senior performers to compete, while Visions gives students from all high school grade levels the chance to perform, including a few outstanding eighth graders. To compete in this arena the way they have and to earn the amount of accolades that continue to come their way is a testament to the program's work ethic, dedication, and collaboration. The commitment these students exhibit is reflective of the passion of their director and the many Visions alumni who return season after season to help design the show and run rehearsals.

Our school's show choir program instills students with a drive for excellence, an attention to detail, and a demand for precision. Undoubtedly, students who participate in this program will emerge more confident, coordinated, and hard-working. Across the district, I've noticed more recognition for our students as well as a

renewed drive for excellence. It comes not only from our teachers and administrators but from the students themselves.

You saw it last year when our high school football team made its first trip to the state championship game. Currently the baseball team is making a convincing run for an historic season. Our robotics team, Pure Imagination, continues to achieve higher rankings in the state and nation, as well as our STEM teams affiliated with the NJROTC program. Our high school band has maintained a long-running tradition of excellence, winning grand champion honors at festivals throughout the southeast each fall.

A world-class education means rising above the confines of your school and working with students from other towns, states, and countries. Grenada's students continue to make great strides in the world, demonstrating a sense of pride and excellence not only among their peers but among themselves as well.

There's no better affirmation of one's abilities than to perform on par with the best, and that's exactly what our students in Grenada are doing.

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Photo by Amy Killebrew

Photo left  
Third- and fourth-grade students at the Green Top who participate in the Pizzazz Show Choir include (front row, l to r) Waylon Elliott, Kasen Surrell, Bryce Hicks, (middle, l to r) Sophia Herring, Jersey Greer, Savannah Dungan, Lucy Hatcher, Allyeanna Cooper, Ryleigh Stewart, Tate Shirley, Kaylyn Pratt, and (back row, l to r) Storm Payne, Abigail Foster, Sophia Harris, Aubrey Cole Surrell, Corey Goss, Levi Day, Karter Mitchell, Carsyn Chandler, Adley Franklin, Libbie Grace Anthony, Karly Mitchell, and Bella Cruz Gober.



Photo by Martha Liberto

Photo left  
(l to r) GHS seniors Sarah Trotter, Kenny Everett, and Malaree Williams perform a selection from Visions' show, "Ugly."



Photo by Martha Liberto

Photo right  
Members of the GMS show choir Entertainers — including (standing, l to r) Emma Grace Rocha, Lily Beth Williams, Ethan Cooley and (seated) Logan Grace Bridges — perform a selection from their show, "Beetlejuice."

## “Choir”

Continued from Page 1

“A lot of what made this show special was the characters and the meaning at the end,” Winter said. “It says, ‘Hey, you might not fit in everywhere you go, kind of like school or even after you graduate. But hold true to yourself, and you will eventually find your place in life.’”

Visions traveled all around the state performing at festivals this winter. They finished second among the state’s top choirs at the Petal Show Choir Invitational (Feb. 24) and took home Grand Champion trophies, along with all the major category awards, at both the first-ever Tupelo King City Classic (Feb. 17) and the Madison Central Deep South Classic (March 2). The group’s lowest showing was still a solid third-place finish at the Jackson Academy Show Choir Invitational (Feb. 3), where senior Case Smith was named Best Performer.

Among the three show choirs at Grenada Middle School, Winter’s Entertainers also competed around the state this season. Their show, “Beetlejuice,” was based on the movie and featured such popular songs as “Bad Guy” by Billie Eilish, “Think” by Aretha Franklin, and “Hold My Hand” by Lady Gaga.

Entertainers earned their highest marks with second-place finishes at Petal and Madison Central, where they also won the award for Best Costumes.

“It was a fun show, but I think next year, we’ll put on a category or theme show so we can concentrate less on story and more on performing and vocals,” Winter said. “If we spend more time on the fundamentals, the kids will be that much further ahead when they get to Visions.”

The future of the program looks sound with the robust elementary choir Pizzazz also learning the competition circuit. The

choir, made up of 4th and 5th graders from Grenada Elementary’s Green Top, is led by Amy Killebrew.

Pizzazz’s competition show, “Catch a Wave,” featured songs by the Beach Boys, the Temptations, and popular numbers from Disney’s “Teen Beach Movie” to go with the surfing theme.

