

REMEMBERING FREEDOM SUMMER

BY CHARLES IRVIN, LEGAL DIRECTOR



1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Volunteers and staff on stage at the 50th Anniversary of Mississippi Freedom Summer Conference Banquet on June 28th, 2014.

We remember June 21, 1964. Outsiders may know it as Mississippi Burning. Those who were forged in the struggle, who rode south, volunteered and ultimately lost their lives, know it as Freedom Summer. During this very worthy endeavor, the ACLU was right there. The Lawyers Constitutional Defense committee (LCDC) was organized by the ACLU to provide legal counsel for the many volunteers of Freedom Summer.

We remember one of our own legal hero's, Al Bronstein. For those who have carried Liberty's torch for many years, you will instantly know the name of this legal scholar. For the newer generation, Mr. Bronstein was a legal crusader, ensuring that Freedom Summer and the Civil Rights cause was not lost to the machinations of legal process. As one of the main litigators for LCDC, Al was on the ground in Mississippi throughout the year of 1964. Throughout that time, he was working to ensure that volunteers had the legal space to register voters, and that any entanglements

with the courts met a strong legal response. Here are some poignant words describing McComb, MS from his unreleased book, which paint a picture of the peril faced by those brave men and women of Freedom Summer: "In more gentile times, it [McComb, MS] had been known as the Camellia City. In 1964, however, it had been the site of so many Klan-related bombings that it was known as the bombing capital of the world."

It has become du jour to view Freedom Summer through the gallant efforts, tragedy, and with the strained view of history that often brings us full circle, but always lacking the intensity of the times. We sometimes gloss over the ugliness that led so many to become "sick and tired of being sick and tired." Mississippi, through its Citizens Councils, the Klan, and every other organism, was the belly of racial intolerance beginning in reconstruction and boiling over into the tactics of poll tax, fear, bullying, slanted legislation and yes, even murder.

In response to this, the ACLU, through LCDC and Al Bronstein, worked tirelessly to ensure a strong legal path for the foot soldiers and activists from the state and nation to push the plight of Mississippians into the national consciousness. By doing so they made the Mississippi story a story of struggle and triumph. Not just the written story of activists but also the attorneys who shaped the new laws that provided security and broke the bottleneck of slanted Jim Crow laws.

As we progress and remember successes gained as a result of Freedom Summer, let us also proceed with caution on our hearts and know that the struggle continues. Even though it is quieter, savvier and on its face much less discriminatory, the threat to constitutional rights continue to be real. We cannot go backwards. Remember Freedom Summer, remember the volunteers, martyrs, and the behind the scenes hero's like Al Bronstein. Also remember that if we do not remain diligent, we will have to fight the same battles.

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A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



“SOMEDAY” IS TODAY!

“We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday.” This was one of the songs sung by those who marched and fought for the right to be treated fairly.

The mid 1960s, especially Freedom Summer, was a tipping point in America. These times called for us to cross organizational and cultural lines to come together on one accord and demand change. Together those who sang, marched, and even sat overcame many obstacles and injustices emplaced to maintain what was referred to as “a southern way of life” and “Mississippi values” - code words for preservation of segregation and discrimination. The result of these concerted demands manifested in the form of school desegregation, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.

We are now 50 years past this momentous time when we saw change. We find ourselves approaching another critical time when everything we hold dear is subject to be stripped away by those holding onto divisive principles with an aim to ensure Mississippi remains a closed and non-inclusive society. We must stand to protect the right to vote, our right to express ourselves, our right to be free from governmental intrusion, our right to be free from discrimination.

If 1964 was a tipping point, today is a decisive point. “Someday” was a phrase hung on hopeful air. Because of that hope and defiance of inequality, today could be that day. The ACLU of Mississippi stands ready to fight against the turning of tide riddle with racist and discriminatory rhetoric and to move equality forward. The time is now when we can all join together and sing “we *have* overcome, we *have* overcome, we *have* overcome today!” We therefore thank you for making a decision today to join us, to continue to be a member who stands in this place in history as we say “someday” is “today.”

