

# SWANA of the South



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- JSU Back in the Student Design Competition
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## 2024 CHAPTER BOARD/OFFICERS

The MS Chapter of SWANA Board of Directors held the 2023 Annual Chapter Membership Meeting during the 2023 MS Chapter Fall Conference. Part of the annual meeting agenda is to vote to elect the next year's Board of Directors and officers. Meet this year's Board and officers.

**President** - Jennifer Jackson, Panola County

**Vice-President** - Shea Mask, RES Disposal

**Treasurer** - Melon Garrett, City of Canton

**Secretary** - Mark Parkman, Advanced Disposal Services

**Past President** - Charlie Bock, MDEQ

**Legal Counsel** - Kate Victor, Lafayette County

**Safety Ambassador** - Amberlyn Liles, City of Oxford

**YP Liaison** - Tim Eaves, Promus Engineering

Dan Ball, Waste Management

Dawn Brown, Matrix New World Engineering

Robert Eaves, City of Louisville

John Junkin, Triad Disposal, LLC

Jimmy Sloan, Golden Triangle Regional Solid Waste Management Authority

Doug Wiggins, Three Rivers Planning and Development District



\*Full 2024 Board not pictured

The Board does a lot of work to plan conferences, put together training courses, promote safety culture, recruit members, and many other activities. That said, if you have any questions, suggestions, training or any other needs, please feel free at any time to reach out to any of the Board members to ask or discuss. Feel free to reach out also via email at [ContactUs@msswana.org](mailto:ContactUs@msswana.org).

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# 2024 Spring Conference

The MS Chapter Spring Conference is set for March 26-28, 2024 at the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi, MS. Registration is open and the draft agenda is available!

Check out the conference page for agenda, registration, and other information:

<http://www.msswana.org/event/2024springconference/>



FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# Member Spotlight



## JAMES “LAP” BAKER

We continue our Newsletter Member Spotlights this issue with former MS Chapter Board member and continued friend James “Lap” Baker. We provided Lap with a set of questions we thought would help readers better get to know him, his passions regarding solid waste management, and his impact on the industry.

Below are his responses to our questions. Enjoy, and if you have someone you feel should receive recognition in our Chapter newsletter, please reach out to us [ContactUs@msswana.org](mailto:ContactUs@msswana.org).

**Tell us briefly about your experience in the solid waste management industry.**

My experience in the solid waste management industry began in 1996 when I was employed as the Director of Planning and Administration for the Hinds County Department of Public Works. I had to monitor solid waste and illegal dumping activities and wrote the Hinds County Solid Waste Management Plan of Hinds County for 17 years. I had no staff in my division. However, I created the first surveillance program for illegal dumping in the history of Mississippi for Hinds County. There was a 45% reduction in illegal dumping in Hinds County after the first year of the program. I created the waste tire recycling program for Hinds County. I utilized the waste tires to create to the first rubberized-asphalt project of any county in the history of Mississippi. I also created the white good recycling program for Hinds County. These programs were instrumental in reducing illegal dumping in Hinds County. I also wrote grant applications for Hinds County with 100% approval. MDEQ asked me if I would utilize the county's surveillance cameras to catch whoever was illegally burning on Billy Bell Road in North Hinds County. Guess what? I caught him on camera. There are many more things to share with you, but time doesn't permit.

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)



# Member Spotlight

**Please provide any personal or family details you'd care to have shared in the newsletter.**

My mother and family have always been the focus and strength of everything that I have done and accomplished. I attended George Washington Carver High School in Picayune, MS where I was an honor student. During my senior year at Carver High School, I became the starting quarterback in football, the starting guard in basketball and the starting pitcher in baseball. I attended Jackson State College and upon graduation, I received a scholarship to attend San Jose State University in San Jose, California. I became the first Black/African-American to receive a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning in the history of the university. In 1974, I accepted a position to become the first Black/African American City Planner in the history of Louisville, Kentucky. In 1977, I accepted a position to become the first Black/African American to write and supervise the development of the health plan for the state of Mississippi. I also incorporated the first Black/African American Planning Consulting Corporation/Business in the history of Mississippi. I am also a vocalist who recorded with nationally-renowned vocalists, "Brandi" and "Ray-J's" father. I am a regular member of Lynch Street CME Church in Jackson, Mississippi.