“This show was full of fun and excitement and awarded us first place at every competition we attended this season,” Killebrew said.

The group won first place in the small middle-school division at Jackson Prep and Jackson Academy, where they also won the Judges Choice Award and the JASI Award, competing against 7th and 8th graders. They ended their season in Tupelo, competing in the Upper Elementary division, and brought home first place as well as a top male soloist award for 5th grader Waylon Elliott, who competed against singers in grades 6-8.

“This year we had some amazing 5th graders that I will for sure miss next year,” Killebrew said. “My 4th graders have grown so much over the course of a year, and they are going to be great leaders for next year’s group.”

Pizzazz will hold its spring show April 4 at the Green Top.

Current 3rd or 4th graders interested in joining next year’s choir are invited to apply. Forms are available in the school offices, and auditions are May 1 from 3:00-4:30.

The GMS Entertainers will perform their competition show at their spring event on April 11 at the GHS Auditorium. The Visions Spring Show, which includes a performance of “Ugly,” will be held April 18-19 in the GHS Auditorium. Auditions for all the GMS and GHS choirs will be held May 6-10.

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# GMS's Inclusive Classroom Strategy

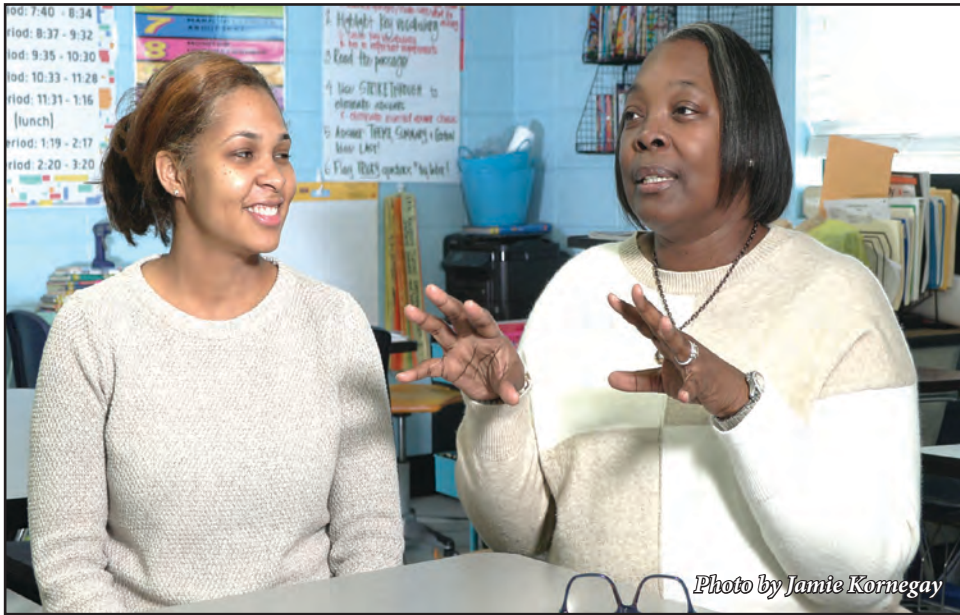


Photo by Jamie Kornegay

Sixth-grade teacher Gail Smith (right) and special education teacher Shonturia Forrest (left) co-teach in an inclusion English Language Arts class at Grenada Middle School. Their teaching methods create a learning environment where all students can thrive, regardless of social backgrounds and learning abilities.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

There's more to conducting a modern classroom than just using technology to spice up a lesson. Educating today's diverse student body requires a more holistic approach to the classroom, even if it means using multiple teachers and strategies.

Inclusive teaching methods are used to create a learning environment where all students can thrive, regardless of

social backgrounds and learning abilities. At Grenada Middle School, certain classrooms have shown success merging general education students with students who have been identified as needing special education and/or related services.

In her English Language Arts (ELA) class at GMS, 6th grade general education teacher Gail Smith is joined by special education teacher Shonturia Forrest. The two share teaching duties in the classroom, with Smith serving as the content specialist and Forrest as the

access specialist.

