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ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

THE GRAMBLING ★ CONNECTION

Volume 2, No. 1 Friday, September 26, 2025 • “Keeping Our Citizens Informed on the Issues That Matter” • Grambling, LA www.GramblingConnection.com

Federal Cuts Strip \$350 Million From HBCU’S and Minority-Serving Institutions

By Stacy M. Brown
Black Press USA Senior
National Correspondent

BLACKPRESSUSA NEWSWIRE — The U.S. Department of Education has announced the cancellation of \$350 million in federal grants that had been designated for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions. Education Secretary Linda McMahon stated that the department will “no longer award Minority-Serving Institution grants that discriminate by restricting eligibility to institutions that meet government-mandated racial quotas.” She added that the administration intends to redirect the money to-



Department of Education building in Washington, DC with American Flag (Photo by Gregory DiSalvo)

ward programs “that advance Administration priorities.” The funding has supported initiatives including laboratory equipment purchases, classroom improvements, student tutoring services, and endowment growth. The cuts immediately drew criticism from leaders of colleges and universities who said the loss would harm students and damage institutions that depend on the resources.

This Day in History

mobility for themselves and their families,” said Mildred García, chancellor of the California State University system. “These funds strengthen entire campuses, creating opportunities and resources that benefit all students, especially those pursuing STEM fields, as well as enhancing the communities where these colleges and universities are located,” said David Mendez, interim CEO of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. University of Hawaii president Wendy Hensel added that the cuts will affect “all of our students, the programs that support them, and the dedicated staff who carry out this work.”

See **Federal** Page 2

Landry supports Trump’s push to send National Guard to Louisiana’s ‘war zones’

By: Wesley Muller

The chances that National Guard troops will soon patrol Louisiana cities grew more likely last week when Gov. Jeff Landry voiced support for President Donald Trump’s proposal to send the military into Democrat-led urban centers. The governor has previously endorsed the president’s idea to direct the Louisiana National Guard into New Orleans, but he’s stopped short of asking Trump to do it. Landry, as governor, has the power to mobilize the Guard on his own and does not need permission or action from the president. Echoing Trump, Landry framed the idea as a way to curb violent crime in cities, saying the troops can be used as a “force multiplier” to support local police. “I think the president recognizes that our cities in America are way too violent,” Landry said. “People say, ‘Oh, this is a militarization of our big cities.’ Our cities are already war zones. Too many people are already dying.” The governor’s comments came at a news conference Tuesday that detailed new state economic development efforts, which Landry said was another reason to curb crime in Louisiana. “You can’t have economic opportunity in



Members of the National Guard stationed outside Union Station in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 18, 2025. (Photo by Jane Norman/States Newsroom)

the face of violence,” he said. “I applaud what the president’s doing. I think what he did in Washington, D.C., is remarkable.” Trump used his federal authority to bring National Guard troops from around the country to the nation’s capital, despite opposition from Democrat D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser. The forces on the ground include 135 military police from the Louisiana National Guard. The president also supported mobilizing Guard soldiers to Memphis, Tennessee, which also has a Democrat mayor, at the request of Republican Gov. Bill Lee. Trump also ordered 700 Marines and more than 4,000 Guard soldiers into downtown Los Angeles to assist federal immigration enforce-

ment against the wishes of Mayor Karen Bass and California Gov. Gavin Newsom, both Democrats who have been highly critical of the president. Chicago, Baltimore and St. Louis are other Democrat-led cities Trump has mentioned as possibilities for military deployments. For weeks, Trump has also mentioned New Orleans as a destination for military troops, and speculation intensified over the weekend after the Washington Post published leaked Pentagon plans to send 1,000 National Guard members to Louisiana. One of the documents, a memo from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, suggests the plan would only move forward if the governor first asked Trump to send the troops.

The Guard would be sent to “urban centers” such as New Orleans and Baton Rouge to assist with law enforcement operations, according to the report. Crime rates are already at a 30-year low in Washington D.C. and a 25-year low in Memphis, according to federal crime data. The same has been true for New Orleans, which has seen violent crime plunging over the past few years. Data the FBI has compiled show violent crime rates in New Orleans have fallen significantly over the past several years, reversing what was an upward trend that began around 2010. The federal database includes homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault in its violent crime category.

See **Landry** Page 2

Grambling State Appoints DeVaria Hudson Ponton to Lead International Student Affairs

Grambling, La. – August 29, 2025–Grambling State University has appointed DeVaria Hudson Ponton as Interim Director of International Student Affairs, strengthening the university’s commitment to global engagement and student success. With over 20 years of experience in higher education, enrollment management, student affairs, and international services, Mrs. Ponton brings a proven track record of leadership. She has previously served as Director of International Services & Programs at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, Louisiana Representative for NAFSA: Association of International Educators, and Director of Multicultural Affairs at Louisiana Tech University. At Grambling State, she has already made a significant impact through her prior leadership in admissions, recruitment, and international affairs. Her appointment comes at a pivotal time for Grambling State. In Fall 2024, international students represented one in five freshmen, with Tigers now hailing from over 30 countries, including recent growth from Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Bermuda, and the

Bahamas. This momentum reflects President Martin Lemelle’s initiative launched last year to expand Global and Experiential Education, positioning Grambling State as a hub for international learning and cultural exchange. “DeVaria’s experience and commitment to student success will strengthen our ability to serve a rapidly growing international student population,” said Tasha Heard, Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management. President Lemelle emphasized: “DeVaria’s appointment is a clear step forward in our global vision. With her expertise, we will continue to deepen Grambling’s international footprint and ensure that every student finds a home here.” Ponton shared her excitement about the role: “I am honored to return to Grambling State in this capacity and to support our diverse community of international students. I look forward to building on Grambling’s legacy as a global institution and ensuring every student has the opportunity to thrive academically and culturally.”

See **Grambling State** Page 2



DeVaria Ponton



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OPINION

Wow, Can You Believe It's Been A Year Already!

Dear Grambling Community and neighbors—

One year ago, The Grambling Connection was born from a simple belief: that our town—rooted in rich history, vibrant life, and boundless potential—deserved its own paper. A community newspaper that tells your stories, shines a light on issues that matter to us, gives voices to those who have gone unheard, and helps us all stay connected.

Looking back over these past twelve months, we've had the honor of covering a wide range of stories, many of which reflect exactly the kind of coverage we set out to provide:

From covering Kamala Harris' bid, as only the second black woman in U.S. history to run for President in our inaugural issue (Sept. 20, 2024) to our local government in action (for example, Grambling's

City Council updates, water supply issues, the Mayor's announcement of a 10-year Master plan for the City and urging citizens to sign up for the CivicReady emergency notifications system)

Celebrating local achievements: School reunions and announcements, student scholarships and Hall of Fame honors (Grambling Legends inductions). Honoring the lives of community members: Obituaries and remembrance pieces -- helping keep alive the memories of those who've meant so much.

Amplifying voices through opinion and



Lena W. Claybon,
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief



Joice Dunn,
Senior Editor

commentary: Pieces on current issues — from AI, politics, education, personal reflections, and more — that invite us all to think, discuss, and engage.

Bringing Grambling's spirit and culture into view: stories about our Juneteenth celebration, homecoming, businesses, alumni, athletics — reminding us of what makes our town unique.

From the positive feedback we've gotten from the community, we believe we are doing well so far in what we set out to do. Of course, there is more to do. We want to deepen trust, continue expanding

what we cover, improve distribution so no corner is left out, increase how many people engage with us (letters, photos, ideas), and make sure the paper remains accessible, and reflective of all parts of Grambling and surrounding areas.

As we turn one, we promise to keep being a positive presence in our community. To keep showing up. To keep doing the job we set out to do: informing, connecting, celebrating, and challenging when needed.

Thank you — to every reader, every contributor, every business that advertises, every tip and story idea you sent in, every person who picks up the paper, reads it, shares it, believes in it. We couldn't have made it this far without you!

Here's to many more years together.

With gratitude and hope,
The Grambling Connection Staff

Angola's Forgotten Men:
The Case for Mercy

By Prentiss Smith

In the fields of Angola prison, where thousands of men spend their days in back-breaking labor, lie stories that are rarely told. Angola is more than a prison—it has become a place where countless young Black men have been sent to die, not because their crimes warranted it, but because a system too often punishes without mercy.

Two of those men are Quontos Wilson and Layla Roberts.

Thirty years ago, they were young, immature, and reckless. They made a mistake—an act born not of malice, but of youth and poor judgment. They were not hardened criminals. They were not predators. They were young men who, like so many others, made a foolish decision. But unlike most, they paid for it with the prime of their lives.

Three decades. Thirty years behind bars.

While many of us built families, pursued careers, and lived out the second, third, and even fourth chances life gave us, Quontos and Layla sat inside Angola—one of the harshest prisons in America—watching time slip away.

