



PRESS RELEASE

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USO TO CELEBRATE 75TH ANNIVERSARY, MARCH 22-25

HATTIESBURG (March 3, 2017) — The East Sixth Street USO, also known as the African American Military History Museum, will kick off the celebration of its 75th anniversary on Wednesday, March 22 with a commemorative event at 10 a.m.

The kickoff event will consist of musical selections from Hattiesburg High School's Chamber Orchestra and an anniversary address from former East Sixth Street USO Hostess Vermell Jackson.

“Commemorating 75 years of service in Hattiesburg is an exciting milestone for the USO. These events will celebrate the 1940s and give guests the opportunity to experience a glimpse of how life was when the USO was established,” Latoya Norman, general manager of the AAMHM, said.

Other celebratory events will be held March 23-25.

On Thursday, March 23, the USO will host an open house at 10 a.m. for area high school students. Following the open house, the USO will show the PBS documentary “USO: For the Troops” at 11 a.m. This documentary will give viewers a behind-the-scenes look at how United Service Organizations keep service members connected to home, service and family. These are both free events.

On Friday, March 24, the first Miss East Sixth Street USO Pageant will be at 7 p.m. with an anniversary social following at 8 p.m. The pageant will feature five female contestants competing for a scholarship for the 2017-2018 school year. As with every other

celebration during this week, the pageant will be inspired by 1940s attire and etiquette. Admission to both of these events is \$10. Seating is limited, so those wishing to pre-purchase tickets should contact the USO to secure tickets.

On Saturday March 25, the USO will host a 1940s Community Day and Mississippi Bicentennial Celebration event from noon to 4 p.m. Activities for the day include jitterbug lessons, a 1940s and military vehicle show, free snacks redeemed through ration cards, and a 1940s live entertainment hour. Guests are highly encouraged to dress in 1940s attire, but it is not required.

“We are both honored and elated to offer this series of special events that give us the opportunity to invite the community to celebrate 75 years of history. We look forward to our residents and visitors joining us at the USO,” Rick Taylor, executive director for Hattiesburg Tourism and Convention Commissions, said.

This official bicentennial project was made possible by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council, through support from the Mississippi Development Authority.

The USO will also post all event activities on its Facebook [page](#).

The African American Military History Museum's regular hours are from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, and from 12-4 p.m. on Saturday with special appointments available. The USO Club opened on March 22, 1942 and was constructed by community volunteers who invested more than 40,000 hours in the project. It is currently the only surviving restored USO built exclusively for African American soldiers and in 2003 was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. More than 150 years of African American military history is on display in the Museum.

The African American Military History Museum is a Hattiesburg Convention Commission Facility. Since 1991, the Hattiesburg Convention Commission has been developing, operating and promoting tourism-related facilities for the Hattiesburg area. For more information, call 601.450.1942 or visit HattiesburgUSO.com.

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