

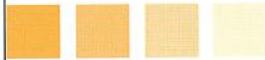
Delta Center for Culture and Learning

Delta State University

Our Mission is to promote the understanding of the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta and its significance to the rest of the world.

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Welcome to the Delta Center

John Thornell, who is currently the Provost at Delta State University, once addressed a group of thirty high school students in Rosedale, Mississippi, a port city that owes its existence to the River. He was talking about the significance of America's greatest river and stopped to ask how many had actually seen the River? Only three admitted they had, and John began to think about ways to promote the understanding of the Mississippi Delta through first-person experiences. That thinking eventually led to the creation of The Delta Center for Culture and Learning.

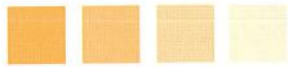
Our Center is now in its sixth year of promoting the understanding of Delta heritage. In that time, we have developed a set of experiential college classes that explore and interpret the Delta's rich natural and cultural heritage. We have worked with visiting university and high school classes, and increasingly with tour groups and even film crews that want to learn about the Delta as they experience its literature, food, music, culture and history. Our theme is that the Delta's landscape can be read as a text, a narrative of the human experience that is simultaneously unique to the region and quintessentially American.

The Delta Center also fulfills its mission by engaging with local communities in historic preservation efforts, oral history collection and service learning collaborations. We have played a major role in preserving "Little Red," the former Drew Colored High School, and the Mound Bayou Bank Building. We have recorded the reminiscences of dozens of Delta citizens, reflecting on everything from the Emmett Till murder to World War II. We regularly place Delta State students in service learning and volunteer positions throughout the Delta, and our after-school, summer camp and teacher's workshop programs have introduced hundreds of middle and high school students, community college and elementary school teachers to the heritage of the Mississippi Delta.

I want to welcome you to this review of the Delta Center's accomplishments. I am proud of the work we do and hope you will be impressed at the diversity and vitality of our activities. I also want to invite you to learn more about the Delta Center, and to join us as a Friend of the Center by helping support ongoing and future activities. The Mississippi Delta is blessed with natural and cultural heritage resources, and the Delta Center for Culture and Learning is helping to use those resources to remember the past and envision the future. Join us in this adventure. Come visit the Delta. Send your friends to the Delta. And please become a Friend of the Delta Center.



Luther Brown
Director of the DSU Delta Center for Culture and Learning



Mississippi Delta: The Place—The Mindset

"The Mississippi Delta begins in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and ends on Catfish Row in Vicksburg," according to David Cohn.¹ Marlo Kirkpatrick says that while "Cohn may be geographically accurate," he was incomplete. "The Delta is not just a place, but a mindset."²

Acknowledged as the birthplace of the blues, the home of "King Cotton," America's "last wilderness," and the source of a variety of uniquely American art forms, the Delta is often discussed and portrayed as a powerful, evocative place.

—Tom Rankin

■ The land was perfectly flat and level, but it shimmered like the wing of a lighted dragonfly. It seemed strummed, as though it were an instrument and something had touched it.

—Eudora Welty
Delta Wedding

The Mississippi Delta is a mindset. It has a mystique of mythological proportions, or as Rheta Grimsley Johnson said, it is the "South of fiction and fantasy."³ But this fantasy has grown out of the reality of American history. The Delta is a land that was virgin wilderness and swamp at the turn of the twentieth century, cleared for cotton and plantation life through the 1930's, dominated by politically powerful gentleman planters, peopled by Black sharecroppers, Italian immigrants, Chinese, Lebanese and Jewish merchants. It is the source of "The Great Migration" north, and thus the home of the African American populations of many Northern cities, like Chicago and Detroit. It is also the home of the Blues, Gospel, soul food and the civil rights movement. It was home to Tennessee Williams, Eudora Welty, Richard Wright, Clifton Taulbert, Shelby Foote and Hodding Carter. It is where Teddy Roosevelt saved the original "Teddy Bear," and where Elvis Presley learned to dance and sing and drive a pink Cadillac. It is the land where Mudgy Waters and Robert Johnson wrote the lyrics that eventually made the Rolling Stones, John Mayall and Eric Clapton wealthy.

The Delta is also the American story, shrunk in time and space. As Faulkner wrote, it was "deswamped and denuded and derived in two generations."⁴ Shelby Foote claimed that one could see "a hundred years of history in twenty years in the Delta."⁵ James Cobb wrote "When it comes to history, the Delta was clearly a region in a hurry."⁶

The Delta was built by cotton planters, railroad companies and New York and European investors, exploiting the labor of tens of thousands of poorly

educated but hard working sharecroppers. It provided timber for the north, and went on to produce the cotton that was the most important export of the United States. Its early development generated the class and race distinctions of America today, resulting in a land of "mean poverty and garish opulence."⁷ Despite these distinctions, Faulkner could still write that it was a region "...where cotton is planted and grows man-tall in the very cracks of the sidewalks, and usury and mortgage and bankruptcy and measureless wealth, Chinese and African and Aryan and Jew all breed and spawn together until no man has time to say which is which and no one cares."⁸ It underwent the massive dislocations resulting from the transition from mule- and man-intensive cotton production to tractor- and harvester-intensive soybean and rice agro-industry, and experienced the upheavals of school integration, economic boycotts, police dog attacks and Freedom summer.

Out of all of this accelerated history grew American popular culture. The Town of Greenville alone claims "more authors per square inch than any other American city," and the rest of the Delta simply adds to that claim. The Blues and Gospel may have been born in the Delta, but they spread along with the migrating population as far as Chicago, New York and Los Angeles, and over the airwaves to London and Tokyo. Jazz, Soul, Bluegrass and Rock 'n Roll were all affected by the sounds of the Delta. The great flood of 1927, which displaced or killed thousands, changed America by sweeping the previously unknown Herbert Hoover into the Presidency and setting the stage for the Great Depression.⁹ More recently, the region was the scene of the struggles and triumphs of the civil rights movement, moving from apartheid to integrated community in a single lifetime.

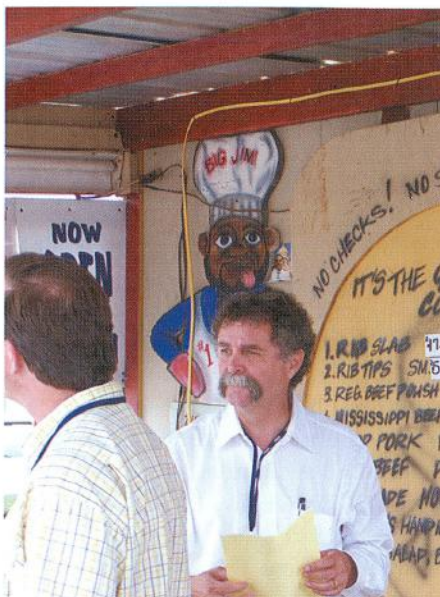
In short, the Mississippi Delta is a mindset, and that mindset is the distillation of American Culture in its purest form. The brew that has fermented in America for hundreds of years is, in the Mississippi Delta, distilled into white lightning in a single century. It is no wonder that Faulkner used the Delta to explore the issues of greed and cruelty and the assault of modern man on the natural world, or that Tennessee Williams used it to expose the depravity and materialism that can hide behind a mask of wealth, power and class.¹⁰

Howard Zinn wrote that the south is the "essence" of American society, and is therefore a mirror "in which the nation can see its blemishes magnified."¹¹ James Cobb extended the argument to claim that the Delta is the South's South, "a mirror within a mirror, capturing not just the South's but the Nation's most controversial traits in mer-

cleiss sharp detail."¹² Students of contemporary American culture are very hard pressed to find a better laboratory in which to explore American history and culture.

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■ Luther Brown at Big Jim's during the Culinary Institute of America-Southern Foodways Alliance tour of Delta Foodways.

Photography © Brooks Hamaker.

Nature Tourism

The Delta Center helped organize the original Friends of Dahomey Wildlife Refuge by writing a grant and receiving funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We have recently submitted another proposal that will allow us to build a long elevated boardwalk and a birding blind at the refuge. The Center is also a partner in the Lower Mississippi River Nature Tourism group, organized by the Audubon Society, and dedicated to promoting the natural heritage of the Delta and especially the Mississippi River.