Let's be clear: accountability matters. No one denies that wrong actions deserve conse-



Prentiss Smith

quences. But punishment must fit the crime. Justice should be rooted in fairness, not excess. The continued incarceration of Wilson and Roberts is no longer justice—it is cruelty.

Governor Jeff Landry, who often invokes his Christian values and belief in redemption, now faces a test of his convictions. Christianity at its heart is about forgiveness, about restoration, about offering people the grace to begin again. To keep Quontos Wilson and Layla Roberts in Angola until they die is to deny not only them a second chance, but to deny the very principles the Governor professes to uphold.

If we are serious about criminal justice reform, about redemption, about believing in the possibility of change—then these two men should not be forgotten casualties of an unforgiving system. They should be pardoned.

Their continued imprisonment is nothing less than a miscarriage of justice.

Governor Landry has the power to write a different ending to their story—one that affirms mercy, one that recognizes human dignity, and one that reminds us that even in Louisiana's darkest corners, hope still has a place.

It is time.

Release them.

POTTER MOTIVATION

You Can't Control the Wind

By Rusty Potter

Life has a way of throwing us off course. One day, everything is smooth sailing, and the next, the wind shifts - sudden illness strikes, a job falls through, and bills pile up, or relationships face unexpected challenges. It's in those moments that we discover a hard but necessary lesson: you can't control the wind.

You can't control the wind, but you can always adjust your sails. That's what sailors do. The direction of the wind doesn't determine whether they make it to their destination - their response does. By shifting the sails, they can harness even unfavorable winds to keep moving forward. The same is true for us. We don't get to choose every storm, but we do get to choose how we respond.

History and faith both give us examples of this lesson. The hymn "Peace Be Still," written by Rev. James Cleveland, paints the picture perfectly. It tells of storms raging and winds howling, but it reminds us that there is calm and safety in trusting God. The song points back to the Gospel story of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were terrified by the winds and waves; they couldn't control them. But with three words - "Peace, be still" - Jesus showed them that the storm didn't have the final say.

In the same way, storms will come into our lives. The winds of disappointment,



Rusty Potter

hardship, and even heartbreak will sometimes blow fiercely. But those winds do not determine our destiny. What matters is how we set our sails - whether we choose to let fear paralyze us or let faith carry us through.

Many of the strongest people you know didn't arrive where they are because life was easy. They made it because they refused to quit in the storm. They adjusted. They shifted their thinking, leaned on faith, and pressed forward even when the winds weren't favorable.

Maybe you're facing some winds right now. Perhaps the economy has made things harder for your family. Maybe your health isn't what it used to be. Maybe grief or discouragement weighs heavily on your shoulders. Whatever your storm looks like, remember: you don't have to control the wind. What you can control is your attitude, your effort, and your faith.

Instead of cursing the wind, learn from it. Adjust your sails. Find new ways to keep moving forward. Hold on to your belief that better days are ahead. And never forget that storms don't last forever - winds eventually shift, and brighter skies always come.

The next time life's winds blow against you, don't give up and don't lose heart. You can't control the wind, but you can control your response. And when you adjust your sails with courage and faith, you'll discover that even the strongest storms can push you closer to your purpose.

Federal From Page 1

The department's announcement follows a lawsuit filed in June by the state of Tennessee and Students for Fair Admissions, which argued the programs were discriminatory because of enrollment eligibility requirements. In July, the Department of Justice said it would not defend the grants, with Solicitor General D. John Sauer writing that they violated the constitutional right to equal protection.

According to HBCU Buzz, the decision has sent shockwaves across campuses, with advocates warning that programs supporting mentorship, STEM pipelines, and scholarships are at risk. Lawmakers, including Senator Patty Murray, have said the Education

Department acted unilaterally without consulting Congress.

The debate over funding arrives as HBCUs continue to face historic underfunding. CNN fact-checkers reported that while the Biden-Harris administration had directed \$16 billion to HBCUs from 2021 to 2024, Trump previously proposed more than \$100 million in cuts to HBCU programs during his term, despite later claiming he had been uniquely responsible for funding the schools.

The Education Department confirmed that roughly \$132 million in mandatory congressional allocations for fiscal 2025 will still be distributed, though officials said they are continuing to review the legal questions surrounding those funds.

Grambling State From Page 1

By the Numbers: International Education at Grambling State

1 in 5 first year students in Fall 2024 were international students

Nearly 30 countries represented in the student body

Rapid growth from Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Bermuda, and the Bahamas

New Global and Experiential Education initiative launched in 2024 to expand study abroad, international partnerships, and cross-cultural learning.

Landry From Page 1

Recent local data reveal a similarly significant decrease in New Orleans following a nationwide violent crime spike in 2022.

So far this year, the city's homicide rate is down 57% from 2022. Non-fatal shootings, carjackings and armed robberies are all down by even greater amounts, according to the Metropolitan Crime Commission, which analyzes New Orleans Police Department data.

FBI data indicate a similar plunge in Baton Rouge, with violent crime falling 72% from 2022 through 2024.

Other cities, such as Lafayette and Shreveport, saw violent crime increase over the same period 79% and 47%, respectively. However, preliminary figures for 2025 show significant improvements in both cities, according to the FBI database.

Overall, the state reached a 25-year low in violent crime last year, which was 39% below the 1999 mark.

Landry framed the potential National Guard deployment to New Orleans as no different than its assignment after the Jan. 1 terror attack on Bourbon Street.

Troops were used to help secure a large section of downtown ahead of the Super Bowl on Feb. 9 and again through Mardi Gras parade season from Feb. 26 through March 6.

Landry already implemented an alternative to deploying the military in New Orleans by establishing a state police presence there last year. Troop NOLA is a detachment of roughly 40 Louisiana State Police troopers who supplement New Orleans Police efforts with additional patrols in the French Quarter and other neighborhoods.

The latest proposal from the governor and president differs from the Guard's time in New Orleans earlier this year, said retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, who's best known for taking over the military response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The federal government designated the Super Bowl and Mardi Gras as top-level security events, while the proposed deployment would be for routine law enforcement, Honoré said.

"It's not a normal mission for the guard to do crime fighting," the general said. "But they have provided security before."

Troops would not likely be used in any sort of investigatory roles, Honoré said. They could detain people until law enforcement arrives, but their primary use would be as a visible crime deterrent, he added.

The use of National Guard troops to achieve political purposes, such as Trump's immigration crackdown, crosses a line, the general said.

"That's the mission I'm most uncomfortable with," Honoré said. "I'm concerned about the immigrant community and what's gonna happen to our essential workers."

The Louisiana National Guard did not respond to a request for comment for this report.

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COMMUNITY

Celebrating Arthur ‘Earl’ Simpson Day

By Joice M. Dunn

Arthur Earl Simpson Day was celebrated in the city of Grambling on Saturday, Sept. 13 in the Black and Gold Room on the campus of Grambling State University.

Earl (Son) and wife, Jennifer Simpson, opened the celebration with words of honor for a man known as a living legacy of music, mentor and a community disciplinarian. Dr. Martin Lemelle, GSU president and former Simpson band student, welcomed family and friends while Mayor Alvin Bradley officially read the proclamation proclaiming it a beautiful Arthur Earl Simpson Day in Grambling.

Several former students told their rendition of the effect Simpson had on their lives as well as their futures.

Louis Allen reflected

on the horn he could not touch until he could out play the band director and after 30 years, he has not torched the horn. Reginald Walker remembered the best part of his life was being a band member of the Grambling High School Marching Band.

Walker said, “I continue to use the knowledge and patterns learned from Mr. Simpson with my students in Houston.”

One former student recalled a lesson learned from Simpson, “God put you in places to push you forward and people in your life to help get you where He wants you to be.” He was told that children in the third and fourth grade can’t play music, but his response was, “Just watch me teach them.”

T.J. McCluskey, who came to Grambling in 2002, said he finds himself sounding and acting just like Simpson.



Arthur Simpson smiles as son Earl stands between him and wife, Veterine.

“I became a well-rounded musician and teacher because of Arthur Earl Simpson. I find myself using his tone and approach with my students,” said Kimberly Joseph McCarter.

The band director of Lincoln Prep also sang the praises of Simpson for his dedication and encouragement.

Simpson, the youngest of four children, was born on historic Church Street in Grambling, Louisiana. His childhood home, purchased by his parents from Grambling State University’s founding president Charles P. Adams, sat just

around the corner from the home of Coach Eddie G. Robinson. In Grambling, greatness was never far. It was in the air, and young Earl breathed it in.

In school, he excelled in academics, athletics, and music. His trombone carried him to Grambling State University and into the World Famed Tiger Marching Band under Dr. Conrad Hutchinson, where he learned precision and pageantry.

