

READYNATION MISSISSIPPI NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 1- MARCH 2023

Early Childhood Investment Council

The Early Childhood Investment Council (ECIC) is comprised of prominent business leaders across Mississippi and organized by ReadyNation Mississippi in partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The influence of this group, as individual business leaders and as a collective, positively impacts policies and programs to help Mississippi's children succeed, especially those who are most vulnerable. In turn, this success helps ensure more students develop the skills they need to pursue a degree or credential of value and secure a good-paying job, increasing the ability of businesses to attract and retain the talent they need to thrive.

2023 Quarter 1 Highlights



Nearly 1,000 business and community leaders attended MEC Capitol Day 2023 on Thursday, January 5. MEC's largest legislative event was held at the Mississippi Trade Mart and the Mississippi State Capitol. Legislative briefings returned to the State Capitol, allowing attendees to meet with their legislators while there. **The Mississippi Early Childhood Investment Council - ReadyNation MS** was a partner sponsor.



The fourth annual Early Childhood Capitol Day was held on January 18, 2023. This year's in-person Capitol Day focused on the critical role that policy supports for childcare, postpartum healthcare, and early intervention services when it comes to strengthening Mississippi's workforce and the overall economy. **ECIC members Maury Hull and Debra McGee were among the speakers.**



In 2013, the state of Mississippi passed the Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013. The law established a collaborative delivery, state-funded pre-K program in which private or parochial schools, private child care centers, and/or Head Start centers may join with a local public school district and compete for state funds to provide prekindergarten services to a specific

community. The state pre-K tax credit was highlighted at Van Winkle Elementary School. Program Officer Todd Klunk and Tonya Ware attended along with a host of early childhood education advocates.



ECIC member **John Damon**, President at Canopy Solutions, speaks to the MS Legislative Black Caucus about at-risk youth, the mental health crisis with children, and the racial trauma suffered by African American children in the state.



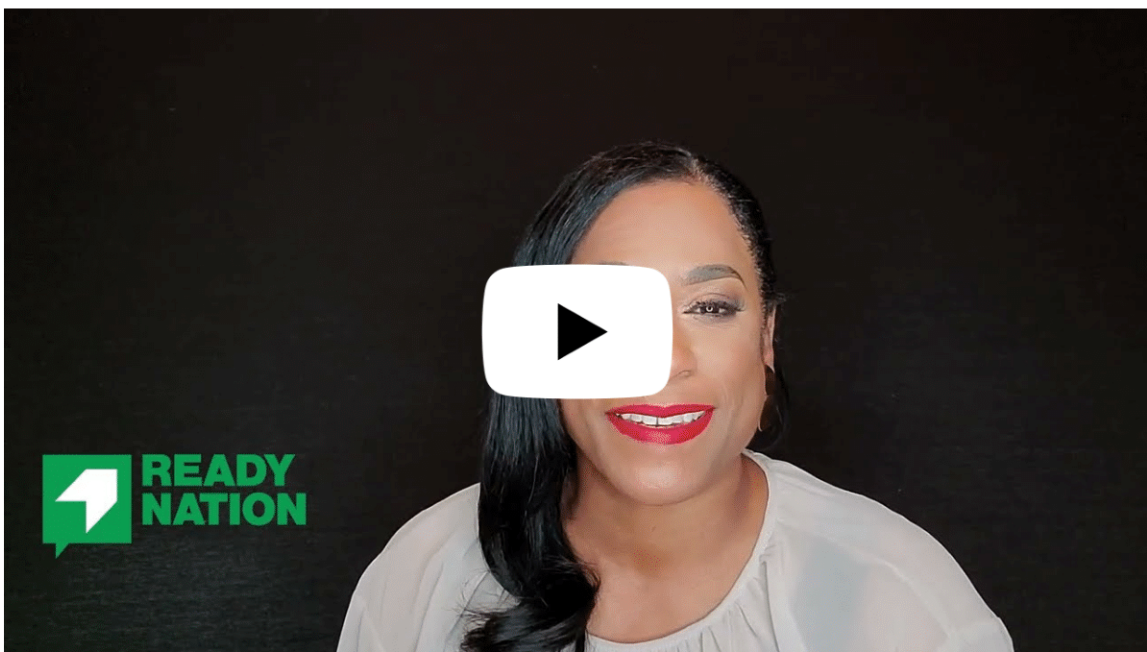
ECIC member **Jeff Good** is honored for his continued commitment to the local Jackson community at the 143rd Annual Meeting of the Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership held at the Hilton Hotel!