The two teachers work intuitively and remain in sync with one another whether they're co-teaching in the classroom or talking about their students. "We're trying to make sure that all the kids in the classroom are able to..." said Smith before Forrest followed up, "...have access to quality instruction."

At GSD, students who possess certain disabilities that may inhibit their aptitude for reading and writing are identified, and specialists help draft an individualized education plan (IEP). The IEP determines areas where students need extra help, and with parental input, specific learning goals, services, and accommodations are set. These accommodations may include alternate methods of how information is presented or how a student is tested.

For Smith, a student's abilities do not determine what they learn, only how they learn it. "I expect my inclusion students to do the exact same things as the general ed students," she said. "The only difference is, they have more accommodations."

By studying data from diagnostic assessments, classroom observation, and other sources, Smith and Forrest identify which students need extra help learning specific standards. They formulate ways of recrafting their lessons to meet the individualized educational needs of the students.

The format of the class, which includes small group and individual ses-

sions as well as whole-class instruction, provides room for teachers to pay extra attention without making it obvious which students need added help. "We don't exclude anyone who needs extra help from the general class because everybody (is) getting one-on-one," Smith said.

"Parents often hear inclusion and think, I don't want my child to be singled out or to be labeled," Forrest said. She explained that the goal of an inclusive classroom is to include all students, regardless of their ability or disability, and providing individualized accommodations and co-teaching ensures that "they're in the least restrictive environment."

Academic studies have shown that the inclusion model, with its additional teacher and more one-on-one time, benefits all students. Often, at this pivotal moment in a child's education, there's more than learning disabilities the teachers are required to identify and support.

Smith and Forrest admit that it's not uncommon to see students struggle in their work when they get to middle school. "Sometimes they're not really struggling, they're just trying to adapt," Smith said. Both teachers have observed that school work becomes more rigorous and certain teaching styles and expectations change once a student arrives at GMS.

See "Inclusion"  
Continued on page 5

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# Grenada Track Hosts First Meet



Photos by Ezzard Beane

Members of the Grenada High School track team — including (l to r) relay team runner Ian McCullough; Kelton Jones, one of the top high jumpers in the state; and hurdler Jakayla McCarroll — competed at the team’s first track meet in more than 25 years on March 26. Coach Jeff Williams said the new rubber-turf track and reconfigured space for field events has elevated the school’s program.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

Grenada School District hosted its first track meet in over 25 years this spring. The Grenada Invitational, held March 26, brought six other schools from around the region to compete on Grenada’s new rubber track and field as part of the refurbished Charger Stadium.

Jeff Williams, head coach for the boys and girls teams at both Grenada High and Middle Schools, said the meet allowed the program to show off its new track and field space as well as its top athletes.

The new six-lane rubber turf track has enhanced training and allowed all of his athletes to better prepare for their competitions. He has a young team (only four senior boys and four senior girls), but there is deep talent on the roster.

Senior Kelton Jones, one of the state’s best high jumpers, came in second at last year’s state tournament. He jumped 6’8” then and has already hit 6’10” this year.

Williams said, “There’s no doubt in my mind he’ll be able to jump seven feet by the time the state tournament rolls around.”

The new space has helped the hurdle runners as well as the long- and triple-jumpers, who now have a nice sand jump pit. Williams is currently training two pole vaulters and is working with the district’s maintenance and ground crew to prepare areas for shotput and discus hurling.

“I’ve already had some coaches tell me how nice it is to be able to walk from one event to another in less than a minute,” Williams said. “At some of the other schools, it’s spread out. The way we designed it, our track events won’t interfere with one another, but coaches and athletes can get there quickly.”

Williams said Grenada’s ability to host its own track meets has several advantages. For starters, students don’t have to leave school so early. Running at home cuts down on travel expenses, and it gets the local community more interested in

track and field. “Plus, instead of paying entry fees, you’re receiving entry fees,” he said. “I think it can be a money maker for the school.”

The track program has grown leaps and bounds since Williams took over ten years ago. “Back then we had about seven or eight boys and girls on the team. This year, with middle and high school combined, we have a little over 100 athletes on both teams.”

Williams’ immediate goal for the program is to host four meets next year, two at the middle school level and two at the high school level. He believes Grenada can win a state championship. “That’s the ultimate goal for any sports in high school athletics,” he said. “But we also

hope to give more kids an opportunity to run in college.”