In 1970, after graduation, Earl was drafted into the U.S. Army. There, he played trombone, touring the country and Europe with

the Army band. The discipline of service gave him presence and sharpened his sense of responsibility.

When he returned, Earl began teaching in Houston, first at M. C. Williams High, then at Kashmere High under the legendary Dr. Conrad “Prof” Johnson. From Hutchinson, he had gained discipline; from Johnson, he observed soul and showmanship.

Blended with his military acumen, these lessons became the recipe for a leader who would shape students for decades.

Beyond the classroom, his music carried into Houston’s clubs and Shreveport’s casinos. One night, behind the piano, he met Veterine McDonnell. He played. She sang. The duet has lasted more than 43 years.

Simpson returned to Grambling, bringing with him the precision of Hutchinson, the soul of

Johnson, and the discipline of his military service. As head band director at Grambling High, he transformed the band from rigid corps style into a high-energy, show-style ensemble that electrified game days and filled students with pride.

While teaching, he also earned his Master’s degree in Education from Louisiana Tech University, balancing classrooms, rehearsals, and family with quiet determination.

For more than 30 years, Simpson taught music from elementary to high school, coached baseball, and mentored hundreds of young people. He is a devoted husband, father and stepfather, grandfather and great-grandfather. He has carried both joy and heartbreak with grace, including the loss of a daughter, yet he continues to live, lead, and love with extraordinary strength.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CCC to hold Soup for the Soul event

The Christian Community Action (CCA) is preparing to put on its major fall fundraiser, “Soup for the Soul.” This year’s Soup for the Soul event will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 14, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the Ruston Civic Center. Tickets are available for \$10 each.

Those interested in helping should call CCA at (318) 251-3282 before the Wednesday, Oct. 1, deadline to sign up.

The CCA annual “Scouting for Food,” will also soon get underway. The Boy Scouts’ will place bags in neighborhoods on Saturday, Nov. 1, with ample time to fill them with non-perishable food items before the Scouts return to pick up the filled bags the following Saturday, Nov. 8.

Line Dance class available for the Grambling area

A Line Dance Class with Yatta at Board & Bottle is now available for the Grambling area each Monday at 130 W. Park Ave. in Ruston and doors open at 5:30 p.m. The free class is being instructed by Kenyatta Collins.

The next session is set for Monday, Sept. 29. For additional information please contact Collins at 832- 891-7488 or WWW.REAL-LYGREATSITE.COM.

NAACP will hold monthly meetings on third Thursdays

The Grambling Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) #6094B will host its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, Oct. 16, at 6 p.m. Via teleconference. For additional information, please call or text 318-680-7679, Grace Tatem.

NAMI Family support group holds meeting

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will hold a support group meeting Thursday, Oct. 16, at 2 p.m. in the Lincoln Parish Library, George Byrnside Conference Room, 910 North Trenton St., Ruston. The meetings will continue each third Thursday of each month until December.

Anyone at least 18 years old may RSVP to jjones79aka@yahoo.com or call 93180 (318) 614-1961 or SJBurch57@gmail.com or call (318) 350- 1612. The meetings are free to the public and all are invited to attend.

GSU Football Nutritional Program seeks help

Looking for donations from committed and supportive friends of the Grambling State University (GSU) Football Coach Mickey Joseph and the GSU Football Nutritional Program. At This Time, All Donations are being made to: HBCU Boosters, Earmarked for the GSU Nutritional Program. Checks or Money Orders should be mailed to: P. O. Box 82, Grambling, La. 71245.

City of Grambling Water Department Issues Warning of ‘Wrong’ Sites for Paying Bills

The Water Department of Grambling wants Citizens to beware of paying their bills on the wrong sites online. Citizens should pay their water bills, property taxes and tickets at cityofgrambling.org ONLY. Once at the site, you will be directed to the payment page (ncount.com) where you can pay your bills. Several of these ‘wrong’ sites have cropped up lately according to the Water Department. One such site is doxo.com. DO NOT pay your bills on this site. Once your money is gone, the City has no way to retrieve it so BEWARE!

Councilwoman has started ‘Listening Post’ for Grambling citizens

Grambling City Councilwoman Delores Smith/Mayor Pro tem is available on the first Monday of each month, noon at Grambling’s City Hall for what she calls a “Listening Post.” Smith is available to listen to, or answer city-related issues citizens may have. The listening post is a designated place and time to visit with Smith to get questions or concerns heard.

Free food distribution set for Saturdays

The Lincoln United Community Coalition will be distributing free food for those who qualify each Saturday from 10 a.m. until noon. Food is distributed on first, third and fourth Saturdays from the Walmart retail store; second Saturday from the Northeast Louisiana Food Bank out of Monroe. Persons can come to the office at 407 N. Hazel in Ruston on distribution day at 9:30 to qualify. Plates are also sold for \$10 to help support the organization.

For more information, please contact Patricia Mims Brooks 318-265-2011 (office) or 214-662-5407.

Grambling Community Garden seek volunteers

Volunteers are needed for the Grambling Community Garden. If you are interested in lending a hand, contact DeVaria Ponton, master gardener. The garden is managed by Grow Grambling, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Ponton has the ability to grant volunteers hours and service-learning hours. Volunteers may contact Ponton at 318-278-9892.

‘No Limit’ accepting registration for 2025-2026

The No Limit Soldiers Program is accepting registration and sign-ups. All area youth are encouraged to come out and participate. For additional information please contact Howard Kirkpatrick, 318-497-2978, Montez Moss, 318-243-7451 or Kelli Granger at 318-664-5435.

Parish public transportation available to Grambling

The Lincoln Parish Public Transportation System (LPPTS) is available to the public, including the Grambling area. The system currently provides demand-response, curb to curb, non-emergency service and operates on a first call/come first serve reservation schedule. The service is handicap accessible.

Reservations are required

24 hours in advance unless prepaid and cancellations must be made two hours prior to pick-up time. For additional information please contact Samantha Dimmer, transportation coordinator 318-251-5138.

Grambling Alerts

Sign up to receive emergency alerts that could directly impact you and your family. The City of Grambling is able to send you emergency alerts via text message, email, pager, or voice mail (in extreme cases), based on your preferences. The system is intended to be used for emergency alerts, as well as non-emergency incidents that may have significant impacts to residents. These alerts are provided free of charge. To sign up, go to cityofgrambling.org and click on CivicReady.

Become a “Friend of The Connection”

For the past year, The Grambling Connection has been your source for timely, accurate, and trusted local news. We launched to connect the community and give Grambling the voice it deserves. But providing this service takes more than dedication—it takes support.

That’s why we’ve started the Friends of The Connection Program and we invite you to join. For just \$10/month, you’ll receive an online subscription, an invitation to our private Facebook group, be recognized in the paper as a

“Friend of The Connection” and receive special updates between issues. To join, go to: www.gramblingconnection.com/donate Thank you for your support!



Congratulations to The Grambling Connection on Your One Year Anniversary!

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COMMUNITY

Area sports director recognized by HBCU Boosters

By Joice M. Dunn

The HBCU Boosters Organization held an Award Luncheon in honor of Zach Richardson, Saturday, Sept. 13 at Log Cabin Restaurant in Ruston.

“The HBCU Boosters set aside time to honor Zach Richardson for supporting the organization’s youth and community programs,” said Jim “Bear” Maryland, president of the HBCU Boosters.

Maryland continued to explain that when someone goes out of the way to give credit for hard work and dedication that person also deserves to be honored or recognized.

Richardson said, “I first got involved with the HBCU Boosters when I covered Coach Wilbert



Zach Richardson, sports director at KTVE Channel 10 and KARD 14, stands with Jim “Bear” Maryland, president of the HBCU Boosters.

Ellis’ baseball camp and was introduced to Mr. Maryland. He reached out to me regarding a few things the Boosters were doing and I wanted to do my part in helping to spread their efforts to support local colleges and students.”

Richardson has been serving as the sports director at KTVE Channel

10 and KARD 14 since July of 2024. He is originally from Louisiana, Missouri where following high school, attended Truman State University. He was also a member of the university’s football team. Prior to moving to West Monroe, Richardson served as a news multimedia journalist/sports reporter at KHQA in



Zach Richardson, sports director at KTVE Channel 10 and KARD 14 (2nd from left), stands with HBCU Booster members Dr. Larry Proctor, Mary Kelly, Carl McCarter, and Billy Norman, holding the plaque.

Quincy, IL.

“The decision to take the job here in northeast Louisiana was pretty easy. This area and the people in it made this place feel like home. Another deciding factor was the love for sports in this area. The number of talented and highly respected student athletes in this area is special. The at-

mosphere I have experienced all over have been unmatched and seeing communities rally behind their teams the way they do here has been incredible. Being able to come to a place that has such a love for their area sports was the perfect place for me to help share their stories both on and off the playing field,” ex-

plained Richardson.