In the beginning it was virgin—to the west, along the Big Black River, the alluvial swamps threaded by black almost motionless bayous and impenetrable with cane and buckvine and cypress and ash and oak and gum.... This land, this South...with woods for game and streams for fish and deep rich soil for seed and lush springs to sprout it and long summers to mature it and serene falls to harvest it and short mild winters for men and animals...

—William Faulkner, *Go Down Moses*

Photography © Abe Draper.

HERITAGE as a Community and Economic Development Tool for the Delta

Pride of Place affects sense of self. People who know why the place they live is important and why they should be proud to live there are more likely to be engaged citizens. They will be less likely to want to move elsewhere, and they will probably be more concerned about making their place better, whether that means expanding services like libraries, schools, the downtown district, or keeping the place free of litter, crime, drugs and other problems. People who are proud of where they live don't throw trash out their car window and are more likely to vote. They look to a bright future because they know they represent the legacy of an important past. At the same time, people who explore heritage may come to understand their neighbors better because they understand what forces and events contributed to their neighbors' heritage. In this regard, heritage can develop community by promoting reconciliation, whether between classes, castes or ethnicities.

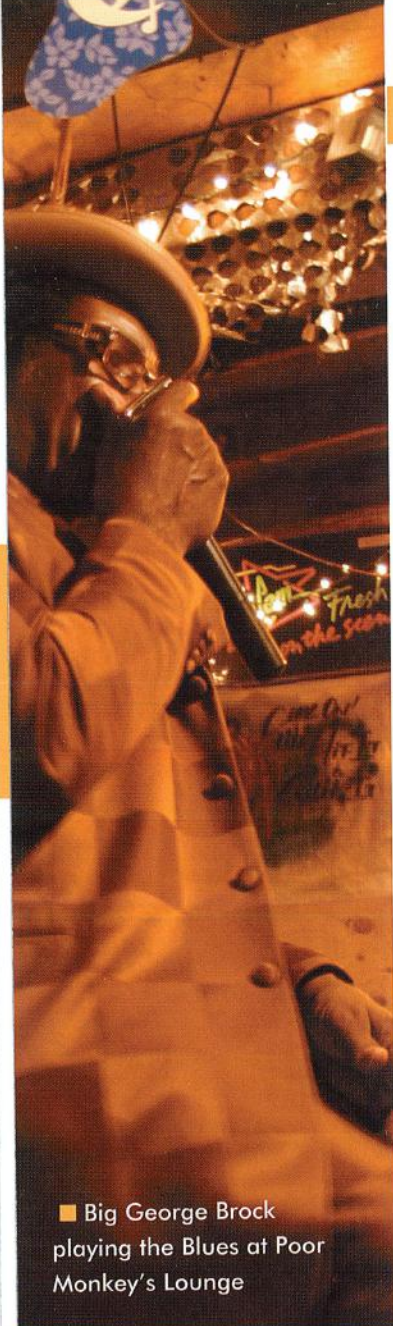
This first reason leads to the second, which is that certain businesses, if they are founded by people who take pride in being from a particular place, may be committed to operating in that place. In other words, successful entrepreneurs or business operators may decide that staying in the place they came from is more important than seeking lower hourly wages or other business benefits. Quality of life trumps the economic bottom line, and quality of life is somehow a function of heritage. Viking Range is a classic case study of this.

Similarly, there may be businesses located outside a region that will move to the region simply because of the heritage that that place presents. In an increasingly globalized world, certain businesses and some services can be provided from almost anywhere. There may be some that simply want to live where the Blues began, for example, just as there are others who want to be in the French Quarter, or near the Alamo, or in Harlem (as did Bill Clinton, for example).

Heritage is information, and information has economic worth. Goods and services flow from information and can provide work for people.

Tourism is one way in which heritage can be marketed. Tourists may come to visit a region because they want to explore the history and culture of that area. They may rent rooms, eat food and buy products, or they may hire local guides, pay for museums or attend musical or arts performances. Heritage tourists tend to want local flavor, and seek out locally owned and operated enterprises. Heritage can also be marketed by branding parts of the culture of a region and then reaping the benefits of those brands. In the case of the Delta, the brand name "Mississippi Delta" is already known around the world, but is not usefully exploited by the Delta itself. The Delta has incredible brand recognition, but no enforcement, and no real benefit from branding. Examples of usefully exploited heritage brands are names like "Champaign," "Parmesan" or "Bordeaux." American examples include "Bourbon" whiskey and "Vidalia" onions. In these cases, to be labeled by that name, the product must come from that region or at least meet the standards of that region. In each of these cases, branding has produced huge economic benefits to the region, and these benefits flow directly from heritage, not from any real regional restrictions on product development.

"Mississippi Delta" is a brand name more valuable than "Vidalia Onions." What we need to do is find ways to convert that value into real benefits for Delta people. ■

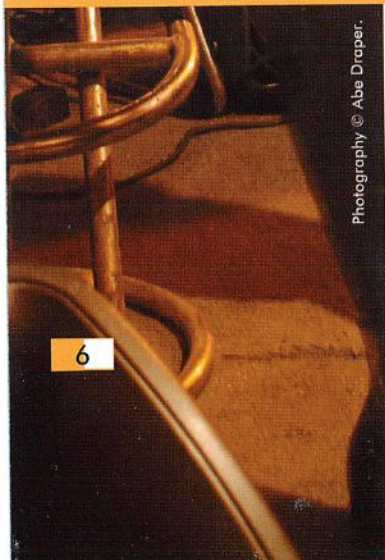


■ Big George Brock playing the Blues at Poor Monkey's Lounge

"Citizens kept ignorant of their history are robbed of the riches of their heritage."

Bruce Cole, Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities

Photography © Abe Draper.



BOBBY RUSH

For Booking Information Call:
Bobby Four Inc. 702-880-7911
Email: Frank@bobbyfour.com
Heritage Productions, Inc. 601-355-6380
Email: bobbyrush@aol.com
601-316-1479
Email: ab0609@bobsouth.net

■ Bobby Rush is one of the greatest living Bluesmen. He joined our Gear Up Blues camp in the summer of 2006, talking to the students about his life playing the Blues. His niece, Kristin Hill, was one of the camp's staff, and is a Robertson Scholar at the University of North Carolina.

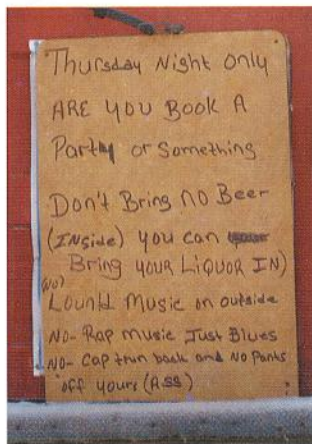
The Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area

National Heritage Areas are defined by the National Park Service as being places "where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography." They are created by Congress, and while they are part of the National Park Service, they do not impose any restrictions on local land use or development.

National Heritage Areas stimulate both community and economic growth. The twenty-seven existing Areas and ten newly created Areas have shown that establishment benefits a region by:

- Stimulating and diversifying economies while building community pride
- Creating new jobs, especially in locally owned and operated businesses
- Preserving regional culture, local businesses and the natural environment in a time of increasing homogenization and globalization

The Delta Center for Culture and Learning has played a leading role helping to make the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area a reality. It has built partnerships with Delta Council, Mississippi Valley State University, the B.B. King Museum, Mississippi Tourism and the Mississippi Blues Commission, all of whom will be important to the success of the Heritage Area. This long-term effort has prepared the way for our Congressional delegation to introduce legislation establishing our Heritage Area. ■



■ Po Monkey's Lounge and "the rules", Merigold, MS

Poor Monkey's Lounge

Poor Monkey's Lounge is the most famous building in the Mississippi Delta. It has been pictured in Annie Leibovitz's American Music, Vanity Fair Magazine, Oxford American, Esquire, National Geographic and the New York Times. Web sites in Swedish are dedicated to it and it has appeared in a lengthy Japanese television show. This adulation is because it is truly one of the last surviving rural jook joints in the Delta, epitomizing the kind of place where the Blues began. That and the fact that it is a lot of fun. For an article prepared by the Center describing Poor Monkey's in detail (including a map of how to get there), visit www.southernspaces.org/contents/2006/brown/1a.htm.



