



THE CSLC COMMUNITY VOICE

"In relentless pursuit of perfection in education and knowledge"

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From the Executive Director's Desk



Greetings!

Can you believe we are almost halfway through the year 2024? We have been busy throughout the winter and spring serving children, adults, and small businesses with programs and services afforded us.

Unfortunately, we have some sad news to share as well. Mr. Henry Luckett, one of our CNPP Spokes and a former long-time CSLC Project Director, passed away. We will miss him dearly. He was a dedicated servant of God and fellow man, and we are truly grateful for his friendship, support, and contributions. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and family.

On a brighter note, we have some exciting news about pending new homes. (See the adjacent details).

We are also thrilled to share that we were approved to continue the SBA CNPP small business outreach. (See overall progress below):

Total Amt. in Loans and Grants Submitted:	\$27,479,072.00
Total Amt. in Loans and Grants Approved:	\$2,168,005.00
Unique Clients Assisted:	822
Total Counseling Hours	3,546.65
Total Trained Clients	2,645

We are grateful to all funding agencies, donors, supporters, and friends who have helped us to serve.

Beulah Greer, CSLC Co-founder & Executive Director

\$500K grant to expand subdivision with 3 new homes



During the check presentation from left to right are CSLC Founder and Board President Leslie Greer, Executive Director Beulah Greer, and U.S. Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (MS-2nd Dist).

Thanks to a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development as part of the Community Project Funding for FY 2024, the Faith Hill Center for Low-Income Families will expand to provide housing for citizens. This funding will enable the construction of three new homes in the Faith Hill Subdivision in Holmes County. The grant was presented to CSLC, by U.S. Rep. Bennie G. Thompson of Mississippi's Second Congressional District.

CSLC will oversee the expansion of the subdivision, adding three new homeowners to the Holmes County tax base. "We are so grateful to Congressman Thompson for submitting our application and to those entities that provided letters of support," said CSLC Executive Director Beulah Greer. "These homes will bless new low-income homebuyers and their families." U.S. Rep. Thompson also presented Special Appropriation Project checks in other areas of his district during April. More details and progress on the project will be released as they become available.

Reeves tells HIPPY grads: 'You were born smart'

At the May 11, 2024, graduation ceremony, retired educator Sherri Reeves congratulated seven students and families of the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program who completed the research-based preschool curriculum. Reeves emphasized to the early learners that their parents are their first teachers and that they



"were born smart." HIPPY Coordinator Lubertha Banks Mosley expressed gratitude to Mrs. Reeves for her interactive message to the graduates. "Her presentation was fun," she said. (See more HIPPY highlights on page 2).

Highlights of CSLC HIPPY's 2024 Graduation and other Winter/Spring Activities



HIPPY continues to be a huge early educational success!

The HIPPY Program, facilitated by Coordinator Lubertha Banks-Mosley, has been successful. The program promotes children's development through a developmentally appropriate, early literacy curriculum. It provides educational activity packets and storybooks for parents of children aged 2-5. The program involves role-playing parent-child activities with a home visitor, often a former HIPPY parent, under the supervision of a professionally trained program coordinator.

During the 2023-2024 session, 20 families from Holmes County, Mississippi, enrolled in the HIPPY Program. The program expanded to the Jackson area (Hinds County) with three families participating. Valorie Young serves as the Home Visitor for the Hinds County area. In total, there were 23 children in the HIPPY Program for the 2023-2024 term. Lubertha Banks Mosley expressed excitement about the program's progress.

Executive Director Beulah Greer expressed the center's excitement and gratitude for the educational support received from major contributors like BankPlus of Mississippi. She mentioned that BankPlus, the Mississippi Motorcycle Association, and other clubs, organizations and individuals have been vital in helping to sustain this valuable early learning program for children.

Banks-Mosley reported that this year, the parents organized a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Program on January 11, 2024, and an Easter Program on March 5, 2024, as fun learning activities for the children. The events were well-attended and included various activities and performances by the HIPPY children and their families.

The HIPPY Program provides all learning materials to families free of charge. We have also enclosed some pictures for your reference.



A HIPPY kid of the program's 2012 exit class now heads to Univ. of Georgia to study Dentistry



CSLC HIPPY 2012 graduate Katlyn Greer recently graduated high school with a 4.2 GPA from Grayson High School in the Atlanta area. Katlyn will be attending the University of Georgia (UGA) and majoring in Dentistry. She also received a \$500.00 CSLC Lula Mae Friar Memorial Scholarship.

A HIPPY kid of the program's 2012 exit class receives the CSLC Merdis Anderson Memorial Scholarship



CSLC HIPPY 2012 graduate Carlos Clark recently graduated from Holmes County Central High School of Lexington, Mississippi. Also, a former CSLC STARS After-School student, he received the \$500 CSLC Merdis A. Anderson Memorial Scholarship. He was a student of her writing tutorial. He will be attending Holmes Community College to study and train in Welding.