The northerner said he has met so many people in the short amount of time here that he has made this leap of faith in his career worth every second.

“I couldn’t be more grateful to be welcomed into such a fantastic area and I am truly blessed to have this opportunity!” he said.

Lincoln Prep PTO encourages community help

By Joice M. Dunn

A community-wide Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meeting was held Thursday, Sept. 2, at Grambling City Hall.

“We had a great turnout and appreciate those committed to making our school a wonderful place for our students,” said LaVonda Walker, PTO-president of Lincoln Preparatory School.

The mission of the PTO is to develop a closer connection between school and home, enhance educational experiences by supporting academic and enrichment activities, and improve the school environment through volunteer and financial support.

Dr. Crystal Washington, acting executive director

of Lincoln Prep, as well as assistants Antonio Hudson and Joshua Johnson were present to talk about school policies, procedures and dress code.

Dr. Washington explained that Lincoln Preparatory School is a Title One school.

The director explained that the J Campus platform as well as the school’s website and sometimes Facebook is used by the school to help keep parents and students informed.

Dr. Washington announced to the group that certified CNA classes will be offered this year because of the work of the school nurse. The agriculture class will continue this year with the possibility of starting an Agriculture Club.

“Students will have an opportunity to receive

training as a CNA and become certified,” Washington said.

Hudson and Johnson talked about the changes for students on the disciplinary side.

Hudson explained to the group about Saturday sessions to make up for excessive tardies and working with students concerning their disregarding rules.

Johnson reminded the group that students can only be absent from school 10 days without an excuse.

The key discussion points of the meeting included the direction of school, policies & procedures, volunteer opportunities for parents along with community, parent & family Engagements, school-wide programs upcoming and fundraising Events.

Hudson cleared up the changes and adjustments in the dress policy for the year. He also mentioned reaching out to businesses and various departments around the city to offer internships for Lincoln Prep students.

A question from the floor was asked about a Lock Down procedure for the school? Hudson

explained that Lincoln Prep has a Lock Down procedure in place which is required by the state. He explained that the school doesn’t have metal detectors in place, but they do have the wans if they are needed. “We have staff members that are trained in the area of crises prevention,” said Dr. Washington.

The PTO is working on a plan of action for future items such as trash dispensers and a vision for an elementary playground.

The next board meeting is set for Tuesday, Sept. 23 and the general PTO meeting is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 29, at 5:30 p.m. at Grambling City Hall.

Sigma Closet opens at Lincoln Preparatory school

The Gamma Kappa Sigma Alumnae Chapter has Launched took a step forward in service by opening its first Sigma Closet at Lincoln Preparatory School. The closet opened Friday, Aug. 22.

The initiative grew out of Sigma Gamma Rho’s National Program, Operation Big Book Bag, which ensures children begin the school year with the tools they need to succeed.

“Recognizing that many families and even teachers often lack access to essentials throughout the school year, the Chapter created the Sigma Closet as a sustainable resource,” said Essence Payne, 2nd Anti-Basileus.

It is a cornerstone of the chapter’s commitment to education and service, ensuring that children begin the school year with the tools they need to succeed. The closet is full of essentials from school supplies & uniforms to toiletry items & day planners for the teachers!

The closet—conveniently located in the school’s main office—provides students and educators with school supplies, uniforms, toiletry items, and even



Pictured from (L to R) Andrea Blair; La’sheka Shine, Basileus; Dr. Crystal Washington, Lincoln Prep Acting Director, Essence Payne, 2nd Anti-Basileus and Vickie Anderson.


day planners for teachers. Access is simple: anyone in need may connect with the school office administrator to receive items. This process ensures dignity, confidentiality, and quick support.

The Gamma Kappa Sigma Alumnae Chapter has pledged to replenish the Closet on a quarterly basis, reinforcing their commitment to continuous service.

This project was launched because the Chapter saw a real need within the community and believed in providing

tangible solutions. As one member shared, “When children and teachers are equipped with what they need, they are empowered to succeed—and that lifts the entire community.”

Community support is vital to keeping this effort strong. Together, we can make a lasting impact—one supply, one student, and one classroom at a time. If you would like to contribute to the Sigma Closet and help ensure no child or teacher goes without, please reach out to the Chapter at admin@gam-makappasigmagrho.com.



The City of Grambling would like to wish

The Grambling Connection

a successful

1 YEAR

Happy Anniversary

We are proud to have The Grambling Connection as part of our community... All the best on many more great years to come!

Mayor Bradley



Skip Russell State Farm Agent

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CHURCH NEWS

Grambling Native Writes Book on Healing and Spiritual Growth

By Joice M. Dunn

The book From Pain to Purpose: Finding Healing and Restoration after Life's Disappointments by Lou Smith is a personal reflection of her life and spiritual growth. The book will be available soon.

Smith's love of writing has led her to the publication of a third book, the first two were children's books, Cameron's Road Trip and Adoption: A Love Story.

"Have you ever felt torn between your faith and your reality? Have you prayed and believed God for something that didn't happen? Have you thought, 'Maybe God has forgotten about me?'" You might even have felt overlooked while others were being blessed. This type of disappointment can be painful and profoundly challenging. If you identify with any of these occurrences and you're seeking answers to your setbacks and unfulfilled dreams, this book is for you," explained Smith.

The author examines the universal theme of pain and disappointment, addressing how individuals can come to terms with failure, despite faith in an all-powerful God. This narrative presents her personal testimony offered with honesty and transparency, prompting readers to reflect on their own experiences with major disappointments. This compelling story follows the journey from her personal struggle through repeated miscarriages, frustration



Lou Smith

and anger to an encounter with God that led to her purpose and life assignment. Her account of loss and grief offers an engaging perspective that encourages readers to remain engrossed until the end. She provides insight into life's challenges and offers guidance for finding healing and restoration and living a satisfying, successful and purposeful life.

Smith is a native of Grambling, Louisiana where she was raised in a godly home with her parents, the late John and Odessa Dunn, and seven siblings. She graduated from Grambling State University with a degree in Speech and Drama. She is also a graduate of Beulah Heights University with a degree in Biblical Education, where she was named Student of the Year and upon graduation was awarded the Evangelical Training Association Standard Teacher Diploma with approval to teach Bible courses.

As an ordained minister with Christian Global Outreach Ministries, she has been involved in various aspects of ministry—Sunday School

Superintendent, Drama Ministry Director, and Women's Ministry Leader. She, and her husband Henry, organized and led a Singles' ministry called NEXUS and a Married Couples' Fellowship. They have conducted pre-marital counseling and served as Ministry Care Pastors, attending to the spiritual needs of church members. Lou has served God in numerous capacities to evangelize the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to equip, encourage and edify the body of Christ.

Lou is an evangelist, speaker, teacher and workshop leader who has spoken at Women's Day programs, women's meetings, retreats and seminars.

A light-hearted and humorous person, she enjoys reading, writing, traveling, movies and theatre. Smith takes pleasure in ministering to women and married couples, encouraging them with Bible-based principles. She loves the Lord, believes in the power of prayer, and knows that your gifts and callings will make room for you.

Retired after working over 30 years in Human Resources in the U.S. Federal Government, Smith lives with her husband Henry in Bossier City, Louisiana. They have been married over 40 years, and have one adult daughter, Leslie Presley; a son-in-law, Jonathan; two grandsons, Cameron and Gabriel; and two granddaughters, Jordyn and Zuri. They are excited about a third grandson who is expected soon.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mt. Olive Mission to hold monthly meeting

The Mt. Olive Baptist Church Mission Department will hold its meeting Saturday, Sept. 27, at 10 a.m. at the church.

The church is located at 571 Mt. Olive Rd. Grambling and Rev. Donald Young is the pastor. For more information contact Sharon Ford Dunn at (318) 614-4726.

Pilgrim Rest Church sponsors Women's Day program

The Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church will celebrate Women's Day on Sunday, Sept. 28, at 9:45 a.m. at the church. Jackie Belton of the Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church of East Hodge, Louisiana will serve as guest speaker. The theme for the program will be "Trusting Him When Times Are Tough" from Psalm 46:1; Jeremiah 17:7.

The church is located at 622 West Line Avenue, Ruston and Rev. Bradon J. Crews is the pastor.

Love Chapel to hold Family and Friends Day

The Love Chapel Baptist Church of Ruston will hold Family and Friends Day on Sunday, Sept. 28, at 2 p.m. at the church. Rev. James Mattox, Sr. and the Union Baptist Church Family of Dubach will serve as special guest.

The church is located at 1525 Sikes Street, Ruston and Rev. Elliott Abney is the pastor.