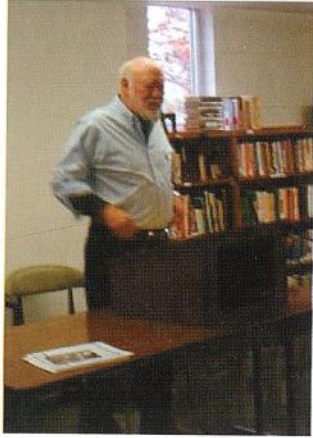
■ Terry "Big T" Williams at Ground Zero Blues Club, Clarksdale, MS.

The Mississippi Blues Commission

The Blues Commission was established by the Mississippi Legislature in 2004 and charged with creating a Mississippi Blues Heritage Trail, along with several other things. The Delta Center is a founding member of the Commission and has played a leadership role in building the Trail. The Center authored the first National Endowment for the Arts grant that supported the original eight Trail markers and set the standards for further stops along the Trail. The Center is also the home of a second NEA grant, and serves the Commission as fiscal agent for additional grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The Trail will include over 100 historical markers that interpret Blues Heritage. Many of these markers will have audio and visual components, which will be available through podcasts and as DVDs. The Commission expects the Mississippi Blues Heritage Trail to be the premier example of heritage interpretation in the US, and also expects tourists from all over the world to stop along the Trail and learn about the Blues.

The Delta Center also works with the Blues Commission and Mississippi Development Authority/Tourism Division to produce an annual poster that lists the names and dates of every Blues festival in the State of Mississippi. Thousands of copies of this poster are distributed at the annual Chicago Blues Festival. Information about the posters and an updated list of all festivals and dates is available at www.blueshighway.org/festivals2007.htm. Events for 2008 and subsequent years will be available at the same address, updating the year accordingly. ■

Henry Outlaw Speaks about Emmett Till



■ Henry Outlaw speaking to the Starkville, Mississippi, Friends of the Library meeting about the murder of Emmett Till.

Henry Outlaw's capstone experience in the Delta Center is a lengthy oral history project that focuses on the murder of Chicagoan Emmett Till, the trial of Roy Bryant and J.W. Mylam and their subsequent confession in *Look* magazine. Henry's work unearthed intriguing memories, unpublished letters and old newspaper accounts. A coincidental meeting at the ruined store in Money, Mississippi, where the 14-year-old Emmett Till whistled at Caroline Bryant, led us to the Till family, through his cousin Wheeler Parker who was with Till during the events that led to his lynching. Mr. Parker subsequently participated in two very emotional commemorations of Till's life, meeting with a visiting group of Chicago teenagers in the courtroom where the murder trial occurred back in 1955. He also sent Henry an unpublished photo of Emmett Till as a young man, and stimulated Henry to work with the Capps Archive and Museum at DSU to produce a wonderful exhibit on the Till case and its aftermath, funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council. That exhibit opened recently at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and will tour the country. Henry's work was honored in *Humanities* magazine, the publication of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A special thanks to Dr. Henry Outlaw for being a founding member and driving force in the Delta Center. Henry retired (again) in 2006, and now works for the DSU Foundation as a fund raiser. Everyone in the Center misses him and his vision.

Lee Aylward recently interviewed Henry about his project. Here are brief segments of the interview, showing Henry's passion for the subject, and also reminding us that Henry taught forensic science for many years before coming to the Center.

... in 1955 when I was in high school, my father lived in Chicago, and he lived down in a pretty rough section, down on 63rd Street in Chicago. Right before school started in 1955, my grandmother wanted to go see my father. I told her, I had

just gotten my driver's license, that I would drive her up there and visit with him, and then we'd come on back and I'd start to school. So, we did that, and got into Chicago just as the time they were having the Emmett Till funeral. I don't remember anything about the funeral, but I do remember the tension in Chicago during that time. Matter of fact, I had several people you know, holler at me, yell at me when I was driving the car down on 63rd Street because they saw the Mississippi tag.

... and then we went to visit Gerald Chatham; he was the son of the prosecutor in the case. He lives in Hernando. When we got through interviewing him... he said, "I have something to show you." So he pulled out a box, out of the closet, a pasteboard box. I bet it had two hundred letters, maybe more, that his father had kept during this trial.

... he was the prosecutor appointed by J.P. Coleman to be involved with this case. He was a young lawyer from Ripley, MS. His name was Robert Smith ... and so I found out that his sons actually lived in Tupelo. ... So Brenda Outlaw and I went over there and interviewed the two of them. And during the course of that interview they told me also that their father had kept letters and documents during the trial and he had those.

... and so I'm convinced from this evidence and other evidence that the killing actually took place just outside of Drew which is in Sunflower County. So it will be interesting to see if indeed the grand jury finds that there is enough evidence to go forward in the case where that trial will take place. It could take place in Indianola which is in Sunflower County.

...out of that came the notion that we might make this into some kind of educational material that we might take this exhibit we had and develop it to a point that it could travel. And this is where Emily Weaver, who is the archivist at Delta State, really came into the picture, and really I have to give Emily 99% of the credit for developing this traveling exhibit. ■

■ The Center promotes real Delta Blues in real Delta jookhouses by supporting local Blues performers and venues whenever possible. We also founded the DSU Blues Band, which is now housed in the Delta Music Institute.

PO' MONKEY'S BLUES BASH
FAST HORSE RECORDING ARTISTS
THE JAMES MATHUS KNOCKDOWN SOCIETY
"WHO'LL SOP MY GRAVY"
"STOP AND LET THE DEVIL RIDE"
WITH JIMBO MATHUS - GUITAR & VOCALS
WITH DAREN DORTIN - DRUMS
BARRY BAYS - BASS
* ALSO FEATURING * * *
ELECTRIC TATER
"BOOMERANG"
"CHECK YO' OIL, BABY"
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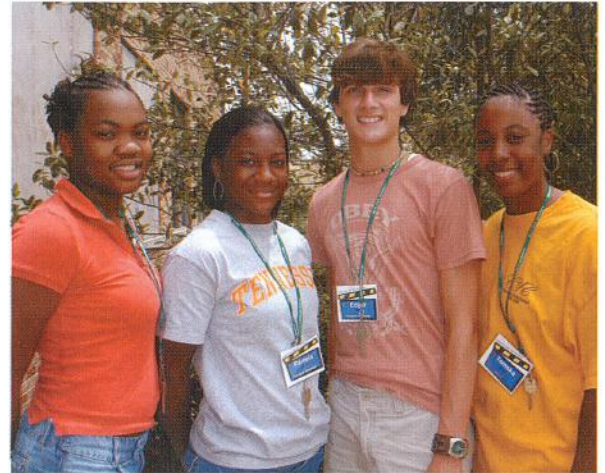
Photography © Amy Evans



The Cleveland Youth Council



In 2003, the Center for Student and Community Engagement, worked with six students from Cleveland and East Side High Schools to write and submit a proposal to the National Service-Learning Partnership at the Academy for Educational Development. They received \$250,000 through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Youth Innovation Fund Grants, and founded The Cleveland Youth Council.



■ Youth Council members Andra Webb, Pamela Jackson, and Edgar Meyer, with CYC Coordinator Tamika Harbin.

The Cleveland Youth Council (CYC) empowers youth to become better citizens. Members meet with the school Superintendent, local elected officials and business leaders to address issues from a youth perspective. The Council has also engaged in youth philanthropy by awarding several small grants to youth driven projects. Council members have participated in numerous training programs, service learning and community engagement symposia and retreats, traveling across the US. In the four years since its founding, the CYC has included almost fifty members, many of whom have gone on to enroll in universities. ■

Angels on the Backroads

2006 marks the third anniversary of our highly successful BLUES IN THE SCHOOLS program, made possible by grants from the Tri-State Educational Foundation, Mississippi Arts Commission and Delta State University. More than 25,000 Mississippi school children have learned about the Blues through this musical heritage program. By the end of this season, performances will have taken place in fifty schools throughout the state of Mississippi (and one in Muscle Shoals, Alabama). Frank and Eddie Thomas, who tour as the Angels on the Backroads, developed this fifty minute musical multi-media tour. Eddie leads the tour through Blues history, illustrating it with guitar and voice, while Frank runs the audio-visual background, illustrating places where the Blues began. The program has helped students to learn about the Blues, which originated in the Mississippi Delta and had a profound impact on other American music genres including rock 'n roll, jazz, gospel and country and western. ■



■ Eddie and Frank Thomas performing for our popular Blues in the Schools program.