**When did you first join the MS Chapter?**

I was recommended to become a member of the MS Chapter of SWANA in 1998, and was accepted. I became the first Black/African American board member.

**How long were you a Board Member?**

I was a board member for over 20 years.

**In which officer roles, if any, did you serve?**

I served as a regular member, secretary, vice-president and president of the MS Chapter of SWANA. I was the first Black/African-American to serve in each of those positions.



**FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)**

# Member Spotlight

## Why did you join SWANA, and why did you stay involved?

As I stated, I was recommended to become a member. I stay involved with SWANA because I love what it is doing.

## Tell us about your what safety for solid waste employees means to you and your contributions to keeping them safe.

Safety for solid waste employees is important to me because they perform activities that keep people and the environment clean and safe. The garbage/solid waste collection occupation has been in the top 5 for occupational fatalities in the United States for years. I informed the members of the MS SWANA that I was going to submit a bill to the MS Legislature to protect garbage collection employees. A MS Senator introduced Senate Bill 2182 for approval in 2014 and 2015.



## Do you have a favorite SWANA memory you'd like to share?

My favorite memory of MS SWANA has always been the joyful meetings we had.

## What words of encouragement do you have for our active and prospective young professional members?

My words of encouragement for active and prospective young professional members are “stay focused and be creative”.

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# Newsworthy



## JSU ENTERS SWANA 2024 SWDC

Jackson State University is hungry for a win having entered a team in their third straight SWANA International Solid Waste Design Competition! They're up against 9 other schools competing to find the best solution for "Sustainably Reducing Landfilled Plastic Waste". Good luck to JSU in this year's competition and [keep up with the competition here...](#)

## MEET THE NEW SWANA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / CEO

Following the departure of David Biderman, SWANA welcomes Amy Lestition Burke as their new Executive Director and CEO. The organization is excited to have her bring her experience and leadership skills to the position. [Check out this article from SWANA introducing her here...](#)



FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# Chapter Safety Awards

**The MS Chapter of SWANA is pleased to announce our Chapter Safety Awards Program!**

The MS Chapter of SWANA is preparing to roll out our annual awards program to recognize individuals in programs showing their dedication to making the solid waste management industry safer. Each year, the Board of Directors will be presenting awards in the following 3 categories:

## **Biggest Safety Improvement Award**

Showcases an exemplary safety improvement undertaken by an individual or organization in the solid waste industry during the previous year.

## **Best Safety Innovation Award**

Showcases an exemplary safety innovation undertaken by an organization in the solid waste industry during the previous year to reduce hazards and accidents, develop company regulations and best practices, or improve worker safety.

## **Workplace Wellness Award**

Recognizes organizations that go above and beyond to reduce health risks and improve the quality of life for workers. Winners of this award demonstrate effective health and wellness programs that respond to and anticipate employee needs.

Originally meant to begin highlighting calendar year 2023 activities, the first set of awards will now recognize safety activities during calendar year 2024, with winners planned to be announced at the 2025 Spring Conference in Biloxi. Be on the lookout for more information about the program and release of the application forms, and be thinking about who you think deserves recognition!



See more about why Safety Matters to SWANA at

<https://swana.org/initiatives/safety>



FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# *It Pays to Be a Member*

All SWANA members have access to SWANA's members-only private social network: MySWANA.



MySWANA provides members access to:

- Membership Directory - search for members by name, location, technical division, or other industry-specific criteria to find other members with similar “likeness” to you
- MySWANA Open Forums - see posts and discussion between members on all sorts of solid waste topics, start your own discussion on a matter on which you’d like some input from other members, and see shared files like articles, guidance documents, or comments on national policies
- Blog Posts - view blog posts from members regarding their opinions or advice on matters that affect everyone in the industry or share your own viewpoints with a blog post of your own
- Quick access to other benefits like eLibrary, Career Center, and more!