Spring Hill Baptist Church to hold Appreciation Musical

The Springhill Missionary Baptist Church will hold its first Musician & Choir Appreciation Musical honoring Ricky Davis, Royce Dillard, Tyrone Miller, Tarez Williams and the Springhill B.C. Choir, Sunday, October 5, at 2 p.m. The church is located at 727 Dicks Store Road, Simsboro, LA and pastored by Rev. Eric Caldwell.

The guest speaker will be Pastor James G. Leonard and the St. Rest Missionary Baptist Church Family of Quitman, Louisiana. Featured Choirs & Soloists will include St. Rest Missionary Baptist Church Choir, The Mays Family, Pastor Jeremy R. Braggs -New Galilee Baptist Church Duane Harris (Magic One), Billy Jerro & Jerro Associates Community Choir and The Mays Family. The master of ceremony will be Donterrio (Donnie) Anderson.

Springville United to hold pastoral anniversary

The Springville United Baptist Church of Gilsland will hold a pastoral anniversary for Rev. Julian Burns on Sunday, Oct. 5, at 8:30 a.m. at the church. Rev. Elliott Abney. and the Love Chapel Baptist Church Family of Ruston will serve as special guest.

Men's Fellowship group to celebrate Jesus

The area Men's Fellowship group will meet every second Monday of each month at the Memorial Funeral Home Chapel in Arcadia, Louisiana, located on 128680 LA-9 71001 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. The men only group gathers for strength, courage and knowledge.

The meeting will be held on Monday, October 6. The meeting is spearheaded by Patrick Jefferson, former state representative, along with invited speakers. Every man is invited to come and worship.

Church of Christ in Grambling Extends invitation

The Church of Christ in Grambling invites all to worship. Bible Study is held Sunday at 10 a.m. and morning worship at 11 a.m. Listeners may join online services by tuning into the YouTube channel, 146 King St. Church of Christ. Wednesday night Bible study begins at 7 p.m. The Zoom ID is 9744743562 and the church may be contact at ChurchofChristatGrambling@gmail.com or 318-596-1038. The Church is located at 146 King St.

New Hope Church to hold community-wide Bible Study

The New Hope Baptist Church of Ruston will hold a noon community-wide Bible Study each Wednesday. The church is located at 301 W. Vaughn Ave.

Editor's Note: If you have a church announcement, please email the information to the grambling-connection@gmail.com.

Area Church Directory

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Cathedral of Praise Worship Center - 2877 Highway 33, Ruston
First Assembly of God - 1400 Woodward Ave., Ruston

BAPTIST

Alabama, 16061 Hwy. 151, Arcadia
Barnett Springs, 1601 S. Barnett Springs Rd., Ruston
China Grove Missionary, 406 Vernon St., Ruston
Christ Temple, 7349 Hwy 80, Ruston
Church of Restoration, 285 Main St., Grambling
Cook, 2000 Cooktown Rd, Ruston
Corinth, 4327 Hw 545, Dubach
Countyline, 7426 Hwy. 146, Ruston
Dayspring Baptist Ministries, 3191 South Vienna St, Ruston
Emmanuel, 1200 Farmerville Hwy., Ruston
Fellowship, 6476 Hwy 151, Dubach
Fellowship, 1572 Highway 507 South, Simsboro
First, 117 Oak St., - One block south of Hwy. 80 in Choudrant
First, Hico St., Dubach
First, 200 S. Trenton St., Ruston
First, Simsboro
Friendship, 143 West Sixth Street, Bernice
Grace, 2808 Trenton Ave., Ruston
Grace Bible, 216 Rough Edge Rd., Ruston
Greater Pleasant Grove, 1270 Golf Course Rd., Unionville
Greater St. Luke, 163 St. Luke Church Rd, Arcadia
Gumspring, 3117 Hwy 151, Farmerville
Hebron, Love Chapel, 1525 Sikes St, Ruston
Hico, 653 Hwy. 152, Dubach
Hopewell, 7657 Fellowship Rd., Hwy 151, Dubach
Lane Chapel, 1016 McAllister, Ruston
Lanes Chapel, Hwy. 151 Downsview
Liberty Hill, Simsboro
Longstraw, 1799 Styles, Ranch Rd.,
Love Chapel, 1525 Sikes St, Ruston
Macedonia, No.1, Rt. 2, Dubach
Macedonia, No. 2, 489 E. Sibley Rd., Choudrant
Mineral Springs, 4599 Hwy 822, Dubach
Mount Harmony, 210 Mt. Harmony Church Rd, Ruston
Mount Calm, 566 Mount Calm Rd., Simsboro
Mount Olive, 571 Mt. Olive Rd. Grambling, Louisiana.
Mount Olive Outreach, 2817 S. Service Road W., Ruston
Mount Pisgah, Hwy. 3061, Ruston
Mount Sinai, 2269 Hwy. 145, Choudrant

Mount Vernon, 1356 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach
Mount Zion, 2586 Hwy 150., Grambling
Mount Zion No. 2, 113 California Plant Road, Dubach
New Hope, Choudrant
New Hope, 302 W. Vaughn, Ruston
New Liberty Hill, Hwy. 544, Simsboro
New Living Word Ministries, 1900 W. Barnett Springs, Ruston
New Pilgrim Rest, Inc., 2697 Elm St., Arcadia
New Prospect, 3438 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach
New Prosperity, 1378 Prosperity Church, Clay
New Rocky Valley, 2155 Martin Luther King Ave., Grambling
Northview Missionary, Highway 33, Ruston
Olive Grove, 3138 Olive Grove Rd, Choudrant
Pilgrim Rest, 622 W. Line Ave., Ruston
Pine Grove, 470 Chandler Rd., Ruston
Pleasant Grove, 1366 Pleasant Grove Road, Choudrant
Pleasant Grove, "The Oasis in the Woods", 446 Bowden Rd., Ruston
Pleasant Hill, 1127 Mondy Rd, Simsboro
Rock Corner & Garden of Prayer, 824 Rock Corner Rd, Dubach, off Hwy.33, 14 miles north of Ruston
Rocky Valley, Simsboro
Solid Rock, 1511 West California Hwy 80, Ruston
Southside, 3191 South Vienna St., Ruston
Springhill, 727 Dicks Store Rd., Ruston
St. David, Vienna.
St. John, Old Grambling Rd., Ruston.
St. Mary, 1114 Larson St., Ruston.
St. Peter, 404 Longstraw Rd., Ruston
St. Rest, 09 Walker Rd., Choudrant
St. Rest, Hwy. 146 West, Dubach
Temple, 1515 S. Service Rd. W. Ruston
True Believers, 184 CCC Road, Ruston
The Springs, (A ministry of Temple Baptist Church) 1601 S. Barnett Springs Ave., Ruston
The Springs.life The Word, 504 S. Main St., Grambling University - 2856 W. California, Ruston
Vernon, 190 Vernon-Eros Road, Ruston
Woods Chapel, 326 Hwy 454, Ruston
Zion Hill, 505 Lee St., Ruston
Zion Traveler, 1201 Martin Luther King Dr, Ruston

CATHOLIC

St. Benedict, 471 Main St., Grambling
St. Thomas Aquinas, 810 Carey Avenue, Ruston

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church of Christ, 2902 Hwy. 80 West,

Ruston
Church of Christ, 146 King St., Grambling
Northside, 1804 N. Trenton St., Ruston
Orleans Cir. Church of Christ, 2103 Orleans Cir., Ruston
Ruston, 2300 W. Woodward Ave., Ruston, www.rustonchurchofchrist.org

EPISCOPAL

Church of the Redeemer, 504 Tech Dr., Ruston
St. Luke's, 538 Main St., Grambling

METHODIST

Ansley Union, 328 Ansley Rd, Ruston, located 10 miles south of Ruston off Hwy 167
Antioch UMC, Simsboro
Arcadia First UMC, Arcadia
Choudrant UMC, 125 Pecan St., Choudrant
Dubach UMC, Dubach
First UMC, Arcadia
Grace, 3401 N. Trenton St., Ruston
Lewis Temple, Main St., Grambling
Mays Chapel CME, 615 W. Line Ave., Ruston
Memorial UMC, 9325 Hwy 80, Simsboro.
Mt. Mariah UMC - Salem UMC - 11793 Hwy. 151, Dubach
St. Peter AME, 1104 Arlington St., Ruston.
Trinity Methodist, 1000 Woodward Ave., Ruston
Wesley Chapel, 4330 Hwy. 818, Ruston

PENTECOSTAL

Anchor Tabernacle, Exit 93 from I-20 then South 1/2 mile, Choudrant
First Pentecostal, Corner of Kentucky and Goodwin Ruston
King's Court UPC, 2401 S. Service Rd. West, Ruston
LifePoint Church, 1018 S. Vienna St., Ruston. lifepointruston.com
The Pentecostals, 2851 Hwy 33 North, Ruston
Powerhouse Temple of Christ Apostolic, 101 Main St., Grambling
United Pentecostal, Dubach
Zion Temple Apostolic Faith Deliverance - Eastern Hills, off Beacon Light Rd., Ruston
Voice of Revival Ministry - 304 W. California St., Ruston

PRESBYTERIAN

Alabama (USA), 2091 Hwy 145, Choudrant
Covenant Reformed, 2106 Cooktown

Rd., Ruston
Greenwood, Lincoln Parish Rd. 181, between Mitcham's & Hwy. 146, Ruston
Ruston (USA), 212 N. Bonner St.