■ Henry Outlaw introduces the Mississippi Delta to a group of visiting health care providers during our "Sugar in the Delta Tour" for the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

University classes we've worked with:

George Mason University
 Baldwin Wallace College
 Harvard University
 Vanderbilt University
 Millsaps College
 The University of Texas
 Florida International University
 Brandeis University
 Franklin Pierce College
 Appalachian State University
 The University of Missouri
 Gustavus Adolphus University
 and the HECUA Group
 Louisiana Technical University
 Wake Forest University
 Western Carolina State
 University
 Cornell University
 University of South Dakota
 South Dakota State University

Touring the Delta

In 1999, Dr. Rob Baldwin brought a class of George Mason University students to the Delta. At that time, Luther Brown directed the Center for Field Studies, and employed Rob to teach "The Mississippi Delta Blues and American Culture." Rob's visit linked Luther to the Delta and ultimately paved the way for his move to Delta State in 2000.

Working with visiting colleges has been a main activity at the Center since its beginning. We have worked with dozens of schools, helping them identify resource people, develop their syllabi and arrange everything from live blues events in jook joints to meetings with our state senator. Popular classes include sociological surveys of the Delta, historical reviews of the civil rights struggle and Blues retrospectives. Other classes have examined shifting landscapes in the Delta (Harvard School of Architecture) or focused on economic development (Brandeis University). Often, college groups include some element of service learning, and some groups are completely focused on service efforts. In some cases, we have had visiting students stay in the Delta for many weeks, or even months. Four Yale students have completed summer-long research projects, and dozens of Duke and University of North Carolina Robertson Scholars have participated in our Delta Heritage summers while serving the communities of the region.

The Center also develops and presents educational tours. These are not really too different from visiting classes, although they typically do not involve grades or exams. Our first tours were developed for the Whole Schools Institute back in 2001. Several hundred participants learned about Delta heritage during that and subsequent Institutes, and thousands more have participated in other tours since then. We have helped provide tours for the Tulane-Jackson State University Unsettling Memories Conference, for several Living Blues "Blues Today" Symposia, for the American Association of Geographers, the Oxford Conference for the Book, The Culinary Institute of America, the Southern Foodways Alliance, our good friends at Temple B'nai Yisrael of Armonk, NY, the Mississippi Heritage Trust, Mississippi

Medical Center, Chicago's Mikva Challenge, the Nissan Superintendent's Academy and several DSU Colleges and Departments, especially the School of Nursing and the College of Education. We have toured Senator Thad Cochran's staff and some interesting private groups, including Ed King (author of Sweet Home Alabama in his Lynyrd Skynyrd days) and Isaac Tigrett (founder of The House of Blues and The Hard Rock Café franchises). We tour with local schools most months.

We have several standard tours now, ranging from a four-hour Delta Heritage tour to a two day focus on the Emmett Till case. We have also done "Delta Artists and Their Workshops," "Delta Literary Tour" and "Great Flood of 1927" tours. All of these are illustrated with appropriate music and video, and some include special narratives by community members.

Our touring efforts have led the Center increasingly into the promotion of nature and heritage tourism as an economic development tool in the Delta. We have offered heritage tourism training through the Alluvian Hotel in Greenwood, worked with community members who want to develop tourism businesses of their own and participated in various nature and heritage tourism workshops, including our own "Share Your Heritage Workshop," funded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. All of this work has allowed the Center to play a leadership role in the establishment of The Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area. ■



■ Betty Hicks, Amy Evans and Ann Cashion making hot tamales at the Shack-Up Inn, Clarksdale, MS, on the Culinary Institute of America Tour-Southern Foodways Alliance tour.

Photography © Brooks Hamaker.

■ "Fantastic! This experience caused me to revisit my roots. The simulation of "those days" came alive with the music videos and sites. As I do live in the Delta, I found that I knew very little about her history. I would like other schools and the local community to experience this tour."

—Anonymous



■ Jim Renfroe addresses a visiting college class at the site of the disastrous 1927 levee break, and shows them a map, produced by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1928 as part of their reconstruction effort. Jim is the Founder of the 27 Break Hunt Club, which owns the levee break site, and regularly works with the Center to inform visitors about the great flood.



The Heritage Lighthouse

The Lighthouse Arts and Heritage program is our signature after-school heritage project. The Center has received funding for the past six years from Learn & Serve America through the Mississippi Center for Community and Civic Engagement. Our immediate partners in the Delta are Communities in Schools of Greenwood Leflore and the Cleveland School District. The project has had two homes, the Cleveland Achievement Center (formerly the Alternative School) and, currently, the D.M. Smith Middle School. The mission of the Lighthouse is to engage middle school students and Delta State students in service-learning, civic-action and the arts in order to facilitate change. Our approach is to use the rich heritage of the Delta as a tool to engage student participants, while informing Cleveland youth of the influence their culture has on the world. This unique after-school program brings together middle school children and DSU students four days a week to promote cultural awareness, provide artistic instruction and set aside time for tutoring, homework and enrichment.

Many of the students who participate in the Lighthouse Program have had little opportunity to explore the culture that surrounds them. Our hope is that knowledge of the rich and varied heritage of the Mississippi Delta will create enthusiasm for learning and stimulate civic pride and participation among both the middle school and university students involved in the partnership. By participating in heritage workshops, going on field trips to cultural sites, attending live blues performances and meeting special guests the children come to gain a much deeper perspective of the place they call home.

Students travel to Dockery Farms, where they learn about the rise and fall of the sharecropping system



and the birth of the blues, the Highway 61 Blues Museum in Leland, where they get to see finished outdoor murals dedicated to the music, Winterville Mounds, left hundreds of years ago by the Native American who lived there, and the Mounds Landing levee break site, where they learn about the Great Flood of 1927 and see the river up close. The learning gained on these trips is further developed with other workshops featuring guest musicians, film footage of the Civil Rights Movement, group warm-up activities, music demonstrations and a whole host of other exciting programs. Alongside the cultural programs, the students participate in individual and public art projects that reflect their newfound awareness of Delta culture.

Additionally the after-school program engages student participants within the community by creating and disseminating educational materials such as the Heroes of the Mississippi Delta Coloring Book and by participating in such service projects as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and National Youth Service Day.

Our Martin Luther King Day activities are funded by the Points of Light Foundation, and supported by Delta State University and a great many Friends of the Delta Center. ■

■ Heritage Lighthouse after-school group with the "Building the Beloved Community" mural painted at the D. M. Smith Middle School in Cleveland during our 2006 Martin Luther King Day of service. Duncan Baird designed and supervised the mural.

Workshops for Teachers

The Delta Center has had the pleasure of presenting several workshops for teachers. For example, we have offered *Rivers and the Delta*, sponsored by the Yazoo and Mississippi Delta Levee Board. This three-day workshop helped twenty Delta teachers develop lesson plans focused on the Mississippi River and the role of the Levee Board in protecting the Delta from floods.

More recently, we presented a greatly expanded workshop titled *The Three R's of the Delta: Rivers, Roads, and Railways* with support from the National Geographic Society, the Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board and Delta State University. Twenty teachers from throughout the Delta participated in the two-week workshop that explored the human and physical geography of the Mississippi Delta. The workshop provided professional development for teachers of geography, history and social studies for grades K-12. It also provided resources that the teachers could take back to their classrooms and use in the future. These resources (our "toolkits") included a globe, many large maps, a copy of the film "Fatal Flood," numerous books and a CD of Blues music, all designed to help teachers talk about the Mississippi Delta in their classes.

Participants traveled throughout the Delta, from the Tunica RiverPark Museum in the north to the Delta National Forest outside of Rolling Fork in the south, and from Greenville to Yazoo City. Highlights included traveling on a JanTran towboat and talking with a pilot about his craft, riding the rails on Amtrak from Greenwood to Yazoo City and exploring old Highway 61 as it passed through Delta towns.

