



Press Release

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For Immediate Release:

Jackson State University will host the 45th Commemoration of the Gibbs-Green Tragedy at Alexander Hall at 1 p.m., Friday, May 15, with a roundtable discussion immediately following in the JSU Student Center Theater.



Jackson, MS—On Friday, May 15, at 1:00 p.m. outside Alexander Hall on campus, Jackson State University will host the 45th commemoration of the Gibbs-Green tragedy, which left two young men dead and a host of others injured. The program will include thoughts from members of the Class of 1970, who witnessed the events that day, and from Lee Vance, a Jackson State alumnus and the current Chief of Police for the City of Jackson. A special roundtable discussion will immediately follow in the JSU Student Center Theater with Dr. Nancy Bristow, a historian who has a forthcoming book about the tragedy.

In 2012, a Mississippi Freedom Trail Marker was installed at the site to memorialize the shootings, which took place on May 15, 1970, when Jackson police and Mississippi Highway Patrol officers suppressed student unrest with intense gunfire. Philip Lafayette Gibbs, 21, a junior pre-law major, and James Earl Green, 17, a Jim Hill High School senior, were killed. Many students were injured, 12 by gunfire. Alexander Hall, a women's dormitory, was riddled by 460 rounds, some holes still visible today. Law enforcement had massed at the college to subdue students protesting harassment from whites driving through campus, police intimidation, and the recent killing of four student demonstrators at Kent State University by the Ohio National Guard.

Dr. Mark Bernhardt, an Associate Professor of History at JSU, wrote the Mississippi Humanities Council grant application, which is supporting this program. "It's an incredibly important moment in the history of Jackson State, the City of Jackson, and the State of Mississippi," Bernhardt said. "And, in the current national context of outrage at police brutality, it's important that we recognize this history and talk about it."

For more information, contact the Center's staff at 601-979-2055 or mwa@jsums.edu, and visit the Margaret Walker Center's website at www.jsums.edu/margaretwalkercenter.

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