OTHERS

Abundant Grace Tabernacle, 3092 Hwy 556, Choudrant
Campus Community Worship Center, 1000 Saratoga St., Ruston
Christian L.I.F.E. Church, 107 Love Ave., Ruston
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 205 Woodhaven Rd., Ruston
Church of the Living God, 1438 Hwy. 167 W., Dubach
Church of the Nazarene, 1101 Center St., Ruston
Douglas Church, 1642 Hwy 821, Ruston
Church of God in Christ, 256 Voss Street, Dubach
Faith Church, 1507 Goodwin Road, Ruston
Focus Christian Ministries, Martin Luther King Community Center, 901 Martin Luther King Dr., Ruston
Fountain of Praise United Worship Center, 1394 Hazel St., Arcadia
The Gospel, 108 Sanctuary Rd, Ruston
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 2508 Kavanaugh Road, Ruston
Impact Worship Center, Greenwood Recreation Center, 1306 Cornell Ave, Ruston
Ruston Housing Authority Building 901 Martin Luther King Dr. Ruston.
Lifechurch.LA, 3000 S. Vienna St., Ruston
LifePoint Church of Ruston, 1018 S. Vienna St., Ruston
Living Water Full Gospel Church, 149 Fairgrounds Rd., Ruston
Miracle Temple COGIC, 1405 S. Farmer-ville, Ruston
New Living Word Ministry, 1900 Barnett Springs Rd. Ruston
New Testament Church at Grambling Inc., 508 Main St., Grambling
Praise Temple, Ramada Inn, 107 Love Ave., Ruston
St. Paul Lutheran, 504 Tech Drive, Ruston
The Bridge Community Church, North Campus, 2301 N. Trenton, Ruston
Triumph The Church and Kingdom of God in Christ, Hwy. 3061 E. Tenn. Rd., Ruston
United Faith Tabernacle Ministries & Prayer Center, 303 Cherry St., Bernice,
Upon the Rock Outreach Center, 513 E. Texas Ave., Ruston

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you would like your church information listed, please email the Grambling Connection at gramblintecconnection@gmail.com.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

CHARMING'S CORNER

Love as Medicine: Healing the Heart Chakra

By Charming Davis

At the very center of your being, in the middle of your chest, lives the heart chakra—the energy center of love, compassion, forgiveness, and connection. When this chakra is open and balanced, you not only give love freely but also receive it without fear. You walk in harmony, hold space for others, and allow joy to flow into your life with ease.

But when the heart is blocked, it can feel like walls have been built around you. Past hurts, disappointments, and generational wounds can cause us to shut down, to harden, or to keep love at a distance. Sometimes, we may even give too much of ourselves—overloving to the point of neglecting our own needs.

Signs of a Blocked or Unbalanced Heart Chakra

- Difficulty trusting others

- Holding onto grudges and resentment
- Trouble forgiving yourself or others
- Fear of intimacy or rejection
- Overgiving to the point of exhaustion
- Feeling lonely, closed off, or bitter
- Physical issues such as heart or lung discomfort, or tightness in the chest

Why the Heart Chakra Matters

In the African-American community, many of us were taught to “be strong,” to bury pain, or to keep silent about heartbreak. Generationally, this silence has created cycles of guarded hearts. But true strength is not in shutting down—it’s in staying open. Healing the heart chakra allows us to break these cycles, to forgive, and to release the heavy weight we were never meant to carry.

When balanced, the heart



Charming Davis

chakra brings:

- Deep compassion for yourself and others
- Healthy and supportive relationships
- The ability to forgive and move forward
- Emotional balance and inner peace
- A strong sense of connection to all life

How to Heal and Strengthen the Heart Chakra

- Practice forgiveness—not for them, but for your own freedom
- Surround yourself with green—plants, nature walks, or even clothing
- Work with herbs like basil, rosemary, rose petals, or thyme
- Sip heart-opening teas such as hibiscus or chamomile
- Meditate with crystals like rose quartz, emerald, or green aventurine
- Speak affirmations such as: “I am worthy of love. My heart is open. I forgive and release.”
- Place your hands over your chest and breathe deeply, sending healing energy into your heart space

At Naturally Charming Universe Holistic Wellness Center, I walk with you through the journey of opening your heart chakra. Whether through Reiki, teas, oils, or one-on-one consultation, I help you release the weight

of the past and step into the freedom of love and forgiveness. You can schedule a phone consultation with me today to learn how to soften, to open, and to welcome love back into your life.

Forgiveness Heals You First

Forgiveness is not about excusing others—it’s about setting yourself free. Holding on only poisons your own spirit, while forgiveness clears the way for peace, joy, and balance. Healing the heart chakra teaches us that love, compassion, and forgiveness are not weaknesses—they are our greatest strengths.

Naturally Charming Universe Holistic Wellness Center
• Address: 311 Main Street, Grambling, Louisiana 71245
• Phone: (318) 789-5393
• Business Hours:
• Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
• Saturday: 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Breakthrough Mitochondrial Technology by Minority Owned Company Offers Transformative Health Benefits

(Black PR Wire) Atlanta, Georgia, USA — The African-American community has long faced disproportionate rates of lifestyle related diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and related conditions. These chronic illnesses often lead to serious health issues including heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and organ failure affecting the heart, kidneys, eyes, and more

A New Approach to Wellness

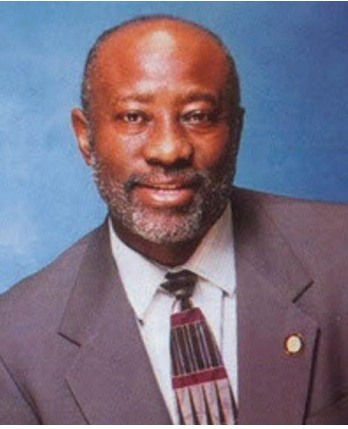
At the center of this health crisis lies a critical but often overlooked factor, mitochondrial health. Mitochondria, commonly referred to as the “powerhouses” of the cell, are responsible for generating the energy that drives every biological function

in the body. Beyond energy production, mitochondria play vital roles in metabolism, cell signaling, and the regulation of overall cell health.

Research led by Dr. Bevan Elliott highlights the foundational importance of optimal mitochondrial function. As he points out, “Everything the body does requires energy.” Without adequate cellular energy production, the body’s ability to maintain and repair itself is severely impaired.

The Mitochondrial Decline Problem

The number and efficiency of mitochondria peak early in life and begin to decline steadily with age. By age 60, most people have lost about half the mito-



ROGER HILL
CEO and Founder of More Mito

chondria they had in their youth. By age 80 or 90, this number can drop to as low as 5–10%.

This mitochondrial decline severely impacts the body’s ability to heal, recover, and re-

sist disease. When energy production plummets, so does the body’s performance and ability to bounce back from health challenges.

The More Mito Solution

More Mito LLC, a high-tech nutritional company, has developed a pioneering approach to address this issue. As the name suggests, More Mito focuses on increasing the body’s mitochondria using natural nutrition.

Under the scientific leadership of Dr. Bevan Elliott, More Mito has identified specific bioactive compounds found in nature that stimulate the growth and multiplication of mitochondria. While these compounds show promise, their effectiveness is limited by poor bioavailability.

To solve this, Dr. Elliott invented a proprietary technology known as XDS (eXponen al Delivery System). This innovative delivery system enhances the transport of bio actives deep into cells, significantly boosting their impact on mitochondrial function.

As a result, the body gains more natural energy at the cellular level, empowering it to perform better across all systems, regardless of existing health challenges.

As the company puts it, “It’s not what ‘Mito’ does, it’s what the body does with Mito.”

For more information including how others have responded to the More Mito technology, go to: mymito.info (<http://mymito.info>)

How to Tell When Your Body Is Trying to Warn You

By Greg Brown

Imagine your body trying to send you warning signals, not with alarms or sirens, but with small changes you might not even notice at first. These little things—like an odd pain, strange vision, or sudden tiredness—can actually mean a lot. The body doesn’t randomly act up. When something feels off, it’s often a sign that something deeper needs attention.

The problem is, people are used to ignoring small symptoms. They wait for things to get really bad before doing anything. That’s when it becomes a bigger problem. So, learning to notice the early signs can actually save a lot of trouble later on. Here are some of the most common ways the body tries to tell you something isn’t right.

