



Rotary
Club of Jackson,
Mississippi



Rotagram

March 17, 2025

The Rotary Club of Jackson welcomed **Kollin Napier with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Director, Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN).**

His presentation will be **“Empowering the Future: AI Education and Workforce Training in Mississippi.”**



L to R: Richard Wilbourn – Rotary President Elect; Attorney – Richard Wilbourn and Associates, PLLC; Kollin Napier with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Director, Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN); President Phillip Carpenter, Rotary President; Owner, Carpenter Properties; and Jill Beneke, President & CEO, Pileum Corporation

**President Phillip Carpenter welcomed Rotarians and guests.
He also led the Club in the Four Way Test.**

Neddie Winters delivered the Invocation.

Bill Moore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Congratulations to LeAnne Brewer and Jill Beneke, who were selected as two of the 2025 WOMEN IN ROTARY HONOREES & AWARD RECIPIENTS! They both exemplify Rotary's "Service Above Self" motto.

The Women in Rotary Celebration and Awards Luncheon, celebrating the leadership and accomplishments of Women in Rotary and the Smart Men who support them, was held on **March 5 at the Country Club of Jackson.**



L to R: Greg Campbell for the Golden Ladder Award, Pat Thomason for the Champion of Change Award. Dr. Martha Wells for the Heart of Rotary Award, Jill Beneke for the

Champion of Change Award, and LeAnne Brewer for the Champion of Change Award.
District 6820 Governor Sharon Fields Moulder is on the right.

SAVE THE DATE: The Rotary District 6820 Foundation Gala will be held on March 21, 2025, at the Refuge Hotel & Resort in Flowood, MS. The theme is Magical Mardi Gras.

Matching Paul Harris Point Campaign

- Any individual Rotarian can donate \$100 or more in March.
 - All donations will be matched with an equal number of recognition points.
 - Give the check to Mark Saxon or James Carter, Club Foundation Chairs, before the end of March.
 - Mark or James can help you with your current recognition level and tell you how much it would take to go to the next level with the match.
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BIRTHDAYS:

Deonte Oscar	March 18
Robby Toombs	March 20
Roy Ward	March 21

ROTARY JOIN DATES:

Gerard Gibert	03/22/2019	6 Years
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Monday, March 24, 2025 – The Rotary Club of Jackson will welcome Chief Cyrus Ben with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Richard Wilbourn introduced Kollin Napier with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Director, Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN).

As Director of the Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN), Kollin Napier, Ph.D., leads the nation's first statewide AI initiative. MAIN is transforming Mississippi's workforce by integrating AI into education and industry, ensuring the state remains at the forefront of innovation. MAIN's mission focuses on:

1. Providing statewide leadership in addressing AI-driven workforce demands.
2. Attracting advanced technology and AI sectors to enrich Mississippi's industry landscape.
3. Delivering comprehensive AI education and workforce training across K-12, community colleges, universities, and businesses.

Dr. Napier is an accomplished software architect and developer with extensive experience designing and managing cutting-edge software applications. His expertise spans software engineering, system architecture, and application management, and he has a proven track record of delivering high-quality solutions across databases, web and mobile applications, and innovative technologies.

As a researcher, he holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science focusing on machine learning and AI. His academic work has led to peer-reviewed publications and significant contributions to text-based machine learning, particularly in vulnerability detection. He specializes in optimizing model performance and enhancing interpretability to bridge the gap between AI theory and practical application.

Passionate about advancing AI and machine learning, Dr. Napier is committed to addressing real-world challenges with innovative solutions while empowering the next generation of AI professionals. His work reflects a dedication to driving impactful change at the intersection of technology, education, and workforce development.

MAIN

The Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN) is the nation's first and only statewide AI network. It addresses AI's rapid emergence and transformative impact on Mississippi's workforce.

LATEST NEWS: Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC) receives a \$7.1 Million RESTORE Act Grant to advance the Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN), the nation's first statewide AI initiative.

The Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN), spearheaded by Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC), was established through strategic collaborations with key partners such as AccelerateMS, the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges (MACC), the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), the Mississippi Manufacturers Association (MMA), and global technology leaders Intel and Dell Technologies. This robust alliance spans all 15 Mississippi community colleges, major universities, private institutions, K-12 education, state government, law enforcement, military, business sectors, and more. These partnerships position Mississippi as a national AI education, workforce training, and innovation leader.

MAIN Goals

Provide Leadership In AI

MAIN continues to provide statewide leadership in addressing AI and workforce needs for the State of Mississippi.

Growth and Innovation

MAIN has established AI labs across Mississippi through higher education partners. Furthermore, the network attracts and grows innovative AI and advanced technology industries and employers.

Curriculum

MAIN ensures continued progress by meeting the AI education and workforce training needs of K-12, community, and technical colleges, universities, state agencies, and Mississippi's business and industry sectors.

MAIN Workforce AI Courses

MAIN offers a range of free, self-paced AI courses developed in partnership with Intel. Specifically, utilizing Intel's AI for Workforce curriculum, these courses provide foundational and specialized knowledge in areas such as Introduction to AI, Generative AI, AI for Manufacturing, Applied Ethics for AI, AI for Cybersecurity, and AI for Sustainability—with more coming soon. By adapting the courses into Canvas, MAIN ensures accessible, flexible, and inclusive AI education for anyone in Mississippi—including students, educators, and workforce members.

Participants earn professional development certificates and Credly badges upon completion. K-12 teachers receive continuing education units (CEUs), and K-12 administrators earn School Executive Management Institute (SEMI) credits, all at no cost.

Each course offers 64 hours of content across 16 modules, structured over 16 weeks. Furthermore, modules must be completed sequentially to ensure a thorough understanding before advancing. Although instructor-free, the courses support active learning through slides, videos, discussions, quizzes, and assignments. This allows participants to engage at their own pace and gain practical experience with essential AI concepts.

MAIN Achievements

Since its inception, MAIN has significantly advanced AI literacy and workforce training across Mississippi, positioning the state as a leader in AI education and innovation.

As of 2024, MAIN has enrolled thousands of individuals in its free AI courses, including K-12 educators, higher education professionals, and workforce members from diverse sectors. Over 1,600 K-12 educators have completed the Introduction to AI course, earning over 750 CEU, SEMI, and OSL credits—equivalent to over 7,500 hours of AI-focused professional development. Beyond K-12, MAIN has empowered Mississippi's workforce by enrolling thousands of participants in AI training programs tailored to various industries, boosting AI literacy across the state.

With over 15,000 cumulative hours of free AI education delivered through courses, workshops, and events, MAIN equips Mississippians with the skills needed to thrive in

the digital economy. By offering accessible, high-quality AI education, MAIN is fostering statewide innovation and economic growth, enabling communities to shape the future of technology actively.

MAIN AI Labs

With support from AccelerateMS funding, MAIN is establishing AI labs at partner institutions across Mississippi. Consequently, these labs foster innovation statewide, providing AI-ready resources that empower institutions to integrate and expand AI curriculum. By revitalizing existing courses and supporting new programs and degree pathways, these labs offer access to cutting-edge facilities and technology. Additionally, students, educators, and workforce members benefit from these resources.

MAIN AI labs support skill development for Mississippi's workforce and position educational institutions as hubs of technological advancement. Furthermore, this closely aligns with Mississippi's goals for economic growth and AI leadership.