Williams also hopes to get more students and staff interested in the sport. “I truly believe a strong track program can only improve all sports at Grenada.”

The track teams have a few more meets around the region before the North State meet on April 27 and the state meet on May 4. Tryouts for next year’s team will be held after football season in the fall.

**GSD Website**  
**www.grenadak12.com**

## “Inclusion” Continued from Page 4

“There’s also a huge jump in how the school is managed compared to the elementary school,” Forrest added. “We have to recognize that and adjust to meet a student’s needs and expectations.”

This year, Smith offered, another 6th grade ELA teacher, Brooke Foster, moved to the middle school from the Green Top (grade 4-5) and noticed that her students were having trouble with some of the prompts and questions on their tests. The vocabulary used in the questions was more advanced in sixth grade, and many students were stumped.

“It could be the same standard being taught, but the language was differ-

ent,” Smith said. Once they stopped and began breaking down the questions, the students absorbed the new terminology. “We were used to preparing students for 7th grade, but now 6th grade teachers are closing the gap from 5th to 6th in addition.”

Communication, not only between teacher and student but teacher-to-teacher as well, helps bring the bigger picture into focus. Smith said it helps that the 6th grade ELA teachers work so well together, but their common planning and strategy sessions ultimately benefit the students most of all.



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# GSD Receives New Buses



Photo by Jamie Kornegay

Grenada School District Transportation Department members (l to r) Floyd Miller, Coach Curtis Hardy, Ricky Jones, Steven McCormick, Antonio “Tadpole” Whatley, District 3 School Board member Arlene Conley, Transportation Director Benji Britt, Cas Britt, and Buddy Willis show off the new electric school buses, appointed to GSD by a federal EPA grant.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

The daily commute to school recently got a lot more comfortable — and quieter — for students at Grenada School District.

In addition to a fleet of 28 new air-conditioned school buses, the district’s transportation department has added two new electric (EV) buses.

GSD Transportation Director Benji Britt said the new EV buses arrived free of charge to the district through a federal

EPA grant.

Britt confessed that he had no interest in acquiring electric buses initially. The vehicles only traveled 150 miles on a charge, and he was worried the buses wouldn’t meet the district’s needs with long rural routes and trips to various parts of the state.

However, the EV buses have been employed to run short routes in town and have performed exceedingly well. The daily energy expenses are estimated to be about \$5 a day less than traditional diesel fuel, and if those savings hold true, that could add up over time.

“Of course, I don’t know how to measure the carbon footprint of these buses,” Britt said, “but I do love nature and want to do everything I can to preserve it for future generations.”

The grant also provided a charging station, which the district installed in consultation with the city and Entergy. The charging station also acts as a diagnostic tool, according to Britt, providing information about the buses’ health and battery status.

One of the most interesting things the department has discovered about the EV buses is how much quieter the chil-

dren are. “You don’t realize how much the students are trying to talk over the engine,” Britt said. “It is a much more peaceful environment just because of the noise alone, either the mechanical noise created by the bus or the interior noise created by the conversation.”

Britt said it’s strange to be standing near the bus, which emits no engine noise, and in the interest of safety, his team installed a noise maker on each bus that emits a sound similar to a high-pitched static whine when the vehicle drops below five miles per hour.

The EV buses, along with the new diesel buses, are air-conditioned and have radios installed. “It’s amazing what a calming effect the radio has,” Britt said. “We’ve had a lot of positive input about all the new additions in the transportation department. Unfortunately we have not gotten every route in an air-conditioned bus, but we are working very hard within the next three years to have every route air-conditioned.”

Before the new arrivals, the average age of the district’s buses was 21 years with an average of 275,000 miles. The transportation department kept the fleet in good repair, but it was imperative to start trading up. “We’re currently looking at very few issues with our buses,” Britt said.

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# Balloon Quest's Successful First Year



(Photo left)

**Tammie Cavanaugh hosts students from other districts, as well as Grenada, at Balloon Quest. The district's innovative, hands-on science museum celebrated its first year in operation this winter and continues to help students across the region fine-tune their science skills.**

*Photo by Jamie Kornegay*

**By Jamie Kornegay**  
*GSD Reporter*

Grenada School District's hands-on learning museum, Balloon Quest, celebrated its one-year anniversary this February. Developed and operated by the district, the facility provides an immersive learning environment where students can hone their science skills while engaging in escape-room-style activities.