When Your Vision Starts Acting Weird

Vision changes are one of the most ignored warning signs. If it gets harder to read things that used to be clear or lights seem way too bright, that’s not just normal tiredness. Blurry vision, double vision, or even flashes of light could point to serious issues, like problems with your retina, pressure in your eye, or even early signs of diabetes.

Some people also experience constant eye strain. This might feel like soreness around the eyes, head-

aches that build over the day, or just feeling super tired after using a screen. Eye strain can come from spending too much time on phones, tablets, or computers without a break. Dryness or watery eyes are other signals your body is giving you a heads-up.

Headaches That Don’t Go Away

Everyone gets a headache now and then. But when they keep coming back or feel stronger than usual, it could be something more. Sometimes, constant headaches are a sign of poor vision, high stress, or even high blood pressure. Migraines can also show up with other strange symptoms like flashing lights or nausea.

Another kind of headache is the tension headache. It usually feels like a tight band around the head and can be caused by things like not drinking enough water, bad posture, or too much screen time. These headaches are warning signs that something in your daily routine might need to change.

Feeling Tired All the Time

If someone is always tired, no matter how much sleep they get, it’s a sign the body is struggling. This kind of tiredness isn’t just from staying up too late. It can be connected to low iron levels, not getting enough nutrients, or even

an issue with the thyroid.

Feeling drained can also be linked to mental health. When people are stressed, anxious, or depressed, it affects energy levels a lot. The body uses energy trying to deal with all that tension, which leaves less for everything else.

Pain That Keeps Coming Back

Pain is one of the clearest ways the body asks for help. But people often try to push through it or hope it goes away. That’s not always safe. Pain in joints, muscles, or the back that keeps returning might be a sign of injury, inflammation, or stress on the body that’s not healing properly.

For example, constant knee or shoulder pain could mean the joints are being overworked or there’s early arthritis. Sharp stomach pains, es-

pecially when they happen often, might have to do with digestion problems or something more serious.

Chronic pain—pain that stays for weeks or months— isn’t something to ignore. It means the body is struggling to recover or fighting off something deeper.

Breathing Feels Off

Breathing is supposed to feel easy and natural. So if it suddenly becomes hard to catch a breath or there’s a wheezing sound, the body is definitely raising a red flag. This can be due to asthma, allergies, or even something affecting the heart or lungs.

Shortness of breath that shows up when walking or climbing stairs, especially if it never used to be a problem, is a sign worth checking out. Sometimes it’s something small like low

fitness, but it could also point to something more serious like heart or lung conditions.

Key Takeaways to Remember

The body isn’t silent. It has a way of speaking through small changes—things that seem random but usually aren’t. Blurry vision, tiredness, frequent headaches, sudden weight changes, or ongoing pain all mean something. These

are early warning signs, and noticing them is a big step toward staying healthy.

Taking care of your body doesn’t mean waiting until something is broken. It means paying attention early and acting on signs that something needs help. If anything feels off, it’s okay to ask for help. Talk to someone, book a check-up, or visit a health professional who knows what to look for. Catching things early makes all the difference.

THE GRAMBLING CONNECTION



The Grambling Connection Turns 1 — And We Need You!

For the past year, The Grambling Connection has been your source for timely, accurate, and trusted local news—covering Grambling, the University, Simsboro, Arcadia, Gibsland, and Ruston.

We launched to connect the community and give Grambling the voice it deserves. But keeping our paper free for the community and expanding our coverage takes more than dedication—it takes support.

That’s why we’ve started the Friends of The Connection Program and we invite you to join. For just \$10/month, you’ll:

- ✓ Get an online subscription
- ✓ Get an invitation to join our private Facebook group
- ✓ Be recognized in the paper as a Friend of The Connection
- ✓ Receive special updates between issues

Most importantly—you’ll keep local journalism alive in Grambling.

To become a Friend today, go to: www.gramblingconnection.com/donate

Your \$10/month makes the difference between Grambling having its own voice—or losing it. Thank you.



THE GRAMBLING CONNECTION

The Grambling Connection is looking for Freelance Writers!

If you are interested in writing for this place, send us an email and let us know! For someone with writing experience in newspaper, news sites, blogs, or websites. Send us a letter of introduction and your resume to: greg.brown@theconnection.com



(318) 596-1700

7604 Highway 80
Grambling, LA 71234
(next door to Fred's)
M-W/F: 8AM-5PM
TH: 8AM-7PM

We accept all forms of insurance including Medicare & Medicaid

Clinical Services

- ✓ Primary Care of all ages
- ✓ Dental
- ✓ Pediatrics
 - KidMed
 - Child
- ✓ Physicals Behavioral Health/Family
- ✓ Counseling
 - Women's Health
 - OBGYN Family
 - Planning
- ✓ Case/Care Management Services
- ✓ Pharmacy
 - scription Services
- ✓ Laboratory Services Medicaid
- ✓ Enrollment Center Community
- ✓ Outreach Health Education
- ✓ Mobile Health Services School
- ✓ Based Health Center



*Pictured top to bottom:
Catherine M. Tonore, CEC
GinnyLea Norris, CSO*

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Private insurance, Self-Pay and *Sliding Fee Discounts
(*Proof of income is required)*

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Monroe, LA 71201 (318)
388-1250
M-F: 8AM-5PM



Desiard Street Clinic
2913 Desiard Street
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 651-9914 M-
W/F: 8AM-5PM TH:
8AM-7PM



Dental Clinic 2914
Betin Avenue
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 323-4450
M-W/F: 8AM-5PM
TH: 8AM-7PM



School-Based Health Center
Carroll Junior High School
2945 Renwick Street
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 654-8760
M-F: 7:30 AM-4PM



Pediatric & Women's
Health
2915 Betin Avenue
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 651-9945
M-W/F: 8AM-5PM TH:
8AM-7PM



Behavioral Health
Clinic
2913 Desiard Street
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 325-7740 M-
W/F: 8AM-5PM
TH: 8AM-7PM



West Monroe Family
Health Center
301 McMillan Road
West Monroe, LA 71291
(318) 737-7616
M-F: 8AM-5PM



School-Based Health Center
Wossman High School
1600 Arizona Avenue
Monroe, LA 71202
(318) 538-0230
M-F: 7:30 AM-4PM



S.D. Hill Clinic
850 S. 2nd Street
Monroe, LA 71202
(318) 651-0041
M-W/F: 8AM-5PM
TH: 8AM-7PM



PHSC Pharmacy
(Located inside
Desiard Street Clinic)
2913 Desiard Street
Monroe, LA 71201
(318) 654-8756
M-W/F: 8AM-5PM
TH: 8AM-7PM



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SPORTS

Grambling State Men's Basketball Announces 2025-26 Schedule

By: **Curtis Ford**, Associate AD for Athletic Communications

GRAMBLING, La. | The Grambling State University men's basketball team announced its schedule for the 2025-26 season on Tuesday afternoon. The Tigers' slate, which will be the first under new head coach Patrick Crarey II, features 12 home games, two games against power conference opponents and one neutral site classic in Atlanta. GSU opens the season at home on Nov. 3 versus Huston-Tillotson. The Tigers then travel to Aimes, Iowa and Washington D.C. for games at Iowa State (Nov. 6) and Howard (Nov. 9). Grambling State returns home on Nov. 13 to take on Sun Belt opponent

Southern Miss at the Fredrick C. Hobdy Center. Following that game, the G-Men embark on an eight-game road trip that begins on the west coast. The Tigers' west coast swing features games at San Diego (Nov. 18), Cal Baptist (Nov. 21) and UC-Riverside (Nov. 24). GSU travels to Tulane on Dec. 2 and Southern Miss on Dec. 8. Grambling State returns to the Chris Paul HBCU Classic on Dec. 18 and 19 where the Tigers will Hampton and Norfolk State. Both games will take place at the Gateway Center Arena in Atlanta, Ga. The Tigers wraps up its road trip with a game at Ohio State on Dec. 23. GSU closes its non-conference slate on

Dec. 30 when the Tigers host Centenary. Grambling State begins Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) play at home versus Prairie View A&M on Jan. 3. GSU's home SWAC schedule includes games against Texas Southern (Jan. 5), Southern (Jan. 17), Mississippi Valley State (Jan. 24), Arkansas-Pine Bluff (Jan. 26), Alabama State (Feb. 7), Alabama A&M (Feb. 9), Florida A&M (Feb. 28) and Bethune Cookman (March 2). Grambling State's SWAC road games are at BCU (Jan. 10), FAMU (Jan. 12), Jackson State (Jan. 31), Alcorn State (Feb. 2) TSU (Feb. 14), PVAMU (Feb. 9), SU (Feb. 21), AAMU (March 5) and Alabama State (March 7).