Sincerely,
Jennifer Riley-Collins



Jennifer Riley-Collins with Hollis Watkins at the 50th Anniversary of Freedom Summer Conference Banquet on June 28th, 2014.

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TANF Drug Testing Law Delayed

BY MORGAN MILLER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



In a joint effort, the ACLU of Mississippi, ACLU National, and the Mississippi Center for Justice successfully delayed the implementation of House Bill 49. The law, which was scheduled to go into effect on July 1st, would require TANF applicants to be screened for possible drug abuse. Our request for the delay until after the public hearing comment period was granted on June 24th in a letter from the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS). According to Mississippi Procedure Law, an agency is not permitted to adopt a law “until the period for making written submission and oral presentation has expired.” The public hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, July 22, 2014.

During the legislative session, we, along with our allies, strongly opposed the passage of the HB 49 as it could disproportionately impact poor children and communities of color. Now that the bill is law, although postponed, we want to make sure that all the provisions in this new law are well defined. We identified legal and practical problems with the bill. As written, the rules make it uncertain who will shoulder the costs of the drug screening as well as the drug treatment. It fails to address the negative impact on households and children when individual TANF recipients are unable or fail to comply with the screening requirements. The rules further do not provide privacy protections.

If these concerns are not addressed, Mississippi’s most vulnerable children are at risk. The bill was rushed through to approval with little thought given to how it would affect the families receiving TANF benefits. The public has the right to engage in the functions of government and any opportunity to ease the burden on our most at risk citizens. We hope that addressing the concerns in this misguided policy will help protect low income Mississippians receiving these public benefits. Please join us on July 22nd!

“If these concerns are not addressed, Mississippi’s most vulnerable children are at risk.”

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF DETAINEES WITH DISABILITIES

BY BRIDGETTE MORGAN, STAFF ATTORNEY

In April this year, we discovered that the Hinds County Detention Center did not have a TTY accessible line as required by law in TITLE II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). TTY is an acronym for “teletypewriter” or “text telephone.” A TTY is a special device that lets people with a hearing disability or speech impairment communicate, by allowing them to type text messages. A TTY is required at both ends of the conversation in order to facilitate communication.

We had concerns for those detainees with a hearing disability or speech impairment and had no access to communicate by telephone. We demanded Hinds County Detention Center comply with TITLE II of the ADA by acquiring a TTY line and device and train their staff on how to operate a TTY line/device. The ADA coordinator and ACLU of Mississippi worked closely together to ensure that the installation of the TTY line in Hinds County Detention Center was fully compliant with state and federal law.

In May, we received a letter from the Hinds County Administrator stating that TTY devices had been installed at all three of the Hinds County detention facility locations. Detainees with a hearing and/or speech impairment now have the ability to communicate with their family and friends. The ACLU of Mississippi and the affected detainees are especially pleased with Hinds County’s timely response and due diligence of such a sensitive matter. We will continue to make sure detention facilities across the state create equal opportunity for detainees.

Public Hearing on Drug Testing TANF Recipients

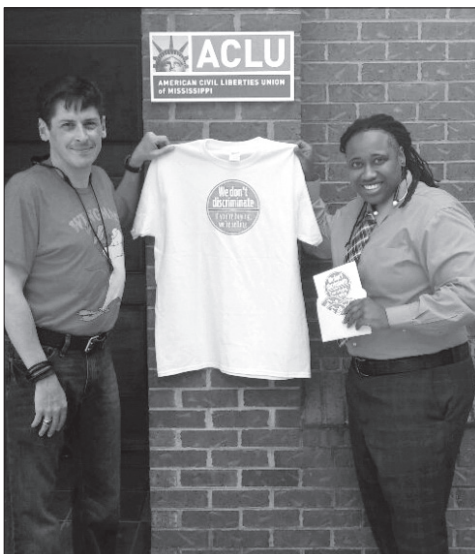
Tuesday, July 22, 2014
9:00 a.m.
1735 Wilson Blvd.
Jackson, MS 39204

VOTER PROTECTION, WAR ROOM READY!