Tammie Cavanaugh, the museum's director, said Balloon Quest continues to evolve and has attracted attention from outside of the district in its first year of operation.

In addition to classes from Grenada, students from neighboring districts have been invited to tour the museum for free, which makes it a popular field trip among teachers. This school year, Cavanaugh has hosted or booked school

groups from Oxford, Cleveland, West Point, Greenwood, and beyond. "The word's getting out, and people are excited about Balloon Quest," she said.

Melanie Hardy from Yazoo County Middle School brought her 6th grade classes to tour the museum. "I've been teaching for 29 years," Hardy said, "and this has been the best field trip we've ever taken."

Cavanaugh said the science lessons that students encounter during their Balloon Quest experience aligns with state standards, making it valuable to all students in Mississippi. "I think it's a great way to motivate kids to learn and apply science," she said. "They don't just come in and answer a bunch of questions, they're actively going around, searching for clues and seeing phenomena through models, virtual reality, and videos."

Students who attend Balloon Quest are

divided into teams, each represented by a different science profession, including architects, biologists, and chemists. Teams move from room to room, each creatively designed to depict an ecosystem that ranges from the local (Grenada Lake and Chakchiuma Swamp) to the exotic (Hawaii and the Grand Canyon). Along the way, students use a variety of technological tools to increase their science understanding, reading comprehension, problem-solving capabilities, and technological literacy.

In each ecosystem, a series of videos, displays, and interactive lessons impart information on the room's topic, and team members test their knowledge by answering questions that lead them to clues and ultimately on to the next room.

Cavanaugh has noticed that students especially love the dark and life-like Swamp Room, where they learn biological facts about the local ecosystem. "A lot of kids here in Grenada don't know about Chakchiuma Swamp, but they see it here and learn something about our swamp," she said. "It teaches them science but also something about the local community."

The museum lessons are scaled for various grade levels, and groups from 2nd to 9th grade have enjoyed taking part.

But kids aren't the only ones enjoying Balloon Quest. The museum remains relevant and challenging for adults as well. Cavanaugh has hosted a number of business and leadership groups whose

members were curious to see the museum and experience it like the students. "Not everyone remembers all their science, such as Newton's Laws of Motion," she said. "They still have to watch the videos and understand the concepts to answer the questions."

As word of Balloon Quest spreads, Cavanaugh said she looks forward to adding new features and scaling the activities for larger and more diverse groups, not to mention students returning for their second and third visits.

She has also planned special events like Mystery at the Museum, a recent night event that brought students, parents, and community members together to solve a special challenge featuring the museum's unofficial mascot, Jack the Possum. The event successfully introduced the museum to a wider audience and treated returning students to new activities.

For community members who are interested in touring Balloon Quest, an open house event will be held on Saturday, May 4. Families are welcome to experience the dynamic ecosystems that make up the museum and have fun solving clues. Reservations for morning and afternoon times are available on the Balloon Quest website ([bit.ly/balloonquest](https://bit.ly/balloonquest)) or by emailing [balloonquest2022@gmail.com](mailto:balloonquest2022@gmail.com)



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# New GHS Internships this Spring



Photos by Jamie Kornegay

(Photo left) Tiffany Reed (left) conducts the student internship program at Grenada High School. She placed senior Nadia Reed (center) at the Carlos Moore Law Group where she works with attorney Ray Shoemaker (right). (Photo right) Senior Shelbie Woodall (right), an aspiring dentist, has been able to shadow dentist Hayden Horan (left) at Horan Family Dental. Students earn pay as well as experience through this internship program sponsored by Three Rivers Planning and Development.

By Jamie Kornegay  
GSD Reporter

The internship program at Grenada High School continues to expand, granting students real-world work experience in their chosen career path as well as a generous hourly wage.

Tiffany Reed, Career Coach at GHS, has matched several seniors with local businesses that suit their interests. The experience is proving mutually beneficial for both students and businesses.

Senior Nadia Reed said she has wanted to be a lawyer “ever since I could remember.” She was placed with the Carlos Moore Law Group in February and has been busy filing and organizing case files.

