

# Today's Hooks

The Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change  
at the University of Memphis

Issue No. 2011(1)  
April 4, 2011



## Cover Story

Hooks Institute to Unveil  
Two New Civil Rights Websites

## Also In This Issue

Coming Events  
Community Corner  
Research Watch  
Hooks Book Award  
Kudos!



Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks  
1925 — 2010

**Teaching,  
studying,  
and promoting  
civil rights and  
social change**



## Hooks Institute to Unveil Two New Civil Rights Websites

The Hooks Institute has been hard at work producing not one, but two new websites chronicling important events in the civil rights history of the Mid-South. The first site is called *Tent City Stories: Telling the Stories of Fayette County, Tennessee*. For this project, Daphene McFerren (Director of the Hooks Institute) and Hooks Institute graduate assistants Armanthia Duncan and Michael Blum are working with Dr. Loel Kim of the University of Memphis Department of English to publish an online commemoration of the events surrounding the Fayette County black voter registration drives of the 1950s and '60s. When white land-owners sought to deter voter registration by evicting African American sharecroppers from their farms, blacks offered their own land to the ousted sharecroppers, and massive Tent Cities arose. *Tent City Stories* is a collection of first-hand accounts of how blacks banded together and endured, making Fayette County the site of what the *New York Times* would later call the "longest sustained civil rights protest in the nation."

The second website, entitled *A Mapping History of The Civil Rights Movement in West Tennessee*, recalls notable civil rights milestones of the Mid-South with a particular focus on education and labor. Dr. Esra Ozdenerol of the University of Memphis Earth Sciences Department has spearheaded the site's technical development. In order to compile the massive amounts of historical data, extensive research and initial content drafting was conducted by Michael Blum, a graduate student in the Department of History, working with History professor, Dr. Aram

*Continued on Page 2...*

## COMMUNITY CORNER

Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church and Memphis  
Theological Seminary proudly present: *An Evening with*

*Dr. Allan Boesak*: pastor, Martin Luther King scholar, and leader of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. 7 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2011 at Mississippi Boulevard.

Next Production at Hattiloo Theatre: *Crowns*, by Regina Taylor (April 28th—May 22nd).  
For directions, show times, and tickets, visit [www.hattiloo.org](http://www.hattiloo.org). ♦

## COMING EVENTS

- **Hooks Roundtable: Structuring a National Conference to Explore the Evolution of the Civil and Human Rights Movements**

April 7, 2011: 2-4 pm. Rose Theatre Entertainment Lobby, University of Memphis. Mark your calendar for this Roundtable Discussion with faculty and community members to identify themes for the Hooks Institute 2012 Civil and Human Rights Conference.

- **Hooks Institute 2012 Civil and Human Rights Conference**

April 18-20, 2012. Save the date! Lots of informative programming and ground-breaking strides towards social justice in the Mid-South.

- **Red Carpet Premiere of *Duty of the Hour: The Life and Times of Benjamin L. Hooks***

April 18-20, 2012. Save the date! The Hooks Institute will present a Civil and Human Rights Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and will culminate conference events the evening of April 20, 2012 with a Red Carpet Premiere of the Hooks Institute upcoming documentary, *Duty of the Hour* (working title), written and directed by Reece Auguste, a U of M faculty member. We expect persons from around the United States to attend this Conference and Premiere. Stay tuned for updates! ♦

## Hooks Institute to Unveil Two New Civil Rights Websites

... Continued from Page 1

"These new websites will make the American Civil Rights Movement even more accessible to the world through 21st century technology."

- Daphene McFerren, Director of the Hooks Institute

Goudsouzian. Additional drafting and editing was done by Hooks Institute staff members Daphene McFerren, Armanthia Duncan, and Tiffany Johnson. The site features state-of-the-art geographic information systems (GIS) software. GIS technology arranges and presents data in visually strategic ways to reveal informative patterns, relationships, and trends — in this

case using interactive maps to chart the progress of social justice in the Mid-South.

We expect both of these new online ventures to be well-received not only in Memphis, but nationwide. Please check our Facebook® page often for upcoming announcements of the website URLs and launch dates! ♦



### RESEARCH WATCH

In 2008, the tragic deaths of two local African American teens in public swimming pools brought new attention to what is now widely recognized as a national trend: minority youth are less likely to know how to swim — and thus at greater risk of drowning.

The 2008 drownings sparked the birth of Make a Splash Mid-South, a community-based organization that provides at-risk children with free swimming lessons, encourages minority participation in swimming, and supports local lifeguard training. Since the program's inception, the Hooks Institute has provided funding to support the work of University of Memphis researchers Carol C. Irwin, Ph.D. and Richard L. Irwin, Ed.D., who have conducted two different studies to gather data on the impact of Make a Splash and develop strategies for continual improvement.

Results indicate that Make a Splash Mid-South is an effective approach to addressing this health disparity among minority populations. Please visit the Make a Splash Mid-South website at [www.makeasplashmidsouth.org](http://www.makeasplashmidsouth.org) to learn more about this great organization and its ongoing research on this vitally important issue of social justice. ♦

### News Flash!

**Hooks Online: Revised, Revamped, and Soon Revealed!**  
Stay tuned for the Institute's forthcoming new website!

We'll let you know as soon as it's ready to go live!

<http://benhooks.memphis.edu>

*Kudos!*

The Hooks Institute is proud to welcome two new staff members to its family.

In December of 2010, Julie Graves came aboard as the Institute's new Assistant Director. Julie holds a B.A. in Journalism from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, MO and a Masters Degree in Public Affairs from Park University in Parkville, MO. She has over fifteen years of experience in nonprofit management, fundraising, and partnership development.

The Institute is also happy to introduce its newest graduate assistant, Tiffany Johnson. A lawyer by trade, Tiffany graduated from the University of Miami (Florida) and the Georgetown University Law Center. She is excited to join the team while working towards her Master's Degree in Professional Writing at the University of Memphis.

Kudos to Armanthia Duncan, graduate student extraordinaire! Armanthia has graced the Hooks Institute with two years of loyal service, and she will now be leaving to start her doctoral studies in Sociology at the University of Massachusetts - Amherst. Congratulations to Armanthia! ♦

### HOOKS INSTITUTE BOOK AWARD

Last year, the Hooks Institute accepted nominations for its prestigious Book Award to recognize the book published in 2010 that best advances public understanding of the American Civil Rights Movement and its legacy. The awardee will receive \$1,000 and an invitation to speak as part of the Hooks Institute's 2011-2012 Lecture Series. The selection committee has narrowed the entries down to five titles. Who will win? Check our next newsletter to find out!

Special thanks to our committee members: Dr. Aram Goudsouzian, Chair (History Dept.); Dr. Ladrice Menson-Furr (English Dept.); Dr. Wanda Rushing (Sociology Dept.); Dr. Charles McKinney (Rhodes College); and Dr. Femi Ajanaku (LeMoyne-Owen College). ♦

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**®

**The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute  
for Social Change**  
at the University  
of Memphis

<http://benhooks.memphis.edu>

107 Scates Hall  
University of Memphis  
Memphis, TN 38152-3440

Office: 901.678.3974 • Fax: 901.678.0177

Daphene R. McFerren, Director

Email: [bhi@memphis.edu](mailto:bhi@memphis.edu)

Issue No. 2011(1)

April 4, 2011



UOM305-FY1011/4C50 HOOKS INSTITUTE