



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MISSISSIPPI ANNOUNCES ITS MOST RECENT "TOMORROW'S 25" CLASS

Twenty-five exemplary leaders are selected for fellowship that invests in the work of Mississippi's best high school and middle school coaches

February 11, 2025 – Today, the Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) and the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA), in partnership with the University of Mississippi's School of Education, announced the 25 Coaches who were selected for participation in Mississippi's 2024-25 "Tomorrow's 25" class.

Tomorrow's 25 is the signature leadership program from the Excellence in Coaching Project. It is a 10-month fellowship designed to invest in 25 coaches from across the state who have been deemed an emerging leader in high school and middle school athletics. Currently, the Tomorrow's 25 Coaching Fellowship is adopted in Mississippi and South Carolina.

"I feel like this is another top-notch group of coaches who are doing wonderful things in our state," said Johnny Mims, Executive Director of the Mississippi Association of Coaches. "They give me great hope for the future of our profession."

All 25 coaches were identified by a selection committee and represent the best the state has to offer. Final selections had to represent the values of the coaching fellowship – a love of young people and a desire to develop them for life within the context of sports – and had to demonstrate excellence in their sports as ambassadors for the state. Serving on this year's selection committee were Celeste Bramlett (Madison County Schools), LaDon Taylor (East Tallahatchie School District), Dr. Cheyenne Trussell (Meridian Public School District), Candace Foster (Jackson Public Schools), and Hawtin Buchanan (Biloxi Public School District).

Over the course of 10 months, Tomorrow's 25 Coaches will travel six times to locations in Oxford, Clinton (3), Jackson, and Biloxi for in-person class, while the other four sessions are done virtually. The goals for each session of the coaching fellowship are to assist in three areas of growth for each candidate:

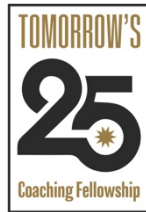
1. Coaching the Whole Athlete (Leadership, Resilience, Empathy, and Responsibility) - Each participant will be able to implement all sessions' materials at their current school and share with their colleagues.
2. Opportunity to network with 24 of their peers who have demonstrated the capacity to be the state's future leaders in athletics.

3. Access to current leaders in the MAC, the MHSAA, College Athletics, and other thought-leaders in education to learn how they can grow their spheres of influence in their communities and across the state.

The first session was held on August 21st, and the coaches are nearing their seventh class session which will be held on February 19th. This year's class of coaches will officially finish the program in mid-May.

This is also the first year the Tomorrow's 25 program is in two states (Mississippi and South Carolina) with the hopes that more intentional out-of-state collaboration will foster breakthroughs in the coaching profession.

"It's quite an honor when other states want to find out what Mississippi is doing," said Rickey Neaves, Executive Director of the Mississippi High School Activities Association. "We believe in this program and want to see it continue to impact more schools and communities."



Mississippi's 2024-25 "Tomorrow's 25" class members, their sports, and their school districts are:

- Barrett Barham, football, Clinton Public School District
- Daniel Best, baseball, Rankin County School District
- Tyler Brock, cross country/soccer, Cleveland School District
- Dameon Brown, football/track, Jackson Public Schools
- Jazzmine Church, basketball, Rankin County School District
- Anna Grace Cooley, softball, George County School District
- Jerrial Dawson, assistant principal/ basketball, Starkville Oktibbeha School District
- Rasheed De'Berry, football, East Tallahatchie School District
- Justin Edwards, baseball, Gulfport School District
- Shanice Griffin, basketball, Petal School District
- Devin Hill, assistant athletic director/ basketball, Biloxi Public School District
- Shasta Husband, basketball/cheer, Laurel School District
- Taylor Karr, baseball, DeSoto County Schools
- Laine Marler, volleyball, Rankin County School District
- Ashley Martin, volleyball, Oxford School District
- Zariah Matthews, basketball/softball, Madison County Schools
- Roderick Moore, basketball, Tate County School District
- Sharon Murray, basketball, Jones County Schools
- Gabriel Myles, football, Biloxi Public School District
- Kelsie Poole, volleyball, Rankin County School District
- Brittany Roberts, basketball, Meridian Public School District
- Shelby Sheppard, archery/soccer, Western Line School District
- Terrance Steele Sr., baseball/football, Meridian Public School District
- Shayna Turner, cross country/soccer/softball, Petal School District
- Darius Wren, football, Kemper County School District

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More about the Tomorrow's 25 Coaching Fellowship and the Excellence in Coaching Project:

Dr. Hunter Taylor, an award-winning professor and author from the University of Mississippi, is the founder of the Excellence in Coaching Project and the creator of the Tomorrow's 25 curriculum. Before making the leap into academia, Taylor spent 10 years as a men's basketball coach on the college, high school, middle school, and international levels.

"I can't believe we're already in Year 3 of doing this work in our state," said Taylor. "I'm just so thankful for leaders like Johnny (Mims) and Rickey (Neaves) who empower this program to be all it can be. And we still have a long way to go to reach our potential."

The Excellence in Coaching profit is a non-profit that seeks to elevate the work of coaches across the United States, and "Tomorrow's 25" is its signature program - designed to partner with state coaching associations to intentionally invest in their emerging leaders.