“There are a lot of pieces that go into this whole puzzle,” she said. “It’s mind-blowing how many parts make this office run.”

Ray Shoemaker, an attorney with the firm, said Miss Reed is doing fantastic. “She’s a very hard worker, a self-starter, and catches on well. She needs very little supervision. Just give her a task, and she takes it from there. That’s exactly what we’re looking for.”

This is the second year the Carlos Moore Law Group has participated in the GHS internship program. “We’ve seen the success of it,” said Shoemaker. “We took the chance to see how it would go, and it’s been a great program for us.”

Miss Reed graduates in May and said she plans to attend the University of Mississippi, where she’ll major in law with a

minor in business. She hopes to open her own law firm one day.

Meanwhile, GHS senior Vivian King described her interest in criminal justice to Career Coach Reed, who developed a hybrid internship that would touch on the various aspects of law and psychology.

Miss King began her internship with Dr. Syrenia Johnson of Psychosocial Solutions, a local office that provides mental health and social services to a wide array of clients. Dr. Johnson began teaching King terminology and ethics, especially privacy and confidentiality policies, before allowing her to sit in on therapy sessions.

Miss King said she has become interested in diagnosing and helping people. “My favorite part is listening in on sessions and hearing how (Dr. Johnson) responds to them,” she said. “You really start to understand what people are going through.”

Johnson said she was happy to open her doors to a serious student like Miss King to expand the visibility of her profession, which includes life coaching, substance abuse training, and telehealth sessions. “When I was in high school, I didn’t know this was an option,” Johnson said. “I thought only doctors or psychiatrists had their own office in this field.”

Before graduating in May, Miss King will embark on the second part of her internship at a local law office. She plans to attend the University of Mississippi to study psychology and is interested in exploring a career with the FBI.

Senior Shelbie Woodall planned to

pursue a career in dentistry. After a career coaching session, Reed reached out to Horan Family Dental in Grenada to see if they’d be willing to take on a student intern.

“I felt like it would be a wonderful opportunity for a student to have on-site experience and quasi-training to see if this was for sure something they wanted to do,” said Dr. Hayden Horan. “If so, they could learn the basics before they received more advanced training.”

Horan said that Miss Woodall is mostly shadowing him. “Not being a hygienist yet, she can’t do a whole lot with the patients, but we’ve gone over instruments, how the office works, and the day-to-day things she’d be doing.”

Miss Woodall said her stint in the dental office has opened her eyes and solidified her intentions. She plans to attend Northwest next fall and ultimately acquire her dental degree from the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Students receive more than experience from their internships. Some positions pay up to \$12 an hour through a program with Three Rivers Planning & Development District and the state’s workforce development partner, AccelerateMS.

Reed, who works directly in GHS through Three Rivers, meets one-on-one with high school students to assess their

interests and develop a plan. Once the student has fulfilled the requirements for the program — including good attendance, grades, behavior, and job skills training — Reed works with the corresponding business to assure them the pay and liability is covered by the internship program.

“Even though a student may get the internship award from me, they still have to interview with the business,” Reed said. “It has to fit that business, so we’re not pushing students on anyone. The students must interview in person. They have to come in, they have to present themselves well, and give a good interview in order to completely land the internship.”

Reed confers with work site supervisors regularly to check up on student performance and to ensure that the business is providing a safe learning environment for the student.

“For a business, opening their doors is invaluable to these students,” said Reed. “Either to solidify their interests or show them it’s not for them.”

So far this year, students in the program have affirmed their interests through this unique opportunity at on-the-job training.

## AmeriCorps Promotes Reading



GHS senior Vivian King (left) has learned a lot in her short stint interning for Dr. Syrenia Johnson (right) of local clinic Psychosocial Solutions.



(Photo left) AmeriCorps members (l to r) Lorella Monger, Doris Brown, and Charry Brown present special reading programs in partnership with the Elizabeth Jones Library to encourage students’ love of reading. AmeriCorps also partnered with Dollar General and Grenada’s Junior Auxiliary to host successful events for Valentine’s Day, Read Across America, and a Dr. Seuss Celebration.

Photo by Pamela Hubbard

