



**THE BENJAMIN L.  
HOOKS INSTITUTE  
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**



## Hooks Newsletter

Spring 2016

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Honors JCPenney  
CEO**

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## **Hooks Institute to Honor JCPenney CEO and West Tennessean, Marvin R. Ellison at Annual Join Hands for Change Gala on April 21, 2016**

### **JOIN HANDS FOR CHANGE GALA** Empowering • Supporting • Celebrating **AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN**

**TRIUMPH THROUGH PERSEVERANCE**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2016 | 7 PM**

Ticket price: \$100 each

**Holiday Inn, University of Memphis**  
**3700 Central Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111**

For sponsorship information, please contact the Hooks Institute. Tickets may be purchased through April 17, 2016 on Eventbrite at [www.memphis.edu/benhooks](http://www.memphis.edu/benhooks)



Join us on April 21, 2016 for the Hooks Institute's Annual Join Hands for Change Gala. The Hooks Institute will honor the achievements of Marvin R. Ellison: JCPenney CEO, West Tennessean, and number 19 on Fortune magazine's 2016 World's 50 Greatest Leaders list.

Gala proceeds fund Hooks Institute programs and operations which include faculty research and community service projects; hosting conferences, symposia, and lectures; and promoting and recognizing local and national scholarship on civil and human rights.

One of seven children living in a town that was not fully desegregated until the 1980s, Marvin R. Ellison's childhood was anything but lavish. Ellison recalls how at an early age his parents struggled to budget enough money for the family to make bi-annual trips to JCPenney, once before school began and again before Christmas. Now Ellison runs the company.

How did an African American male from small-town Brownsville, Tennessee rise to become the CEO of one of the most iconic brands in the American department store industry? Hard work and perseverance. His father worked three jobs to support his family. He instilled in his children the value of hard work and education as a way to escape poverty. This work ethic inspired Ellison throughout his life. Early on he decided to put forth his best effort in every aspect of the job he had, no matter how insignificant the job seemed to be.

As a student at the University of Memphis, Ellison worked several part time jobs to pay for his education. One of those jobs was part time as a security officer at Target. His hard work paid off. Over the next decade and a half Ellison moved his way up the corporate ladder, ending his tenure with a corporate position.

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# In the Spotlight: A Season of Thanks for Generous Donations

## *Hooks Institute receives \$273,000 Donation from the Estate of Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin L. Hooks*



From left to right: Daphne McFerren, director of the Hooks Institute; M. David Rudd, president of the UofM; Patricia Hooks Gray, Daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Hooks.

The contributions the late Dr. Benjamin and Mrs. Frances D. Hooks made to social justice are immeasurable. Their dedication to social change continues on through a significant donation of \$273,000 made to the the Hooks Institute from their estate. The gift was announced at a press conference on March 18, 2016.

Dr. Hooks was an activist from the early days of the Civil Rights Movement, serving as a confidant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was the first African American commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission from 1973 to 1978, and was the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1977 to 1992.

The late Mrs. Frances D. Hooks was a committed activist in her own right. During Hooks's time at the NAACP, Mrs. Hooks helped found Women in the NAACP (WIN), a civil rights group for women within the organization. Unknown to many, when the University of Memphis first reached out to Dr. Hooks in an effort to establish the Hooks Institute, it was Mrs. Hooks who convinced him that the proposal deserved serious consideration.

The Hooks Institute relies on donor and grant support to meet its programming mission of teaching, studying, and promoting civil rights and social change. The Hooks Institute is deeply appreciative of Dr. and Mrs. Hooks for their generous donation. We will leverage the gift to encourage local and national donors to support our work.



*The late Benjamin and Frances D. Hooks*

### *Marvin Ellison, continued*



JCPenney CEO Marvin Ellison

Taking note of his success and work ethic, in 2002 Home Depot brought Ellison on as the Executive Vice President of Stores. There he established the company as a leader in the emerging e-commerce market and redefined the brand as the personification of customer service. By the end of his tenure, Ellison oversaw the sales, profit, and operations of over

## *Ingersoll Rand Trane Awards Hooks Institute \$20,170 to Support the HAAMI*



Presentation of Ingersoll Rand Trane gift 3.11.2016. From left to right: Jim Crone, Audrey Bullock, Dean Oakley (Ingersoll Rand Trane); Dr. Rosie P. Bingham (UofM); Rorie Trammell, Dr. Elena Delavega (Hooks Institute).

To ensure the progress of equality in Memphis, and to guarantee the future economic viability of the city, it is essential to invest in one of Memphis's greatest resources, African American men. The Hooks Institute is doing its part through the Hooks African American Male Initiative (HAAMI).