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

A number of ECIC members as well as Tonya Ware, are alumni of Leadership Greater Jackson. In partnership with the Greater Jackson Chamber - Leadership Greater Jackson and Youth Leadership Jackson cohorts are impacting local communities for good while sharing the importance of diversity. State Project Director Tonya Ware and the MS ECIC members are devoted to supporting programs that lift up the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



A BIG THANK YOU
to the MS Early Childhood Investment Council members
for their continued support!



ECIC Members

[Seth Assink](#), Vice President/SBA Business Development Officer, Peoples Bank
[C. Jerome Brown](#), Executive Vice President, The First Bank
[Wade Broyles](#), Regional Vice President- Central US, Oracle Cloud Infrastructure
[Ralph Clark](#), Vice President and Commercial Relationship Manager II, Trustmark - Metro
[General Augustus "Leon" Collins](#), CEO, MINACT Inc.
[John Damon, Ph.D.](#), CEO, Canopy Children's Solutions
[Jason Dean](#), Senior Vice President, PATH Company
[Jason Duren](#), Senior Vice President, Cadence Bank
[Joey Garner](#), President & CEO, TEC
[Will Garner](#), Vice President/ Shareholder, Ross & Yerger
[Jeff Good](#), President, Mangia Bene Restaurant Management Group

[David Gray](#), Vice President & CFO, Consolidated Catfish Producers (Delta Pride Catfish)
[Charles Hall](#), Vice President of Power Generation, Entergy
[David Henry](#), CEO, Merit Health Central
[Neil Henry](#), Regional President, Citizens National Bank
[John Payton Hood](#), Vice President of Commercial Banking, Hancock Whitney
[Maury Hull](#), Vice President of Human Resources, Hol-Mac Corporation
[Susan Jacobs](#), Vice President of Human Resources & Administration, Ingalls Shipbuilding
[Brian K. Johnson](#), Executive Vice President, Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance
[Jonathan Jones](#), Senior Vice President & General Manager, Harrah's Gulf Coast
[Willie Jones](#), President & CEO, Dependable Source
[Kirk Lewis](#), Chairman & President, Blue Springs Metals
[Latasha D. McCullar](#), Vice President of Operations, Blacklidge Emulsions, Inc.
[Debra McGee](#), Senior Vice President & Director of Minority Business Development, BankPlus
[Paula McNair](#), Vice President of Finance, Atmos Energy
[Jack Reed, Jr.](#), Chairman, R. W. Reed Company
[Jordan Robinson](#), First Vice President & COO, Mississippi Center for Advanced Medicine
[Iris Stacker](#), Interim CEO, Delta Health: The Medical Center
[Nicole Stubbs](#), Vice President of Performance Improvement, Greenwood-Leflore Hospital
[Alan Sudduth](#), Manager of Government Affairs, Chevron
[Christie Vance](#), VP of Operations & COO, Mississippi Methodist Senior Services, Inc.
[Charles D. Watson II](#), Senior Vice President of Network Operations, C Spire
[Tim Weston](#), Vice President, JESCO, Inc.
[Ashley Willson](#), Office Managing Partner, KPMG LLP
[Matt Wilson](#), Vice President of Operations, Newk's Eatery

Let's Get Social

As we continue to spread the message about the vital importance of child care during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, we encourage everyone to join the conversation on social media by following ReadyNation [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#). For regular LinkedIn users, we also encourage you to add your affiliation with ReadyNation under the "volunteer experience" section. This special [social media toolkit](#) offers step-by-step instructions to do so seamlessly in five minutes or less.

Questions: For more information about the ECIC or our work in Mississippi, please contact Tonya Ware at tware@readynation.org. Thank you for your support this year!



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