Topics of conversation included the Mississippi and how that river created the Delta itself, and the ways that roads and railways moved people into and out of the Delta. Dr. Mark Bonta, a DSU Geographer, provided content and graded papers, awarding teachers up to six semester hours of credit for their hard work. We were sad to see them leave, but know they will teach their own students about the Delta from now on. ■

■ Isaac Tigrett (L) talking to Center Director Luther Brown near the grave of Blues great Robert Johnson during a tour of the Delta.

Isaac is the son of John Tigrett, who was standing on the levee near Mounds Landing when it broke on April 21, 1927. John Tigrett tells his stories of the great flood in the American Experience documentary *Fatal Flood*. Isaac Tigrett is the founder of The House of Blues and Hard Rock Café.

We want to thank the following for helping make our classes and tours and workshops especially eventful:

Jim Renfroe and the 27 Break Hunt Club
Dockery Farms, Keith Dockery McLean, and her daughters
Milburn Crowe
Joe Janoush and JanTran Corporation
Great River Road State Park
The Alluvian Hotel and Viking Range Corporation
Sylvester and Mary Hoover and the "Back in the Days Museum"
Senators David Jordan and Willie Simmons
The Mound Bayou Sisters of Mercy
Charles McLaurin
Frank "Rat" Ratliff and the Riverside Hotel
Guy Little and Dicky Taylor, bus drivers extraordinaire
Ground Zero Blues Club
Roger Stolle and Cat Head Blues
The Highway 61 Museum
The Delta Blues Museum
Willie Seaberry, aka Poor Monkey
Amy Evans and Carol Puckett
Betty Pearson and Wheeler Parker
Terry "Big T" Williams, Barry Bays and friends
Bill Abel and Cadillac John Nolden
Terry "Harmonica" Bean, "Mississippi Slim,"
John Horton and the Special Occasions Band
Joe Pope's White Front Store
Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board
Mississippi River Levee Board
Tri State Education Foundation

And all the rest of ya'll. We can't do it without you.

Thank You all





Classes Offered by the Delta Center

The Delta Center started out as a “non-academic” program. That didn’t mean that the Center wasn’t intellectual or rigorous, but it did mean that our mission was not primarily to offer traditional college courses. Any courses we did offer had to be presented under someone else’s name, and we collaborated primarily with the Geography program at DSU, using Geography as our “discipline.”

In 2006, the Center took on a new academic role when it began offering courses under the heading of Rural and Regional Studies (RRS). These elective courses focus on Delta heritage. Four such courses were offered in school year 05-06. Each drew an unusual student body including traditional and non-traditional participants, and each brought new students into the DSU community. Delta State is proud enough of these new classes to have nominated the Delta Center to our State Institutes of Higher Learning in their annual search for Best Practices in Academics.

In addition to these courses, the Delta Center presents heritage tours and information sessions to new DSU faculty, to students and families during the Art Department’s recruiting process and to the School of Nursing. The Nursing program indicates how heritage can become a tool to promote broader learning. Nursing students participate in a day-long heritage program that includes a bus tour throughout the region. Although health history is emphasized, civil rights, the Blues, the Great Migration and the flood of 1927 are all included in the tour. Nursing faculty encourage students to re-present their experiences through poetry, painting and writing during the entire semester. Students profess a better understanding of the Delta as a place, and indicate deeper emotional links to the place and the people after learning more about its rich cultural legacies and its contributions to the American story. ■

■ **Introduction to Rural and Regional Studies** (RRS 100) is “an introduction to rural places, issues, and lifestyles and the ways in which they are depicted and studied, with special emphasis on selected topics and issues.” The 2006 class focused on civil rights heritage of the Delta, and presented itself as an innovative dual enrollment course. Seven seniors from the Cleveland School District enrolled with seven traditional DSU students. The class included diverse experiential learning opportunities that explored issues of race and class, traveling as far off campus as Philadelphia, MS. The class was wholly funded by the Cleveland Youth Council, which in turn is funded by the Kellogg Foundation.

■ **The River as Myth, Metaphor, and Reality** (RRS 432/532) is “A learning community that explores rivers as depicted in literature, film, poetry, song, and science, and includes several river field trips.” This class is cross listed with English 492/592, and is primarily a literature class that explores texts that use rivers as central characters. The Mississippi and the great flood of 1927 are primary themes, but most texts also deal with race relations. The class is partially experiential, and students rode on a tow boat and visited numerous river related sites and museums. Thirty students participated in Spring 2006, ten as traditional students and twenty over the age of 65. Many in this latter group were over the age of 70. This class is the current incarnation of a course that we have offered several times now, formerly through Geography.

■ **Mississippi Delta Heritage Studies** (RRS 442/542) explores “the mystique and reality of Mississippi Delta history and culture.” This class was offered in a Thursday through Sunday block, followed by an additional Saturday of meetings and presentations. It attracted practicing teachers, who missed little work due to the condensed nature of the class. It was highly experiential, and involved visiting sites throughout the region and learning about their historical and artistic importance. Seven students enrolled, six of whom were practicing teachers and one of whom was a traditional student.

■ **Special Topics in Rural and Regional Studies** (RRS 492/592) is designed to deal with novel or occasionally offered subjects. This class was presented to twenty K-12 teachers from throughout the Delta as part of the *Three R’s of the Mississippi Delta: Roads, Rivers, and Railways* geography workshop, funded entirely by the National Geographic Society. Over 60 teachers applied to this two-week long experiential workshop that included rides on the Illinois Central, a trip on a functioning towboat, and many other unusual learning experiences.



■ One of our River classes at JanTran, port of Rosedale, Mississippi, after traveling on a towboat.

Additional classes that have not yet been presented include:

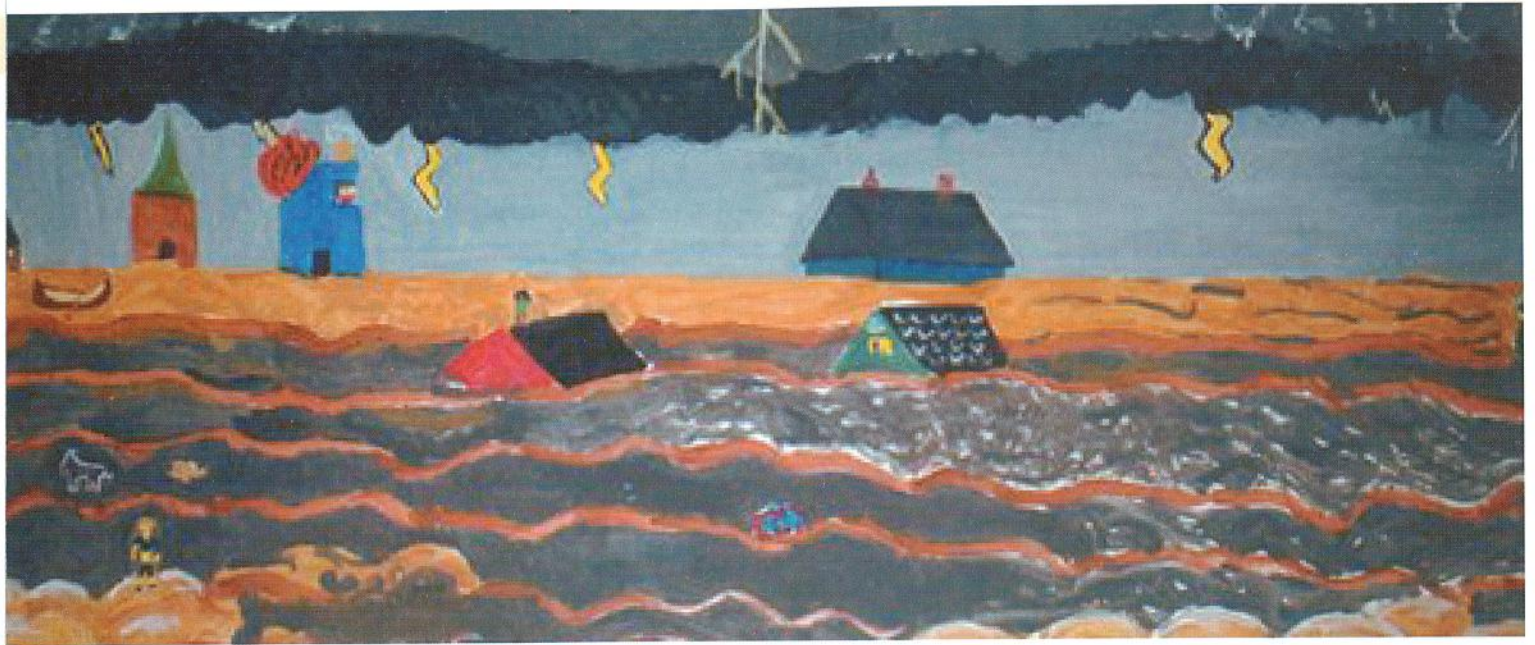
■ **Sense of Place and Identity** (RRS 452/552) An exploration of the characteristics that define “place” and the power of place to produce identity, including a comparison of how the people of the Delta see themselves with how they are portrayed by others. Field trips may be required.