The Mississippi Chapter was the 33rd chapter to form in the organization's history. The chapter received its charter at SWANA's 29th Annual Business Meeting on August 15, 1991 in Cincinnati, OH.

The MS Chapter is currently sitting at 113 members in total. We hope to see members continue to renew memberships and to see them spread the word about the benefits of membership, and we look forward to meeting and engaging with prospective members. If you know of anyone that may be interested in joining to take advantage of the benefits like those above, they can find out more about all the benefits of membership and join online [HERE](#).

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)



# 2023 Fall Conference Recaps



We had another great crowd join us at the Natchez Convention Center to hear about several different topics by our knowledgeable and dynamic speakers.

Another great showing by our friends that sponsored the Fall Conference helping to make this one as much of a success as it was.



**THANK YOU**  
TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS!



After the first day concluded, everyone walked down the street to The Little Easy to enjoy some gorgeous weather, fine Natchez scenery, and good company during our Meet & Greet event sponsored by K&L Environmental Solutions.

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)



# 2023 Fall Conference Recaps



The Natchez Convention Center once again offered a great and spacious place for our exhibit hall with enough room to fit some heavy machinery for display, too. Attendees got the chance during each break to visit with our exhibitors to make new contacts and learn about different services and technologies.

The conference offered our guests several opportunities for networking. Some opted to head over after conference sessions ended Wednesday to the Pig Out Inn for some BBQ and to test their trivia knowledge. Special thanks to Tri-State Truck Center for sponsoring.



Others made it out to John Junkin's cabin for the return of the beloved Natchez clay shoot event. The shoot was sponsored by RiverCity Hydraulics and Puckett Machinery fried up the fish. A little rain didn't hurt these guys' chances to win it all.

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)



# 2023 Fall Conference Recaps

Wednesday evening, everyone gathered outside the Natchez Grand Hotel for a block party with great food and drink sponsored by Pickett Industries and K&L Environmental Solutions. The rain couldn't stop us from enjoying some great BBQ and conversation!



## Barbecue & Block Party

Sponsored by



## Bar

Sponsored by



FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# MS Chapter Scholarships

**Congratulations to our 2023 Doug Wilson Memorial Scholarship winners. Our Chapter Board is thrilled to be supporting...**

**SHELBI ALLEN**

Freshman studying Nursing at  
Northwest Community College

**CAVIE MAYEU**

Brandon High School (2024); Planning to study Biology/Dentistry at  
Mississippi College

**ROBERT GAGE PARKMAN**

Senior studying Civil/Environmental Engineering at  
Mississippi State University

**JAYDEN ROCKINGHAM**

Freshman studying Civil Engineering at  
Mississippi State University

**RYAN SHIRLEY**

Freshman studying Diesel Mechanic Technology at  
Itawamba Community College

Each year, the MS Chapter accepts applications for two sets of scholarships, the Michael Caples Memorial Scholarship and the Doug Wilson Memorial Scholarship. Scholarships are available to seniors in high school and those fully enrolled at a college or university. Students must be a child or grandchild of a MS Chapter member or sponsored by one. Scholarships are also available to student members, and [students can join for FREE!](#)

**The deadline to submit applications for the 2024 Michael Caples Memorial Scholarship is March 22, 2024.** Applications as well as more information available at [www.msswana.org/scholarships](http://www.msswana.org/scholarships).

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)



# 2023 Doug Wilson Memorial Scholarship Winners



## CONGRATULATIONS

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)

# *What's Next...*

What else would you like to see in these newsletters? Any particular stories or happenings in the state you feel we ought to cover? Anyone in the industry deserving of recognition? Want to see more information on membership, training, etc.? Would you like to contribute an Op-Ed piece?



If you have any thoughts on information you'd like to see in future newsletters, feel free to contact one of your Board members or reach out at [ContactUs@msswana.org](mailto:ContactUs@msswana.org). We look forward to keeping in better communication with our greatly appreciated membership.

FOR MORE VISIT: [www.msswana.org](http://www.msswana.org)