



THE BENJAMIN L.  
HOOKS INSTITUTE  
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE



Summer 2016

## Hooks Newsletter

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## Hooks Institute Honors JCPenney CEO and West Tennessean, Marvin R. Ellison at Annual Join Hands for Change Gala.



MARVIN R. ELLISON  
CEO OF JCPENNEY

Talent has no gender, race, ethnicity or class; but it does require opportunity and hard work to manifest. The career of Marvin J. Ellison, CEO JCPenney and University of Memphis (UofM) Alumnus, exemplifies hard work and talent.

The Hooks Institute's April 21, 2016 Gala honored the perseverance and success of Marvin J. Ellison, one of only five African American CEOs currently leading a Fortune 500 company. In his speech, Ellison remarked on his experiences growing up in Brownsville, Tennessee, and how these lessons prepared him for the challenges of leading JCPenney. As a child, Ellison often met hardworking and intelligent people, much like his parents, striving to support their families. This connection with small town America instilled in Ellison the drive to keep things simple and the insight to listen to the needs and ideas of all employees, from the store clerk to the CEO, while leading a large corporation.

**"Not a week goes by where I don't speak with the front line (of JCPenney) ...because I believe there is someone out there we are missing."**

**Marvin J. Ellison, Hooks 2016 Gala**

See more on the life of Marvin J. Ellison! Video from Hooks Institute Gala on our YouTube Page: [www.youtube.com/BenLHooksInstitute](http://www.youtube.com/BenLHooksInstitute)

*The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change  
extends its sincere gratitude to the following Gala sponsors.*

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# In the Spotlight: Faculty Research Awards

Carol Irwin, PhD  
Splash Mid-South



Dr. Irwin (Associate Professor, School of Health Sciences) was honored at the Hooks Institute Gala for her work in researching barriers to swimming for minority youth and developing the Splash Mid-South program, a local free or low-cost swimming program designed to increase the swimming proficiency in minority youth. Created in 2009, Splash Mid-South is a community-wide initiative that includes the American Red Cross, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Safe Kids Mid-South, City of Memphis Park Services, Memphis Tiger Swimming, the YMCA of Memphis and the Mid-South, and the Hooks Institute. Working as a researcher for the Hooks Institute, Irwin evaluated the effectiveness of Splash Mid-South to identify best practices of the program in Memphis and how to replicate the program in other parts of the nation.

See the impact of Splash Mid-South in our community!

<http://splashmidsouth.org/>

Loel Kim, PhD  
Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in  
Fayette County, Tennessee



Dr. Kim (Associate Professor, Department of English) worked with the Hooks Institute to create the "Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee" website, released last year after several years of collaborative research, development, and writing. The website contains the most comprehensive collection of interviews and first-source materials on the civil rights movement of Fayette County, TN. The history of the Fayette County civil rights movement is now required curriculum in Tennessee schools.

Explore the Tent City Website!

<http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/>

Esra Ozdenerol, PhD  
Mapping Civil Rights GIS Website



Dr. Ozenerol (Associate Professor, Department of Earth Sciences) was honored at the Hooks Institute Gala for her work with the Institute to create the Hooks Institute's "Mapping Civil Rights" GIS website. The "Mapping Civil Rights" website explores seminal events and locations of the Civil Rights Movement through an online mapping system that connects civil rights history and geography in an easily accessible format.

Discover Civil Rights history at the Mapping Civil Rights website!

<http://www.mappingcivilrights.net/>

## Did You Know?

*The Hooks Institute relies on grants and donated dollars to fund its programs. We need you to help our efforts to bring quality programs to the communities we serve.*

*Donations may be made online at [memphis.edu/benhooks](http://memphis.edu/benhooks). The MAKE A GIFT button is on the left side of the page. Alternatively, you can contact the Hooks Institute at [bhi@memphis.edu](mailto:bhi@memphis.edu) or (901) 678-3974 for assistance. All donations are appreciated!*

## Thank You for Your Support!

*We, at the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, would like to thank you for your tremendous support this year! Over the summer, we will be*



*planning for the 2016-2017 year as we work to enhance our programs to better serve the Mid-South and fulfill our mission of teaching, studying, and promoting civil rights and social change.*



# Program Highlights: HAAMI | 2016 Gala



Marvin Ellison and HAAMI members meet at the 2016 Hooks Gala.

## HAAMI Members Enjoy Gala!

The significance of an African American male raised in West Tennessee, graduating from the University of Memphis, and continuing on to lead one of the nation's premier department store brands held exceptional value for members of the **Hooks African American Male Initiative** (HAAMI) listening in the audience. HAAMI members had the opportunity to speak with Ellison at a private reception prior to the gala, a rare chance to learn from one of Fortune Magazine's "Top 50 World Leaders." It was a meeting of importance as the next generation of African American male leaders begin journeys of their own.

HAAMI is a Hooks Institute program designed to increase the retention and graduation rates of African American men at the University of Memphis.

## Photographs from the 2016 Hooks Institute Gala!



Our honoree, Marvin J. Ellison (center), and his wife, Sharyn (right).



Dr. M. David (President, University of Memphis) and Dr. Loretta Rudd.



Dr. Elena Delavega (Associate Director, Hooks Institute; Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, UofM) (left) and HAAMI member Fletez Dyson (right) speak to the audience about the importance of the Hooks Institute and its programs!



Looking good! Guests capture a moment from this exciting night!



Violinist Jason Larry entertains guests at the Hooks Institute Gala.



Moziah Bridges (CEO Mo's Bows) (left); Daphene McFerren (Director, Hooks Institute) (center); and Tramica Morris (mother of Moziah) (right) enjoy the Gala.



(From left to right) Greg Coy, (WHBQ-TV, Memphis); Elena Delavega, PhD; Greg Washington, PhD (HAAMI Coordinator; Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, UofM), and Jeremy Pierre (WHBQ-TV, Memphis.)



Guests of the First Tennessee Foundation sponsorship table including Bruce Hopkins (President, West Tennessee Region, First Tennessee Bank) (center, left) and his wife, Janie (center, right).



Hooks Institute Staff and HAAMI members celebrate a successful and exciting Gala!



The Benjamin L. Hooks  
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## 20 Years of the Hooks Institute: The Best is Yet to Come!



The Hooks Institute is celebrating 20 years of teaching, studying, and promoting civil rights and social change. The year-long celebration will coincide with a national fundraising effort to improve the Hooks Institute's capacity to uplift those suffering from social, economic, and racial disparities in Memphis and the nation through our programs and initiatives. The festivities will culminate with a 20th anniversary celebration at the Hooks Institute's April 2017 Gala, where we will applaud two decades of the Hooks Institute programs as we look forward to many more years of social change and activism!

***See the Hooks Institute's featured article in the Spring 2016 University of Memphis Magazine!***

[https://issuu.com/univofmemphis/docs/51797\\_uofmspring2016mag](https://issuu.com/univofmemphis/docs/51797_uofmspring2016mag)