Voting is a fundamental right. To protect this right, the ACLU of MS has begun a public education campaign, both in-person and online, to ensure Mississippians are informed of their rights and about the new Voter ID law. During the hotly contested primary and run-off elections for the United States Senate seat, the ACLU of MS established a statewide voter protection hotline. These were the first elections under the new voter ID law. Thanks to the entire staff, a rapid response team of interns and legal staff were able to set up a war room and maintain a state of readiness. We will continue to monitor elections and provide a hotline to answer the request for assistance of the voters.

RIGHT TO BE FREE TO BE ME!

This is the ACLU of Mississippi's position when it comes to J.B., a transgender man who would like to have his birth certificate and driver's license changed to reflect his gender identity. We are partnering with the ACLU of South Carolina and the ACLU LGBT Project to assist J.B.



Advocacy Coordinator, Constance Gordon, showing the ACLU of Mississippi's support for the "If You're Buying, We're Selling" sticker campaign.



Legal Director, Charles Irvin, speaking at the Human Rights Campaign press conference about their investment in LGBT equality work in the South with Project One America.

NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS SEEK HEARING FOR EARLY RELEASE.

On June 26, along with the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), the MacArthur Foundation and other allies, we filed our first set of cases in Hinds County on behalf of 30 non-violent offenders seeking early release under a section of the law commonly referred to as HB 585. The law provides that non-violent offenders who have served 25% of their time are able to seek a hearing before their sentencing Judge or the Senior Judge/Assigned Judge if their sentencing Judge has retired, to determine whether they are eligible to go before the Parole Board and seek early release. Mississippi has the 2nd highest prison population in the country and hopefully we will begin to reduce this population through these efforts.

TRANSGENDER GRADUATE ALLOWED TO WEAR SLACKS.

The threat of the ACLU of Mississippi intervening on behalf of C.H., a 17 year old graduating senior who had been denied the right to wear slacks under his graduation gown, caused the school to rethink their position. The school has no policy relating to gender based dress for graduation. C.H. identifies as male and did not have any problems throughout the school term wearing clothing that reflects his gender expression. When it came time to graduate, school officials attempted to infringe on C.H.'s right to expression. After school administrators found out the ACLU of Mississippi was monitoring their response to C.H.'s request to wear slacks, they changed their mind.

FROM OUR DR. L.C. DORSEY SUMMER INTERN

BY CARON BYRD

As a young girl, I heard about how vital the ACLU is in fighting for public policy changes in Mississippi. Inspired by the need for progress in matters affecting the youth and criminal offenders where their rights and freedoms may be denied, I wanted to be a part of the ACLU of Mississippi to learn more about its role in the legislative process and efforts to better serve communities. The opportunity has presented itself in my being selected as the inaugural Dr. L C Dorsey Summer Intern. As I walked the halls of the Mississippi State Capitol building 50 years after Freedom Summer, I am humbled to receive this internship honoring the legacy of Dr. Dorsey and her efforts to advance civil rights in Mississippi.

My internship is under the direction of Attorney Joi Owens, the ACLU's Legislative Strategist. The work in which Attorney Owens is involved has enabled

me to grasp a hands-on approach to legal strategies and how policy advocacy is used to reform critical institutions such as education and the criminal justice system. This internship has increased my knowledge and understanding of public policies and furthered my interest in a non-profit legal career. I am interested in how elected officials and the many interest groups compare "successes" and "failures" in terms of Mississippi's public policy and legislative processes.

