

Greene Co. once again well represented among Jones College graduates



Photo courtesy of Jones College

Greene County High School alumnus Gabrielle Taylor is one of several county residents who have excelled at Jones College. Taylor is shown (Above, center) during Commencement at the Ellisville school earlier this month.

— From Staff Reports —
Jones College’s 93rd Commencement Ceremony was an outdoor, evening affair for the first time in the college’s history and a host of Greene County students were among the stars shining brightly at the event.
The COVID-19 virus led to modifying a lot of events and activities over the last year. Jones College President, Dr. Jesse Smith shared with the crowd, including the approximate 720 graduates participating in the May 20 ceremony, that this graduation ceremony marked the first time some people have been back on campus since March 2020. Smith also “confessed” in his Presidential Message in the Commencement Program, that he didn’t understand the meaning of the words unprecedented, incomparable and unpredictable until he witnessed this season of hardship the college community experienced together.
“During my time of leadership, I have never seen the

challenges, trials and circumstances that you graduates have faced in these past twelve months.... I have full confidence that the Jones College graduates of 2020 and 2021 have been rewarded with the spirit of perseverance, an invaluable garland that will forevermore be placed around your neck....” said Smith.
Commencement speaker, retired U.S. Army Major General Byron Bagby also challenged the audience to continue to make their family and friends proud by fulfilling three basic elements of life.
“Be a mentor. Be yourself and make a difference in the world,” said Bagby. “Thank you for what you will do for our world, our nation and for what you will do for your communities.”
About 70 of the Jones College graduates from the class of 2020 decided to participate in this year’s ceremony after last year’s graduation was canceled because of the Pandemic. Greene County native, 2021 graduate and

Student Government Association President Dariyel Johnson said she was glad her predecessors from 2020 were invited to partake in graduation ceremonies.
“It hit me this week how many friends I’ve made here at Jones College and everything I’ve been able to accomplish as Freshman Class President and SGA President,” the Greene County High School alumnus said. “Having the 2020 grads here also gives me the chance to say goodbye to them too, as we leave this special place, together.”
Johnson, who also earned the title of Jones College Most Beautiful 2020, plans to continue her broadcast communication degree at the University of Mississippi and vie for the title of Miss Mississippi next month.
The evening commencement ceremony on the lawn of Jones Hall provided a dynamic atmosphere to showcase the Jones Onstage and Concert Choir students and a firework show finale. Jones graduates received either, an Associate in Arts degree, Associate in Applied Science degree, a Technical Certificate, or a Career Certificate.
While Greene County students continue to leave a lasting legacy at Jones, the school and the experience it provides leaves a lasting impression on the students as well.
Johnson and McKay Lee Bray, the 2019 Valedictorian at GCHS, are among several members of that class that have thrived on campus in

Ellisville. Bray’s path led her to earn one of only 15 Lyceum scholarships at Ole Miss, where she will attend beginning this fall. She also carries Phi Theta Kappa and All-State Academic scholarships (among other awards) with her to Oxford.
“My two years at Jones College have been the best years of my life,” Bray said in a post on social media. “I have made so many memories and friends that I will cherish for a lifetime.”
“From being in Bobcat Brigade, SGA, Honors College, Hall of Fame, Diamond Girl, Jones on Stage, Jones Choir, to being a PTK officer, Senator, and a Presidential, Tullos, Foundation, and All-State Academic scholar recipient.”
“I was definitely able to get the full experience, figure out who I was and who I needed to be. Jones has become a second home and I cannot explain how thankful and blessed I am to God for giving me these past two years. Jones will forever be in my bones.”



Anna Grace Pierce
GCHS Class of 2019
Jones Class of 2021



Contributed Photos

Greene County friends Josh Cook and McKay Lee Bray are shown (Below) after their graduation at Jones College on March 20. Shown (Above) are siblings Darrell and Dariyel Johnson posing for a photo with fellow GCHS alumnus Tahj Johnson, who recently completed his first year at the Ellisville school.



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Jacob Aubrey McLeod

**May the Lord bless your steps!
We are so proud of you.**
Love,
Daddy, Mama, Audrey and Ella

*A man's heart plans his way,
But the Lord directs his steps.
~ Proverbs 16:9*

Congratulations

To our Graduates!
and the *Class of 2021*
We pray God's abundant blessings upon you as you begin the next chapter of your life.

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