Recognizing the importance of African American men in creating a prosperous Memphis, Ingersoll Rand Trane awarded the Hooks Institute a grant of \$20,170 to support the HAAMI program. HAAMI is intended to increase the graduation and retention rates of African American men at the University of Memphis. Session presentations include topics such as university support resources, mental health, student loan debt, internship, professional etiquette, and job readiness. Mentoring and individual coaching are additional components of HAAMI. The Hooks Institute is also grateful to FedEx for its initial financial support of this program in 2015.

## **Did You Know?**

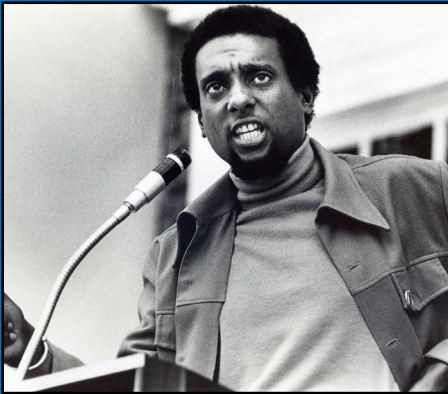
- The Hooks Institute relies on grants and donated dollars to fund its programs. We need you to help our efforts to bring quality programs to the communities we serve. Donations may be made online at [memphis.edu/benhooks](http://memphis.edu/benhooks). The MAKE A GIFT button is on the left side of the 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!

650 stores in the United States. In 2014, his commitment to excellence led JCPenney to bring Ellison on as their CEO. JCPenney, a store in need of a strong and talented leader, found one in Ellison. His leadership is helping to create a renaissance for the once troubled department store through a commitment to simplicity, and a dedication to the American consumer.

For more on Ellison, see Fortune magazine's March 2016 cover story.



# Program Highlights: National Book Award Lecture



Stokely Carmichael, 1977. Photograph c/o Preservation and Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

**Peniel Joseph, Winner of the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute National Book Award, Examines Civil Rights and Social Justice Through the Lens of *Stokely: A Life*.**

Unapologetic, passionate, and frequently controversial, the image and rhetoric of Stokely Carmichael is often polarizing. However, his contributions to social justice and equality is too important to ignore. For Peniel Joseph, PhD, author of *Stokely: A Life*, Carmichael

is sometimes unfairly overlooked in the mainstream historical narrative of the Civil Rights Movement.

"We don't know who Stokely is because Stokely is a revolutionary. Decades later you don't celebrate revolutionaries who you can't rehabilitate and you can't rehabilitate people who wanted Black liberation in an unapologetic, uncompromising fashion" said Joseph.

(Con't below..)



IDA B. WELLS.

The Hooks Institute is excited to begin production on its next feature length documentary film following the Memphis experience of Ida B. Wells (1862-1931) in April 2016. The lynching of Thomas Moss, Clint McDowell, and Will Stewart on March 9, 1892, by a gang of whites, fueled Wells' age to organize a national and international campaign to tackle the brutal practice of lynching of African Americans. This film will examine how the cultural, social, and political conditions of Memphis in the late 19th century shaped Wells' activism later in life. The Hooks Institute gratefully acknowledges Tennessee Humanities and FedEx for their contributions to this production.

Carmichael played a significant role in almost every major grassroots organization and event during the Civil Rights Movement. He had leadership roles in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party. He helped organize, and participated in, the Mississippi Freedom rides, for which he spent his 20th birthday imprisoned at Mississippi State Penitentiary, also known as Parchman Farm. He most famously coined the phrase "Black Power" with the symbolic image of the raised fist to embody it. Young, charismatic, forceful, and a brilliant intellectual with civil rights roots planted in non-violent tactics, Stokely's increased dissatisfaction with racial inequality led him to more militant approaches to achieve political self-determination for African Americans.

"What's so important, and I think the lesson, that Stokely Carmichael... provided, was speaking truth to power no matter what the cost" stated Joseph.



Peniel Joseph speaks to audience members about his book, *Stokely: A Life*, at the University of Memphis. 2.11.2016.

Joseph not only argued the importance of Carmichael's tactics in the 1960's, but he reiterated the influence of Carmichael's rhetoric and actions on modern social change movements, such as the Black Lives Matter movement.

According to Dr. Joseph, "We live in a nation that has historical amnesia, and remembers to forget. That's the nation we live in, this is the United States of Amnesia because we do not want to talk about in depth, social, political, and racial injustice."



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Institute for Social Change  
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# SAVE THE DATE - Hooks GALA

## THE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ANNUAL GALA

**Empowering • Supporting • Celebrating  
African American Men**



**Triumph through Perseverance**

**Thurs, April 21, 2016, 7 pm to 10 pm**

This is a ticketed event.  
Please check our website for updates.