As a rising junior philosophy major with a double minor in political science and gender and women's studies at Birmingham-Southern College, my areas of concentration are ethics in moral philosophy and comparative politics. This summer's experience with the ACLU has been enlightening when thinking of what lies ahead for drafting impactful legislation. As I continue to prepare for law school, I am now more aware of the



L.C. Dorsey intern, Caron Byrd, at the Mississippi State Capitol with visiting students attending the Freedom Summer Youth Congress.

laws and policies needed to better the lives of minorities, women and children. I thank the ACLU and the family of Dr. L.C. Dorsey for allowing me to learn these valuable professional and personal skills while motivating me to continue to push for justice and equality for all citizens.

INTERNING AT THE ACLU OF MISSISSIPPI

Jon Gosnell

University of Mississippi School of Law
Ridgeland, MS

I have had an interest in civil rights issues and politics in general since high school. I did not get to do much extracurricular work in undergrad, but near the end of my first year at law school, the ACLU was tackling an area of interest, religious refusals. On a daily basis, we have dealt with several issues exposing me to many aspects of law including criminal justice, administrative law and disability law. This opportunity has taught me much in a short time.

Nikita McMillian

Mississippi College School of Law
Grenada, MS

I wanted to intern at the ACLU because I value the organization's mission of defending the civil liberties of all Mississippians. Coming from a small town and working class family, I know that many citizens are disproportionately impacted by the law. These same individuals have little access to legal resources. Having this

knowledge, I developed an interest in public interest law and wanted to gain experience in that practice area. This summer, I was afforded the opportunity to get direct experience in administrative law related to TANF drug testing implementation and conducted client interviews with non-violent offenders who may qualify for early release under HB 585. Extending myself to the work of the organization has provided me with knowledge that I will carry throughout my legal career.

Rita Santibanez

Mississippi College School of Law
Salem, OR

From the first day of law school I have had a firm idea that I would use my law degree to give a voice to the voiceless and represent the invisible and sometimes forgotten people of society. Through my leadership role in the Public Interest Law Group on campus I came to learn more about what the ACLU does and specifically what they do here in Mississippi. Everything they represent and everything that they fight for seemed to



Our summer legal interns, from left to right, Rita Santibanez, Jon Gosnell, and Nikita McMillian.

represent that firm idea I held for myself so perfectly. This summer we began the assessment of access to quality healthcare for incarcerated women in Mississippi. What better way to learn the skills and strategies for changing the world than to help and be a part of an organization like the ACLU.

2014 NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Nominating Committee of the Board of the ACLU of MS presents the following 13 names in nomination as candidates for the 10 ACLU of Mississippi Board and 2 At-Large Foundation Board positions required to be filled in the present election. Additional nominations from among the members of the Affiliate may be made by petition of not less than three members upon delivery of such petition to the Board Secretary, Charles Williams, P O Box 8235, University, MS 38677 postmarked no later than July 29, 2014.

Please look for your ballot in the mail in early August. You may vote in person at the annual meeting or by mail to be received at the office of the ACLU of MS prior to September 6, 2014.



Dorothy Abbott is an award-winning writer, journalist, editor, radio producer, and global activist. She is the former assistant director of the literature program

at the National Endowment for the Arts and the author of eight literary anthologies. She is cofounder of the Women's Media and Technology Fund and her radio productions have been heard on National Public Radio and other stations across the country. She produced and hosted The Women's Show, a feminist radio program, and was executive director of the Tampa Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.



Melanie Deas is a founding board member of Equality Mississippi, a state-wide organization dedicated to promoting social justice and equality

for all LGBTQ individuals. She serves as Executive Director of Link Centre in Tupelo, MS and is former Vice President of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. Melanie received her AB in History and Literature from Harvard and her MFA training in Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism at the Yale School of Drama.



Mary L. Figueroa, MSW has served as the Director of Special Projects, Social Worker and Executive Assistant for the Family Health Center, in Laurel, MS

since 1999. She works closely with agencies

such as HRSA, the State Department of Health, and local and tribal governments. She earned a Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of Mississippi in 2006, and is currently a Doctoral Candidate at Jackson State University.