■ **Mississippi Delta Blues and American Culture** (RRS 462/562) An investigation of America’s first art form, the Mississippi Delta Blues, the culture that produced it, and an analysis of how this art and culture affected America. Field trips may be required.

■ **Women in the Mississippi Delta** (RRS 482/582) An introduction to the lives and legacies of important Mississippi Delta women and a review of significant issues faced by women of the past, present and future.

■ “I have lived here for 13 years and have learned more in 2 weeks than in all the years I have been here. I personally want to thank you- Luther, Lee and Mark for sharing your knowledge and time. I have truly enjoyed this class.”

—Cindy Kinneson, workshop participant



■ Gear Up campers in the 2006 River camp painted a mural depicting the great flood of 1927. It now hangs in Ewing Hall outside the Center's offices.

■ Gear Up campers on the Tunica Queen riverboat in Tunica, Mississippi.

Gear Up Summer Camps



Each summer the Delta Center for Culture and Learning helps Mississippi children explore the magic of the Delta during a series of camps at Delta State University. The Mississippi Delta Arts & Heritage Summer Experience, now having completed its third year, combines heritage workshops and arts instruction to increase awareness of the Delta's history and culture among youth. The program is divided into three residential camps, each serving 20 students and exploring a different aspect of the Delta: the blues, the Civil Rights Movement and the Mississippi River. Funding for the camps is provided by Gear Up Mississippi, an outreach effort of the Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning, and promotes higher education to students in low-income school districts throughout the state.

Each session examines the Delta from a different angle, and serves as a way to introduce students to the multiple threads of Delta heritage. The sessions feature fieldtrips, guest speakers, musical performances and heritage workshops, while art projects offer a visual component to the learning experience. Campers are afforded the opportunity to learn about the issues surrounding the geographical landscape of the Delta through the theme of rivers, railroads and roads. They get a taste of local ethnic cuisines from Chinese and Italian to Lebanese and Russian Jewish food. They visit the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis as well as learn about local events and leaders of the grassroots movement in the Delta. Campers experience live performances that in the past have featured renowned artists such as Bluesman Bobby Rush. They build their own one-string guitars called diddley bows, learn the basics of harmonica playing and perform in an African drumming workshop using their own handmade drums.

Each camp culminates in an exhibition and celebration of all the artwork produced during the week. Projects have included creating art installations on the campus of Delta State University that commemorate the lives of local civil rights heroes and building a model Indian Mound with student generated effigy pottery buried within the mound. DSU Art professor Duncan Baird has worked with the camp for the past two years. ■

■ "Thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to take us on the tour. It was life-changing for me. Just to see all of the history that is from the Delta. It made me proud just to be a part of that. Consider this another life changed for the good of the Delta."

—Natalie H. Moore

Delta State University's Alternative Spring Break Assists with Hurricane Cleanup

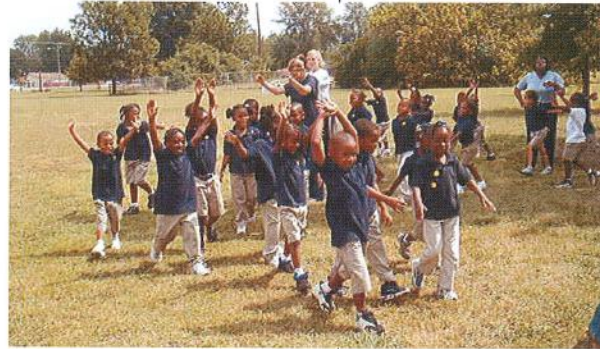
Alternative Spring Break is a student-led group sponsored by Delta Volunteers, a program within the Delta Center for Culture and Learning, which places teams of college students in communities to engage in service and experiential learning. For the past three years, Alternative Spring Break groups have provided service to various communities in the US. This year, they went to Pass Christian on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The volunteers helped to remove debris and damaged household furnishing from homes slated for reconstruction, and volunteered at the God's Katrina Kitchen, which provides meals to the many churches, colleges/universities and other volunteer groups, and serves as a distribution center providing residents with groceries, toiletries, clothing, over-the-counter medications, linens, cleaning supplies, baby supplies and more. The following August, another group of DSU students went to Hattiesburg to help reconstruction efforts there. Among other things, they helped paint houses that had been damaged by Katrina. ■



■ DSU students on our Alternative Spring Break in 2006, helping out on the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina.

9-11

Each year the Delta Center commemorates the tragic events of 9-11, 2001, with a massive service learning project. Almost every DSU freshman enrolls in a General Studies class (GST 100), and all of these classes participate in the "9-11 Week of Service." In 2006-2007, DSU's theme is "Health and Nutrition" which became the theme for our service project too. We partnered with Nailor Elementary School in Cleveland, and more than 350 Nailor students worked with approximately 200 Delta State students during the week-long program.



■ The 9-11 Week of Service activity at Nailor Elementary School in Cleveland.

DSU freshmen prepared for their service by learning about some fundamental issues in nutrition and wellness. We chose to focus attention on the sweet potato both because it is a locally important crop and popular vegetable, but also because George Washington Carver discovered more than 100 different uses for the plant, giving us plenty of opportunity for class discussion. As Nailor students learned more about the sweet potato, they also planted one so that they could see the growth cycle of the plant as well as be able to take it home as a houseplant. Grade appropriate exercises were incorporated in the time spent together as were individual art projects and worksheets, all having to do with the nutritional value of the sweet potato. Many of the classes also emphasized physical fitness, something that is not normally part of the elementary school curriculum.

As a special project, the new USDA food pyramid was painted as a mural in the school's cafeteria under the direction of Kara Courtney. The grounds of the school were also landscaped by teams of DSU students.

Past 9-11 weeks have provided similarly wide ranging service opportunities. Perhaps our grandest program was chaperoned by Bootsie Lyon in 2003, when it was funded generously by the Entergy Corporation. During the Week of Service that year, students worked at the Cypress Park Elementary School to create several landscape features, including a butterfly garden and an outdoor classroom arbor. The project also included field trips and service programs at Dahomey Wildlife Refuge, where similar landscaping was begun. Eventually, three huge, permanent, interpretive kiosks were placed at the entrance to the refuge. These glass-covered displays present maps of the refuge and general information about its ecology. Several "wildlife toolkits" were also created for the refuge to help visiting classes learn more about local plants and animals. In all, over three hundred DSU students, Cypress Park students and local citizens contributed their efforts to this project.

We hope to continue these large service programs annually, and are awaiting news on a major proposal submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. If this is funded, next year our project will involve constructing an elevated boardwalk in the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge. ■

Martin Luther King Day of Service

Our Student and Community Engagement Office has coordinated several events centered on national days of service including National Youth Service Day, Martin Luther King Day of Service and the 9-11 Week of Service. Two years ago, the MLK Project was entitled "Painting the Dream," and involved volunteers from several middle/high schools and Delta State students who helped to paint a house in a low-income neighborhood in Cleveland. For National Youth Service Day the Center sponsored the "I Love Cleveland, I Recycle" program where more than 100 Cleveland schoolchildren, teachers, administrators and DSU faculty and students were involved. The project put 49 recycling bins, painted by volunteers, in three schools in the Cleveland School District.

