

MDCC Law Enforcement Training Academy Graduates Thirty



Guidon: Hollis Gaines – Lafayette Co. S. O. **1st Row:** Margaret Bolton – Pontotoc Co. S. O.; Landry Callahan – Lafayette Co. S. O.; Christopher Gordon – Holmes Co. S. O.; Nyiokee Sandford – Greenville P. D.; Derian Simpson – Baldwin P. D.; Zoe Jackson – Warren Co. S. O.; Syeveon Foster – Greenwood P. D. **2nd Row:** Jace Pearson – Choctaw Co. S. O.; Charles Vibbert – Pontotoc Co. S. O.; John Toles – Corinth P. D.; Larry Jones, III – Tippah Co. S. O.; Patrick Jackson, Jr. – Greenwood P. D.; Dylan Brower – Starkville P. D.; Anthony Newson – Tate Co. S. O.; Lawrence Swindall – LETA Training Officer. **3rd Row:** Marcelo Rojas – Delta State University P. D.; Adam Whisenant, Jr. – Hernando P. D.; Jaryan Shelby – Yazoo City P. D.; Christopher Watkins – Vicksburg P. D.; Da-Quarius Burton – Walls P. D.; John Derivaux – Starkville P. D.; Marcus Herrington – Yazoo Co. S. O.; Kate Ware – Interim LETA Director. **4th Row:** Jacqueline Dillard – Greenville P. D.; Quinton Randall – Lafayette Co. S. O.; Steven Pickens – Montgomery Co. S. O.; Dakota Tapp – Lafayette Co. S. O.; Shun Byrd – State Fire Marshal’s Office; Jakarion Lockett – Noxubee Co. S. O.; Alex Wyatt – Starkville P. D.; Richard Miller – Lafayette Co. S. O.

On June 25, Mississippi Delta Community College (MDCC) held its Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA) Commencement in the J.T. Hall Coliseum on the Moorhead campus. During the ceremony, the 30 cadets of Class 26-B83 became law enforcement officers.

The event began with Hollis Gaines of Lafayette Co. Sheriff’s Office (S. O.) retiring the guidon. Alex Wyatt of Starkville Police Department (P. D.) led a moment of silence. Da-Quarius Burton of Walls P. D., Zoe Jackson of Warren Co. S. O. and Dakota Tapp

of Lafayette Co. S. O. then posted the colors. Christopher Watkins of Vicksburg P. D. led an invocation, followed by LETA Training Officer Lawrence Swindall leading the Pledge of Allegiance. After Interim LETA Director Kate Ware welcomed the attendees, Swindall and Platoon Leader Adam Whisenant of Horn Lake P. D. presented special recognitions and awards. Jaryan Shelby of Yazoo City P.D. then led the class response portion of the ceremony. Following the presentation of certificates, Swindall led the graduates in the Oath of Honor. Chris-

topher Watkins then closed with a benediction. The MDCC Law Enforcement Training Academy is a Class I State Accredited Academy by the Mississippi Board on Law Enforcement Officers’ Standards and Training and offers all levels of training to law enforcement personnel throughout the Delta Region and the State of Mississippi. The MDCC LETA provides areas of training for basic, refresher, part-time, corrections officer, in-service and advanced training on the MDCC main campus located on Highway 3 in Moorhead, Miss.

MDWFP Opens Alligator Wildlife Management Area in the Mississippi Delta

JACKSON, MS – The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) is proud to announce the opening of Alligator Wildlife Management Area (WMA), a new public hunting area in the Mississippi Delta that expands outdoor recreation opportunities while continuing a long-standing partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“MDWFP continues our partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is opening Alligator Wildlife Management Area to provide additional public hunting opportunities while also conserving important wildlife habitat,” said MDWFP Executive Director Lynn Posey. “This partnership allows us to responsibly manage these lands for the benefit of Mississippi’s

hunters, wildlife, and future generations.”

Located in Bolivar and Coahoma counties, Alligator WMA encompasses approximately 2,882 acres and is named for its location near the town of Alligator, Mississippi. The property is situated in the North Mississippi Delta and consists of primarily 20- to 24-year-old bottomland hardwood plantation, providing valuable habitat for deer, wild turkey, small game, songbirds, and other wildlife.