Andy Guerra currently serves as Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Latin American Association, which focuses on education, outreach, and rights

issues affecting Latinos. Once a Deputy Sheriff, Andy is now a liaison for the Latino community to local law enforcement agencies and court systems in Harrison and Jackson County. Andy served in the U. S. Army and National Guard for 20 years and was the first Latin American male recruiter for Mississippi. He was nominated to the National Hispanic Leadership Committee and is recognized as one of Mississippi's prominent young Latino Community Leaders.



Laura Martin is a Project Manager at the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement, whose mission is to fight

poverty through education in Mississippi. Laura served as Legislative Director for a member of the Texas House of Representatives and as a Policy Analyst at the ACLU of Texas. Laura holds dual undergraduate degrees in Hispanic Studies and International Relations from Brown University and a Master of Public Affairs degree from the University of Texas.



Dr. Olga Osby, DSW

earned her Master of Social Work and Doctor of Social Work degrees from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Currently she is an Associate Professor at Jackson State University. Dr. Osby is the 2013 recipient of the Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc., Distinguished Professor Endowed Chair Award. She currently serves on the Commission on Conferences and Faculty Development for the Council on Social Work Education and as the Affiliate Representative to the National Board of the ACLU.



Eddie Outlaw is the co-owner of the William Wallace Salon in the Fondren area of Jackson, MS with his husband, Justin. Eddie is one of the most vocal

advocates for the LGBTQ community in MS. He brought attention to the passage of the "religious freedom" bill and pushed forward a successful campaign for LGBTQ supportive business owners with the "If You're Buying, We're Selling" sticker. Eddie and Justin are featured in a documentary, "A Mississippi Love Story," about their efforts to bring marriage equality to MS. Eddie's work is also featured in the anthology "The Queer South: LGBTQ Writers on the American South."



Dr. Ravi K. Perry holds a B.A. from the University of Michigan and a M.A. and Ph.D. from Brown University. Dr. Perry is Assistant Professor

of Political Science and Stennis Scholar for Municipal Governance at Mississippi State University. He is currently Vice President of the National Association for Ethnic Studies, Secretary of the Section on Race, Ethnicity and Politics for the American Political Science Association and a member of the Executive Council with the National Conference of Black Political Scientists. His commentary has been featured in national

media outlets such as CNN, MSNBC, The Huffington Post, NPR, and USA TODAY.



Dan Roach is a lifelong resident of Jackson, MS with a total of 22 years of experience in education. Dan is currently a teacher, coach, and Upper

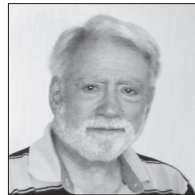
School Dean of Students at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. He graduated from Sewanee: The University of the South and received his Master's in Political Science with a focus on the U.S. Constitution and Constitutional Law from Jackson State University. He joined the ACLU of MS Foundation Board in the fall of 2013.



Julie Schroeder, MSW PhD is an Associate Professor of Social Work at Jackson State University, where she teaches masters and PhD level courses. Dr.

Schroeder earned her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Illinois and her PhD from Tulane University. Dr. Schroeder is a well-published academic author whose

work has been referenced by experts in forensic psychology and psychiatry, law, ethics, criminal justice and social work.



Dr. Stephen Silberman received his dental and public health education at Tufts and Harvard Universities. He was one of the original faculty at

UMMC School of Dentistry and was Chair of the Department of Diagnostic Sciences. During his final years at UMMC, he was Executive Director of the Mississippi Area Health Education Center. He has served on the affiliate board of ACLU-MS for over 30 years and has held the positions of president, vice-president, executive committee member and representative to the national board.