MAIN Partners

- Alcorn State University
- Coahoma Community College
- Dell Technologies
- East Central Community College
- Intel
- Itawamba Community College
- Mississippi Community College Board
- Mississippi Association of Community Colleges
- Mississippi Manufacturers Association
- Mississippi State University
- Mississippi University for Women
- University of Mississippi
- University of Southern Mississippi
- Holmes Community College
- Meridian Community College
- Mississippi Delta Community College
- Copiah-Lincoln Community College
- Pearl River Community College
- Northwest Mississippi Community College
- East Mississippi Community College
- Jones Community College
- Northeast Mississippi Community College
- Southwest Mississippi Community College
- Hinds Community College
- Accelerate MS

MAIN's influence extends across public and private sectors, forging essential alliances with various organizations. These include the Mississippi Cyber Initiative (MCI), state government, military partners, and key agencies like the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), and the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS). These partnerships enable MAIN to deliver advanced workforce training, technical expertise, infrastructure support, and industry alignment.

Moreover, through AI education, workforce development, and social equity initiatives, MAIN is advancing AI literacy and readiness across Mississippi. It is building a resilient workforce equipped for an AI-driven economy.

MAIN Members

- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Millsaps College
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - William Carey University
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Delta State University
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi College
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Belhaven University
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Rust College
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi Department of Education
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi Cyber Initiative
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Mississippi State Center for Cyber Education
- Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network Member - Tougaloo College

MAIN Outcomes

Responsive AI Curriculum

Intel has developed a comprehensive AI curriculum that covers essential concepts, tools, techniques, and ethics in AI. As a result, MAIN members can access this curriculum for free. Partners can use it to enhance existing courses or create new courses, programs, and degrees across Mississippi.

Workforce Training

MAIN members are encouraged to collaborate with industry experts, academic faculty, and business partners. They design customized training that meets businesses' specific needs and challenges.

AI Awareness

MAIN members can lead awareness campaigns, community events, and public presentations. These efforts aim to educate Mississippi residents about AI's potential, ethical implications, and role in shaping future industries.

MAIN FAQ

What is the Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN)?

The Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Network (MAIN) is a response to the rapid emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the impact it is predicted to have on multiple workforce sectors. MAIN embraces a comprehensive approach to AI education, AI workforce training, and AI awareness initiatives. Supported by strategic partnerships, MAIN is poised to position Mississippi as a leader in the AI industry, driving economic growth and creating a prosperous future for the state.

MAIN's Primary Goals

1. To provide statewide leadership in addressing AI and AI workforce needs for the State of Mississippi into the future.
2. To attract and grow innovative AI and advanced technology industries/employers.
3. To meet the AI education and workforce training needs of K-12, community and technical colleges, select universities, and the business/industry of the State of Mississippi.

How will MAIN achieve its goals?

A Responsive AI Curriculum

Intel has developed an AI curriculum covering essential AI concepts, tools, techniques, and ethics. As a result, MAIN members, partnering with Intel and Dell Technologies, can access this curriculum and integrate it into their courses, in whole or in part.

Workforce Training

MAIN members are encouraged to collaborate with industry experts, academic faculty, and business partners. Together, they create customized training that meets the specific needs and challenges of the business sector.

AI Awareness Campaigns

MAIN members can lead awareness campaigns, community events, and public presentations. These initiatives aim to educate Mississippi residents about AI's potential, ethical implications, and role in shaping future industries.

What Will MAIN Partners Provide?

Intel, Dell Technologies, AccelerateMS, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC), Mississippi Association of Community Colleges (MACC), Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), and the Mississippi Manufacturing Association

(MMA) have formed a strategic partnership to ensure MAIN's success. The partnership offers:

Technical Expertise

Intel will collaborate with Dell Technologies and MGCCC to provide MAIN members with an AI curriculum, guidance, and expertise.

Infrastructure Support

Dell Technologies, Intel, and MGCCC will advise MAIN members on selecting hardware, software, and additional resources.

Industry Collaboration

AccelerateMS, MACC, MCCB, and MMA will help MAIN members connect with the industry through collaborations, internships, and job placements, linking students to real-world AI projects.

Workforce Training

AccelerateMS will assist MCCB members in implementing pre-employment and upskilling training programs.

Educational Partnership

MGCCC will support the development of AI education relationships among state institutions, promoting resource sharing and best practices.

MORE PHOTOS