A former CSLC STARS After-School participant receives the CSLC Lula Mae Friar Memorial Scholarship



Former CSLC STARS After-School participant Keyon Friar recently graduated from Holmes County Central High School of Lexington, Mississippi. He received a \$500 CSLC Lula Mae Friar Memorial Scholarship. He will be attending Holmes Community College to study and train in Auto Mechanics.

A HIPPY kid graduates high school and heads to Mississippi State University to study Sports Medicine



CSLC HIPPY graduate Mikiah Hodges recently graduated from Holmes County Central High School of Lexington, Mississippi with honors. She will be attending Mississippi State University in the fall and majoring in Sports Medicine.

A Former CSLC STARS Summer Youth Enrichment Program student heads to 'The Educational Oasis of the Mississippi Delta'



A former CSLC STARS Summer Youth Enrichment Program student, Trenton Williams, recently graduated from Holmes County Central High School of Lexington, Mississippi with honors. He will be attending Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) and majoring in Biology. He also plans to serve on the campus newspaper team.

CSLC helps steer numerous participants to BankPlus' Credit Plus Workshop

BankPlus' Bank Officer and CreditPlus and AHP Manager Brandi Betts recently extended expressions gratitude to CSLC Executive Director Beulah Greer for her valuable contribution to the Virtual CreditPlus seminar. "Your words of encouragement truly added depth and insight to the seminar, and it was a pleasure to have you with us," said Betts.

Greer and the CSLC were instrumental in recruiting attendees for the vital virtual workshop. The attendance was considered the largest in a while according to organizers.

CreditPlus

The topics covered and presenters for the seminar were as follows:

Topic: **Borrowing Basics** by Brittany McCray

Topic: **Money Matters** by Frederick Sandifer

Topic: **To Your Credit Loan to Own** by Brandi Betts

Betts emphasized the tremendous impact of the CreditPlus program, which BankPlus has been offering to the community since 2008. The program provides essential financial literacy training through the CreditPlus seminar, offering invaluable information about credit, the significance of maintaining good credit, and effective budgeting and saving practices.

This initiative has played a pivotal role in assisting individuals in establishing or enhancing their credit scores through responsible small-dollar loans, with a focus on timely repayment. Additionally, the program provides customers with checking and savings accounts to support them on their journey toward effective budgeting and saving. "Thank you once again for your participation, and we look forward to your continued engagement in our future endeavors," Betts concluded in an email to Greer.

To date, the FHLB of Dallas/BankPlus & CSLC rehabs 247 homes



The above home shows a new front porch, handicap accessibility, and steps.

Since its inception, and according to BankPlus' records, the CSLC/BankPlus/FHLB partnership has resulted in 247 homes being rehabilitated. This is a total of \$2,158,674 in FHLB grant money.

BJA Teen Violence Prevention Program at CSLC forms consortium



Team HOYAS, Roneda Scott Founder

Lucretia Holmes, the Program Director of the BJA Teen Violence Prevention Program at CSLC, has joined forces with the Holmes County School District, Delta Health Alliance, Town of Pickens Improvement Club (TOPIC), Town of Goodman, Billingslea Lodge 367-A Goodman, MS and Team HOYAS to establish a consortium of community partners committed to promoting resilience and preventing teen violence.

This collaborative effort seeks to improve the overall school and community environment, nurture positive character development, promote sound decision-making, and counteract negative behaviors and influences.



TOPIC - Town of Pickens Improvement Club



CSLC and Delta Health Alliance and other community health organizations



Billingslea Lodge 367-A Goodman, MS

Floor repairs and rehabs that make people want to say, 'Wow!'

When CSLC Affordable Housing Rehab Coordinator Vera Harmon went to review and assess the repairs made on Emma Bullock’s floors, she said she had to say, “wow!”

The contractor had done such a wonderful job according to Harmon. “Mrs. Bullock was so pleased with her new floor,” said Harmon. “She really loved the work they did. They did the whole house.”

Mrs. Bullock floor repairs are a part of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas (FHLB)/BankPlus Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Program grant. The CSLC 501 c3 non-profit organization has been approved as the facilitator for the program in the Holmes County and surrounding areas for several years.

To date, Mrs. Bullock is among 247 low-income homeowners who benefited through the program facilitated by CSLC. *(See the adjacent photo of her new floor).*



Former CSLC Spelling Bee Champion earns a 'full ride' to Emory University



Chase Jenkins recently graduated from St. Andrew’s Episcopal School in Ridgeland. He is a talented singer and a member of the St. Andrew’s Rhapsody Choir and the vocal jazz ensemble group, Encore.