Last year, the MLK Day of Service involved over 140 students at the D. M. Smith Middle School. DSU art professor Duncan Baird, along with several DSU art students, led volunteers who created a mural that now graces the middle school's entranceway. The mural's theme is Building the Beloved Community. Members of the Lighthouse Art and Heritage after-school program, Cleveland Youth Council, DSU Alternative Spring Break team, Cleveland Garden Club, DSU Student Government Association and other DSU student organizations worked on the mural and other projects throughout the day. In addition to the mural and general landscaping of the grounds, volunteers

assisted younger students in card making workshops. The cards are a compilation of letters and student-generated art that were sent to families and children who suffered loss and displacement during hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Cards were delivered to residents of the Mississippi Coastal cities near Biloxi and Ocean Springs by our Alternative Spring Break teams.

Activities for the MLK Day in 2007 will involve transforming what are currently plain white walls in the cafeteria of Cypress Park Elementary into a visually inspiring educational learning center. Volunteers will create a mural of the USDA food pyramid to demonstrate the guidelines for healthy eating and the importance of a balanced diet. Volunteers will also create character building panels made from painted cloth to adorn additional walls in the cafeteria. Cypress Park elementary students currently participate in Saturday School, where they learn about character building traits such as respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, integrity and tolerance. The panels displaying these terms will serve as a way to visually reinforce what the students learn monthly. Finally, volunteers will assist in creating a colorful and educational entranceway to the school. Each grade number will be featured on the sidewalk where children wait daily for car rides along with several car/street safety tips. The tips, such as the importance of always buckling up, will be painted by volunteers in bright welcoming colors for young children, along with other signs boosting school spirit on outside receptacles. ■



■ 2006 Robertson Scholars

(top to bottom, left to right)
Rob Stephens, Tom Allin, Vivek Chilukuri, Dan Hall, Gabriela Miyares, Lily Kurland, David Sneed, Aaron Yorke, Pablo Friedman, Aja Barretto, Kristin Hill

Robertson Scholars

For the past three years, The Delta Center for Culture and Learning and Delta State University have been hosts for visiting scholars from the University of North Carolina and Duke University. These students are part of an elite group called the Robertson Scholars.

Robertson Scholars receive support for all four years of their University career. They participate in service activities at one of four sites in the US during their first summer, and overseas during their second summer. They document their service and learning through web logs and portfolios. In the summer of 2006, eleven of the thirty-six scholars chose to come to the Mississippi Delta for their first experience. Past Robertson Scholars have helped the Sisters of Mercy at the St. Gabriel Mercy Center in Mound Bayou, the Sunflower County Library, the Cleveland Homeless Shelter, the Sunflower Freedom Project, The Delta Arts Alliance and the Bologna Performing Arts Center, along with other placements. Most importantly, some Scholars have worked in the Delta Center, helping coordinate and document our summer Gear Up Camps and other workshops. The Robertson Scholars truly make a difference in the Delta, and we thank them for all their hard work and kind spirits. ■

Literacy Efforts and First Book

The Delta Center has promoted literacy almost since its inception. Eugene Dattel provided private funding for our Ruleville Reading Project for several years, placing a DSU graduate student tutor in the Ruleville Library four days per week and establishing a local reading club. This program was later funded by the Deer Creek Foundation and moved to Rosedale, where Bootsie Lyon encouraged literacy in their elementary school. Deer Creek continues to support literacy by providing funds for a VISTA/AmeriCorps employee who currently works full time in the Rosedale Head Start Center.

When Kay Stricklin joined the Center, she established our First Book-Mississippi Delta Advisory Board in conjunction with the Bolivar County Library and Literacy Council, the Instructional Resource Center of Roberts LaForge Library at Delta State, the Delta Reads Partnership and the Bolivar County Community Action Agency.

First Book is a national nonprofit organization that provides children from low-income families the opportunity to read and own their first new books. Working with existing community-based tutoring, mentoring and family literacy programs, First Book Mississippi Delta has already distributed several thousand books throughout the Delta. ■

To me, the Mississippi Delta is the biggest museum of American history in the world. A cultural melting pot, the Delta seems to be its own nation covering years of history and so many different ethnicities. There's so much to see in all of the small communities that make up the Mississippi Delta, two months hasn't been long enough to take it all in. The contrast between life in the Delta and life in a big city is drastic. Time moves slower, you feel the heat here more than you feel it anywhere else in the country, and the mosquitoes are at times unbearable. All the more reason to come back. The differences are great and abundant but there is no other place I would have chosen to spend my summer. I'll never forget my time here. It wasn't just the sweet tea, the catfish, the hot tamales, and the fried chicken. It was the people I met, the stories I heard, the places I went, and the things I learned. All of these things will continue to be my motivation to return to the most southern place on earth.

—Kristin Hill

Robertson Scholar, 2006



■ The Taborian Hospital, Mound Bayou, Mississippi, first opened in 1942 as the very first Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) in America. Mound Bayou is also home to one of the very first Community Health Centers to be funded by the Federal government. This town has a rich and unique heritage of innovative medical practice.



■ Doe's Eat Place, Greenville, MS, one of the Delta's famous culinary institutions. Doe's is known for steak and French fries, but the Delta is also famous for its catfish, hot tamales, cornbread, greens and sweet potatoes.

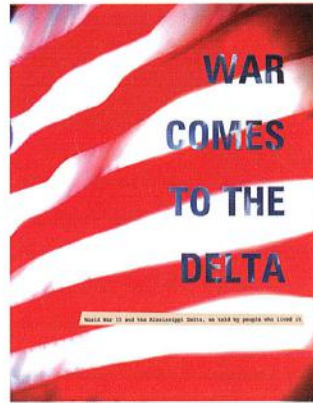
■ "I wanted to e-mail all of you and express my appreciation for this summer, such an amazing, transformative and meaningful experience. I can't stop thinking about and talking about the Delta. The place, and more powerfully each of you, has carved a special place in my heart. Not one of us Robertsons will be returning unchanged. All of you do and will continue to inspire me with the work that you do, the spirits you have. "

—Rob Stephen
Robertson Scholar, 2006

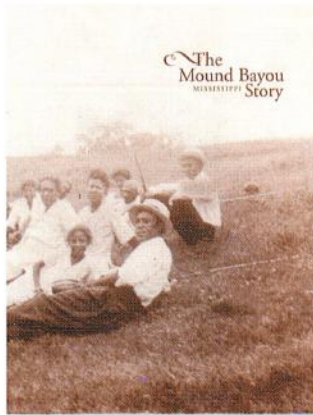
Delta Center Publications

The Center has several publications designed to promote a broader understanding of the heritage of the Mississippi Delta. All of these publications have been funded by grants or by sponsors, and all are distributed free of charge.

■ Martha Foose, owner and operator of the Mockingbird Bakery, Greenwood, Mississippi, unpacking some of our Delta Foodways Workbooks. Martha has helped promote the Delta throughout the country through the Southern Foodways Alliance.



■ **WAR COMES TO THE DELTA** was funded largely by the Mississippi Humanities Council and American Legion Post 1776. It summarizes a lengthy oral history project that was designed to reveal the effects of World War Two on the Mississippi Delta. The 16 page booklet presents quotes from people who lived through the war, whether they were enlisted or on the home front, and includes illustrations of the Greenville Army Flying School, agriculture in the 1940s and several participants, both then and now. Several thousand copies of this booklet have been distributed to History and English classes throughout the Delta.



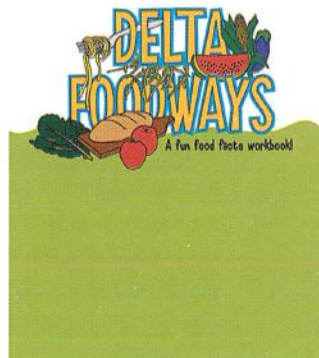
■ **THE MOUND BAYOU, MISSISSIPPI, STORY** was funded by the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, with a text written largely by Milburn Crowe, Mound Bayou historian. It tells the incredible rich heritage story of this town, founded in 1887 by former slaves. Mound Bayou was the shining example of African-American enterprise and self-government, not only in the Delta, but in the South and the entire country. Booker T. Washington, a frequent visitor to the town, once wrote: "Outside of Tuskegee, I think that I can safely say there is no community in the world that I am so deeply interested in as I am in Mound Bayou." The 16 page booklet includes a

map suitable for self-guided touring of the town.