Alison Steiner arrived in Mississippi with a University of Michigan law degree and immediately joined the ACLU of MS. For over 25

years of private practice, she specialized in criminal defense and plaintiffs' civil rights,

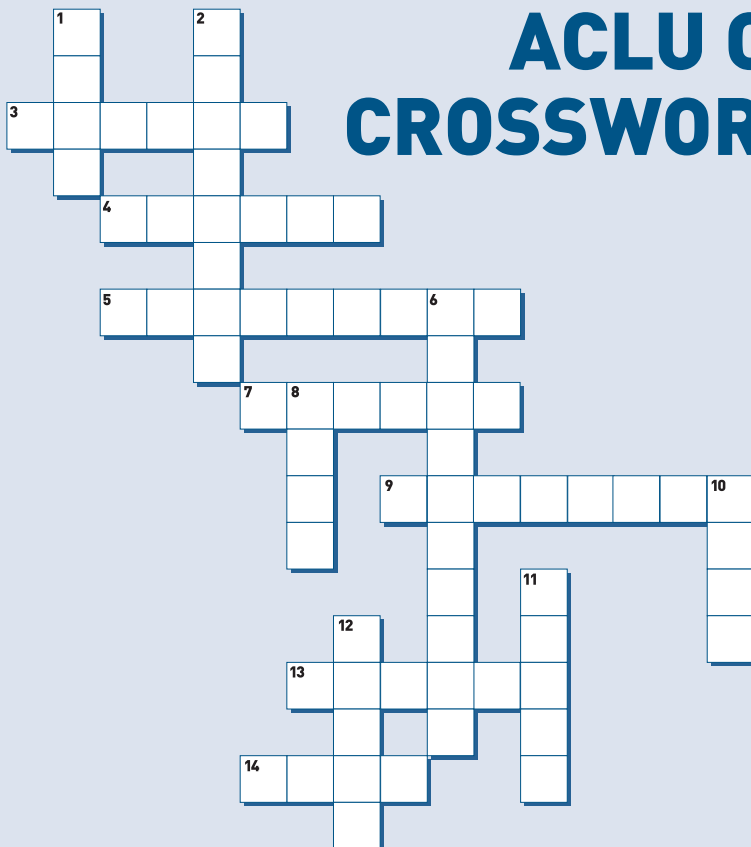
civil liberties and employment litigation. She has been cooperating counsel for the ACLU and has served on the Mississippi ACLU board since 1984. From 1999 until 2013, she was also Mississippi's representative to the ACLU National Board. Alison currently serves as President of the ACLU of MS Board of Directors.



Cassandra Welch is a native Mississippian and change agent for low wealth communities of color. She graduated from Jackson State University and is a licensed Social Worker.

Cassandra received her Master's Degree from Brandeis University in the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. For the past 7 years, she has worked to develop strategies and create opportunities to address the social, political, economic and ecological injustices in low wealth communities of color. Currently she is a policy and advocacy consultant managing the Child Care Matters Campaign for the MS Low Income Child Care Initiative.

ACLU OF MS CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

3. Lieutenant Governor
4. _____ Core: related to education
5. Medical: A bill introduced by Rep. Peake
7. Wanted 'In God We Trust' on state seal
9. Last Day of the Session
13. Number of weeks at which abortion is now banned
14. What public benefit recipients are now required to be drug tested

DOWN

1. Fully funded only twice since formula enacted
2. Aspiring Americans who request MS enact tuition equity law
6. Offenders eligible under HB585 to apply for early release
8. Acronym for Religious Freedom Restoration Act
10. MDOC Commissioner
11. Senator and Chair of MS Legislative Black Caucus
12. MS ACLU Legislative Strategist

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ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE: ACROSS 3) Reeves 4) Common 5) Marjiana 7) Bryant 9) Sine - Die 13) Twenty 14) TANF
DOWN 1) MDEA 2) Dreamers 6) Nonviolent 8) RFRRA 10) Epps 11) Wayne 12) Owens