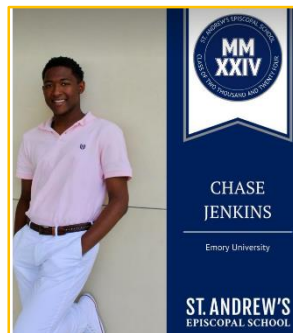
Chase has been consistently recognized in Mississippi State Honor choirs since 2018. He's also been active in the theater department and is a member of various academic and cultural societies.

Chase was selected as a Questbridge College Prep Scholar and later was rewarded the Questbridge National College Match Scholarship, allowing him a full ride to Emory University in Atlanta.

The National College Match is given to 3% of applicants annually.

Additionally, Chase was selected as a Gates Scholar through The Gates Scholarship, a last-dollar need-based grant that covers 100% of tuition at any four-year university and is awarded to about 1% of applicants every year.

While a summer enrichment youth at CSLC, Jenkins was its Spelling Bee winner for multiple summers.



CSLC-USDA partnership helps people realize their American Dream: homeownership



Latasha Nash is all smiles after closing on her new home.

The Community Students Learning Center (CSLC) in partnership with the USDA Rural Development is helping people realize the American Dream of homeownership. CSLC staff member Kalandria Newman serves as the trained and certified USDA 502 Loan Homeowner Loan Packager Outreach and Engagement Coordinator.

“Since December of 2023, we have helped three individuals to become homeowners,” Newman shared.

In addition to the 502-homeowner loan program, CSLC also assists owners in navigating the process of needed home repairs through the USDA 504 Direct Repair Loan and/or Grant Program.

These loans and grants are available to help low to very low-income individuals in rural areas purchase, build, or repair their homes.

If you are a low-income owner and need help in applying for repairs or if you are a potential homebuyer and want to see whether you qualify for a 502 loan to purchase or build a new home, Call the CSLC today at (662) 834-0905 and ask to speak with Newman or leave a message for her to return your call.

Latasha Nash made that call, and now she is living “happily” in her new home.

Lexington-based CNPP hosts closeout business TA in Miss. Delta

A technical assistance conference called "Final Road to a Successful Business" was held on Feb. 17 in Cleveland, Miss. The event was organized by the Community Students Learning Center's U.S. Small Business Administration Community Navigator Pilot Program (CNPP) to provide support to small businesses and start-up owners.

Roughly 20 small business owners were provided the opportunity to secure their business certificate of formation or update their businesses via the Secretary of State of Mississippi website during the conference.

CNPP is a program designed to provide resources to underserved and underrepresented entrepreneurs.

Beulah Greer, an executive of the CNPP and CSLC, said, "We are so grateful to our contributing sponsors: Cadence Bank, Academic Technology-Phillip Boyd, and other anonymous donors who helped sponsor the event and the three \$500 business mini-grants for qualified businesses."

Collaborating partners for the Mississippi Delta event were SBA Mississippi District, Boss Lady Workforce Transportation, LLC, and Jackson State University Small Business Development Center. Pam Chatman, founder and CEO of Boss Lady Workforce Transportation, LLC, served as the emcee.

Greer said the center and CNPP program are always grateful to their collaborating/community partners, including BankPlus of Mississippi.

Small business owners and potential business owners shared that the TA conference was very beneficial to their businesses. (See adjacent and below highlights).



There was standing room only in the general session.



From right, SBA Mississippi reps listen to business presenters.



Attendees are heavily engaged in the technical assistance and networking session.



Excited business owners who secured their certificate of formation via TA from Spokes, Fresh Start Enterprise, LLC



The three winners of the three small business mini grants display their awards made possible by various contributing donors.



Cadence Bank officer explains what his bank does to help small businesses. Cadence was a sponsor.



Noted Delta businesswoman fellow business owners to never give up.

Phillis' business grows since TA conference



Phillis Oliphant recently shared that as soon as she registered her business at the Feb. 17 CNPP conference and began putting in place the business tips gained, her decoration business, Phillis' Pretty Things, LLC began to grow.

SUCCESS STORY

THE COMMUNITY STUDENTS LEARNING CENTER'S (CSLC)
 presents its 5th Annual
HIPPY Fund Fest
Motorcycle Show, Corvette, Show Trucks & Cars
Saturday, June. 8, 2024 • 12 Noon - 5 p.m.



FAMILY FUN DAY • BASKETBALL • 50-INCH TV RAFFLE • \$25.00 GAS CARD RAFFLE • GIFT BASKET RAFFLE • MUSIC • CONCESSION STAND

PLEASE DONATE TO THIS WORTHY CAUSE! Proceeds will benefit the children of the CSLC Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program, an evidenced-based early learning program that helps parents prepare their children for school success. CSLC is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. Raffle tickets are \$5. You do not have to be present to win.

Welcome to all of our Participants! Enter your ride for 1st and 2nd prize winners



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