Hunters will have access to a variety of opportunities on the area. Deer hunting is restricted to archery and a permit-only primitive weapon season. Visitors should consult the current WMA regulations for season dates, permit requirements, and all applicable rules before hunting.

WMA users are encouraged to use the MDWFP HuntFish app to complete the required WMA check-in and check-out process electronically, providing a quick and convenient alternative to paper permit cards. Please note that the old MDWFP WMA Check-In app is no longer operational, and WMA users should download and use the new MDWFP HuntFish app.

For more information about Alligator WMA, visit <https://www.mdwfp.com/wildlife-hunting/wmas/alligator-wma>.

The mission of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is to conserve and enhance Mississippi’s wildlife, fisheries, and parks; provide quality outdoor recreation and engage the public in natural resource conservation.

MSDH Confirms First Human Case of West Nile Virus for 2026

Jackson, Miss.- The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) has confirmed Mississippi’s first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) this year in Hancock County. West Nile virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people (8 out of 10) infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms.

About 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea or rash. The summer is prime time for mosquitos to feast and potentially spread illnesses like West Nile virus. While the risk of a healthy person getting WNV from

a mosquito bite is very low, we all need to take precautions.

Protect Yourself

- Stay indoors or take personal protective measures, especially between dusk and dawn, which are peak mosquito biting times.
- Use mosquito repellent with DEET. Products with up to 30 percent DEET will provide adequate protection under most conditions. Use DEET concentrations of 10 percent or less on children ages 2-12 years of age. For children less than 2 years of age, parents should consult their pediatrician.
- Wear long-sleeved, long-legged clothing with socks and shoes when practical.

Protect Your Home

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots

or similar water-holding containers.

- Remove all discarded tires on the property. Used tires have become the most common mosquito breeding site in the county.
- Close garbage can lids. Be sure water does not collect in the bottom of garbage cans.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.

For more information on mosquito protection and WNV, please visit <https://msdh.ms.gov/westnile>. Stay up to date on news on the MSDH Healthy Mobile App, on our website www.msdh.ms.gov, and on social media: [facebook.com/healthymississippi](https://www.facebook.com/healthymississippi), twitter.com/msdh and [Instagram.com/healthymississippi](https://www.instagram.com/healthymississippi).



Mississippi Firsts

The Neshoba County Fair is a Mississippi policymaker’s rite of passage. Every year, leaders from across our state gather to talk about what we’ve accomplished and what still lies ahead. This year was no different. Of course, what’s said at the Neshoba County Fair rarely stays at the Neshoba County Fair, so I thought it appropriate to share my message here with you today.



If I had to sum up this year’s speech in just two words, it would be this:

Mississippi Firsts. For example, we became the first state in the nation to launch proactive Money Match programs focused on disaster areas. When families are dealing with the aftermath of devastating storms, the last thing they should have to worry about is tracking down missing money. Instead, we take the initiative, find the rightful owners, and return millions of dollars to Mississippians when they need it most.

We were also the first in the nation to require citizenship verification before returning unclaimed money, ensuring Mississippians come first. That innovation has become a national model, earning recognition in congressional hearings

and a seat at the table with the Department of Justice and Vice President Vance’s Anti-Fraud Task Force.

Those innovations have produced real results. Alongside first-in-state-history modernizations, they helped us return nearly \$200 million in unclaimed money to our citizens - the first Treasury in Mississippi history to reach such a milestone.

We also broke new ground by becoming the first Mississippi Treasurer to expand the Mississippi Affordable College Savings (MACS) program so families can use their savings for apprentice-

ships, workforce certifications, and career and technical education. By putting students’ needs first, our program has grown into one of the nation’s Top 6 college savings plans.

And during my first five years in office, we helped Mississippi earn more than \$1 billion in interest income – the first Treasurer in our state’s history to do so.

I’m proud of every one of these firsts. But none of them happened because we were chasing headlines or records. They happened because we made one simple commitment: put Mississippians first.

I grew up in a family that believed customer service wasn’t just good business; it was the right thing to do. I’ve tried to bring that same philosophy to state government. When you put people first, innovation follows. Results follow. And before long, so do the firsts.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the people of Mississippi. It’s the greatest honor of my life, and I look forward to continuing to put Mississippi first.

Mississippi Treasurer David McRae is the 55th Treasurer for the State of Mississippi.