Sonnet for Soul Food

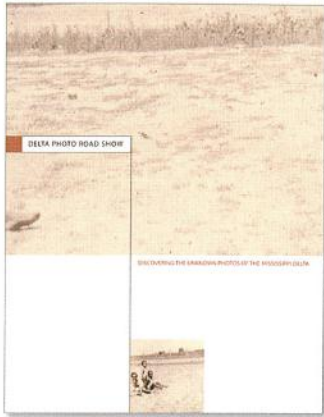
by Gabriella Miyares
Robertson Scholar
University of North Carolina

I am not used to eating food like this,
But Something in the salty, greasy crunch
Of chicken fried till tender, the small pop
Of okra seeds between my molars, and
The chill of ice knocking against my teeth
As I sip at sweet tea, the sugar-melt
Of bright red-orange yams, the clean white flakes
Of breaded catfish edged by silvery skin,
The grainy texture of square-cut cornbread,
Yellow and buttery, the creamy gleam
Of gravy topping sticky rice, green beans
Boiled with ham, and cobbler thick with peach
Says home to me, 600 miles from home.
True to its name, this food has fed my soul.



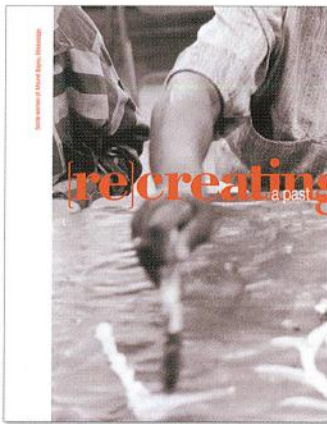
■ **DELTA FOODWAYS; A FUN FOOD FACTS WORKBOOK** was made possible by a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi. The goal of this book was to introduce children in the Delta to their rich food heritage by exploring the origins of Delta foods and cooking styles. At the same time, the book focuses on healthy food and healthy eating, hopefully introducing children to some alternatives that will help improve their diet and health. Topics include what foods came from Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas, what cooking styles are common in the Delta, and what healthy alternatives there are to fried foods.

The Workbook is designed to be used by a team composed of a young learner (probably first or second grade) and a more mature reader. Over seven thousand copies are being distributed around the Delta.



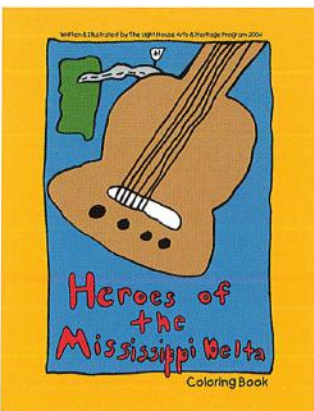
■ **THE DELTA PHOTO ROAD SHOW** was made possible by a \$10,000 grant from The History Channel. It was modeled after the popular PBS program *Antiques Roadshow*, in that it invited local citizens to bring in their “unknown” photographs of life in the Delta. Participants were interviewed by professional documentary photographers, assisted by middle school students from our own Heritage Lighthouse Program. Of almost 10,000 pictures submitted, several hundred were digitally scanned for preservation in the Charles Capps Archives, and a small fraction of this total are re-presented in the color booklet, along with the stories their owners told. This project was so

successful, that it led the Capps Archive, in conjunction with the Delta Center, to obtain a much larger grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The Road Show is touring the Delta between 2006 and 2008, and will stop in Clarksdale, Rolling Fork, Greenville, Greenwood, Tunica and Hernando. Citizens in each town will be invited to bring in their historic photographs and their own stories, and a much lengthier book on the heritage of the Delta will result.



■ **Some Women of Mound Bayou, Mississippi: [re]creating a past** was funded by a donation by Eugene Dattel, who allowed two undergraduate students from Yale University to work with two Delta State students as they collected the oral histories of several elders living in Mound Bayou. The students spent a summer at the St. Gabriel Mercy Center, operated by the Sisters of Mercy. They engaged the elders who come to the Center in various art projects designed to help them remember events in their lives. Stories of church, family, neighbors and friends mingled with stories of growing up in times of segregation and share cropping. This 14 page color booklet

includes lengthy quotes from the participants along with copies of their wonderful art work.



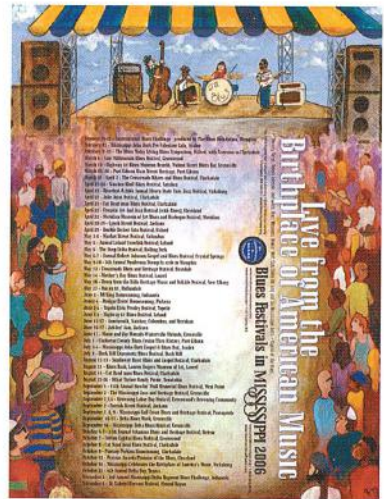
■ **HEROES OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA** was made possible by funding from the Cleveland Youth Council. Students at the Cleveland Achievement Center learned Delta heritage stories about important Bluesmen and civil rights leaders, and interpreted their stories as drawings. These were included in a coloring book designed to help much younger students learn about their own heritage. This project has been so successful that we are about to embark on **SPORT HEROES OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA**, telling the stories of people like Archie Manning and Archie Moore, among many others. Look for this new publication soon.

Poster Publications

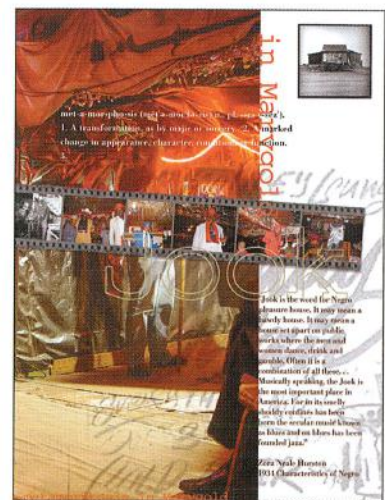
In our series “Jooks, Gins, and Nuthouses.”



■ **Dockery Farms**, birthplace of the Blues, artwork by Bill Lester.



■ Annual posters of all **Blues Festivals in Mississippi**. Visit www.blueshighway.org for this year's version.



■ **Metamorphosis in Merigold**—a celebration of Po' Monkey's Lounge, the Delta's last rural Jook, and its ability to transform people from day laborers into nobility.

The Delta Center for Culture and Learning

Promoting the understanding of the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta and its significance to the rest of the world

Honoring the past, envisioning the future.

Did you know that the Mississippi Delta is a place...



- where 90 percent of the land was wet wilderness at the beginning of the Civil War...and 90 percent of the land was within five miles of a railroad only a few decades later...
- where African Americans owned two-thirds of the farms in 1900...and the majority of shopkeepers were foreign born at the turn of the century....
- where the Blues began as one of the first truly American art forms...and where a social revolution in civil rights transformed America...
- where many Americans now living in northern and western cities trace their family roots and think of as home....

"Much of what is profoundly American- what people love about America- has come from the delta, which is often called 'the cradle of American culture.'" from Stories of the Delta, The National Park Service Lower Mississippi Delta Symposium, 1996

The Delta Center for Culture and Learning is an interdisciplinary program of Delta State University, but all of our projects and programs are funded through grants and donations by people like you. Please become a Friend of the Delta Center and help us continue to honor the Delta's heritage while working to ensure a vibrant future. Your partnership will help us produce more interpretive documents about the Delta, work with more classes that visit the region and expand our after-school and summer programs for youth. Your support will allow us to increase our oral history efforts, offer more tours and continue lobbying for the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area. You might even eventually help us support visiting faculty and stimulate the University to further the field of Delta Studies.

I want to become a Friend and supporter of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

My check, payable to The DSU Foundation/Delta Center, is enclosed, or I've completed the credit card information below for my: MasterCard Visa (check one)

My tax deductible gift in support of the Delta Center is \$ _____

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