'2025-26' GRAMBLING STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE	
MCNEESE STATE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	PRAIRIE VIEW A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
ARKANSAS BAPTIST THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	FLORIDA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
SMU THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	BETHUNE-COOKMAN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
NORTH TEXAS THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
OUACHITA BAPTIST THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ARKANSAS PINE BLUFF THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
LOUISIANA-MONROE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
ARIZONA THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ALCORN STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
DEPAUL MTE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	JACKSON STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
CAMPBELL THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ALABAMA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
NORTHERN COLORADO THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ALABAMA STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
BAYLOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	PRAIRIE VIEW A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
LOUISIANA TECH THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	TEXAS SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
CENTRAL ARKANSAS THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
JARVIS CHRISTIAN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	BETHUNE-COOKMAN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
RICE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	FLORIDA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
LETOURNEAU THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ALABAMA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
TEXAS SOUTHERN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12	ALABAMA STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
	HOME AWAY

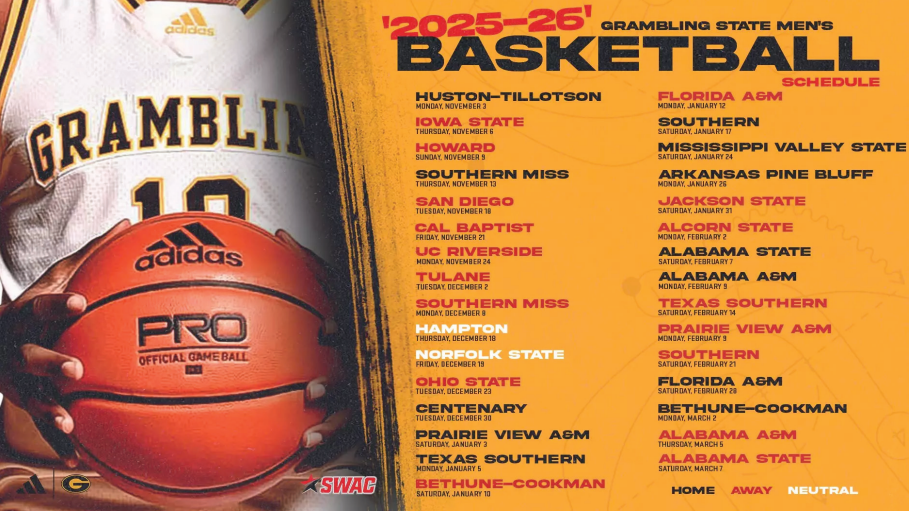
Grambling State Releases 2025-26 Women's Basketball Slat

By: **Leon Mitchell**, GSU Athletic Communications

GRAMBLING, La. | The Grambling State University women's basketball program has unveiled its 2025-26 schedule. The Lady Tigers will tip off the season with a pair of home tune-ups. They will host McNeese for a scrimmage on Wednesday, Oct. 22. The Tigers will then face Arkansas Baptist in an exhibition matchup on Wednesday, Oct. 29. Grambling State opens regular-season play on the road against SMU on Tuesday, Nov. 4, in Dallas. The road stretch continues that weekend at North Texas on Friday, Nov. 7. The Lady Tigers then return home to host Ouachita Baptist University on Sunday, Nov. 9. They will travel to Louisiana-Monroe on Tuesday, Nov. 11, before heading west for a marquee matchup at Arizona on Sunday,

Nov. 16. The team then travels to Chicago, facing DePaul on Nov. 21 then Campbell and Northern Colorado on Nov. 22. Grambling State closes November at Baylor on Sunday, Nov. 30, in Waco. December brings a mix of road and home tests, beginning with Louisiana Tech in Ruston on Dec. 9. The Lady Tigers then host a three-game home stand against Central Arkansas (Dec. 13), Jarvis Christian (Dec. 15), and Rice (Dec. 17) before wrapping up the non-conference slate with a home contest against Letourneau on Dec. 22. Conference play tips off in January with a two-game homestand, beginning with Texas Southern on Jan. 1 and Prairie View A&M on Jan. 3. The Lady Tigers then head to Florida for a road trip against Florida A&M on Jan. 8 and Bethune-Cookman on Jan. 10. The team returns to the

GSU Assembly Center for another homestand, hosting Southern on Jan. 17, Arkansas-Pine Bluff on Jan. 22, and Mississippi Valley State on Jan. 24. Grambling then closes January on the road at Alcorn (Jan. 29) and Jackson State (Jan. 31). February opens with another pair of home contests, as the Lady Tigers welcome Alabama A&M on Feb. 5 and Alabama State on Feb. 7. The schedule then shifts to the road with trips to Prairie View A&M (Feb. 12), Texas Southern (Feb. 14), and Southern (Feb. 21). The month ends with back-to-back home games against Bethune-Cookman on Feb. 26 and Florida A&M on Feb. 28. The regular season concludes in March with road games at Alabama A&M (Mar. 3) and Alabama State (Mar. 5). The 2026 SWAC Tournament will be held March 9-14 at the Gateway Center Arena in Atlanta, Ga.



'2025-26' GRAMBLING STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE	
HUSTON-TILLOTSON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3	FLORIDA A&M MONDAY, JANUARY 1
IOWA STATE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6	SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
HOWARD THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6	MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
SOUTHERN MISS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6	ARKANSAS PINE BLUFF THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
SAN DIEGO THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18	JACKSON STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
CAL BAPTIST THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21	ALCORN STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
UC RIVERSIDE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24	ALABAMA STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
TULANE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	ALABAMA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
SOUTHERN MISS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	TEXAS SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
PRINCETON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	PRAIRIE VIEW A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
NORFOLK STATE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	SOUTHERN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
OHIO STATE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	FLORIDA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
CENTENARY THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	BETHUNE-COOKMAN THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
PRAIRIE VIEW A&M THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	ALABAMA A&M THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
TEXAS SOUTHERN THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27	ALABAMA STATE THURSDAY, JANUARY 1
	HOME AWAY NEUTRAL

Grambling State Athletics Set to Spark Fall with Tiger Madness and Tip-Off Brunch

By: **Leon Mitchell**, GSU Athletic Communications

Grambling, La. | This fall, the Grambling State University Department of Athletics is sparking the season with two thrilling events that bring together fans, families, and the entire GramFam community for celebration, connection, and a countdown to basketball season.

A Spooktacular Start: Tiger Madness Halloween Edition

On a crisp autumn evening, the Fredrick C. Hobdy Assembly Center will come alive with energy and creativity at Tiger Madness: Halloween Edition. This free, fan-centered event invites Tigers of all ages to step inside the arena for a night filled with festive fun and spirited competition. From meeting your favorite student-athletes on the men's and women's basketball teams and the women's bowling team, to participating in fan activities and grabbing exclusive giveaways, there's something for everyone. The highlight? A Trunk or Treat experience right inside the arena! Local organizations, student groups, and businesses will showcase their best-decorated trunks, creating a safe, vibrant Halloween celebration that's perfect for families and Tiger fans alike. Costumes are highly encouraged, so come ready to show off your spooky or creative side!

(We kindly ask that guests refrain from wearing masks.) If you're interested in joining the fun by hosting a trunk, sign up online and become part of this spirited community tradition. Tiger Madness Trunk or Treat Table Sign Up: <https://forms.office.com/r/CXDZSEemYW?origin=lprLink>

Fuel Up for the Season: Tiger Tip-Off Brunch

Just days after the Halloween festivities, on November 1, fans can kick off the basketball season with an exclusive Tiger Tip-Off Brunch. For \$55, guests will enjoy a delicious meal while mingling with the men's and women's basketball coaching staffs. This intimate gathering offers a unique peek behind the scenes and a chance to get fired up for the season ahead. Brunch attendees will also receive a ticket to the premium Tiger Club area at the upcoming GSU football game against Alabama A&M, plus an exclusive commemorative gift from the athletics department. It's the perfect keepsake to remember the start of another exciting season. Tiger Tip-Off Brunch: <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/agp/event/tigertipoff-brunch/> Stay tuned for more details and updates by following Grambling Athletics on social media. Get ready to show your Tiger pride this fall because at Grambling it's more than a game, it's a family.

News



Players Husain Kirkpatrick (10) Mason Turner (29) and Dabrin Robinson (9) take the field.



The team stands by the bus with coaches Tavi Turner, back right and Qua Brantley, left front.

Lincoln Prep Jr. High Football Team Clocks Two Wins

The Lincoln Preparatory Junior High School football players started the year with two wins under their belt, most recently beating Arcadia 16 to 8 Tuesday, Sept. 16. The middle school will play Lakeside at home Tuesday, Sept. 30, Magnolia Middle away on Tuesday, Oct. 7 and home Thursday, Oct. 13.



The Prep team gathers in the huddle to talk.

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