

Media Alert

Friday, March 6

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**Mississippians Explore Poverty & Education Challenges   
to Stem the Dropout Crisis** *The majority of students attending public schools in the U.S. live in poverty.*

**JACKSON, Miss.** *–* Mississippi parents, teachers, community organizations and local stakeholders are participating in a panel discussion and documentary screening on

Saturday, March 7 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Russell C. Davis Planetarium in Jackson, Mississippi. Can a community really change the fortunes of a generation by doubling down on their neighborhood schools?

Hosted by Mississippi Public Broadcasting and local partners, the event aims to create awareness and search for solutions to the challenges local students living in poverty deal with just to get to school. The goal is to effect change in the dropout rates in Mississippi schools.   
  
A [recent Southern Education Foundation report](http://www.southerneducation.org/Our-Strategies/Research-and-Publications/New-Majority-Diverse-Majority-Report-Series/A-New-Majority-2015-Update-Low-Income-Students-Now) has uncovered that, for the first time in 50 years, the majority of students attending public schools in the U.S. live in poverty.

The new documentary “[180 Days: Hartsville](http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/shows/list/180-days/home/)” takes a fresh look at the nation’s poverty and education challenges faced by a rural South Carolina town as it triumphs in the face of extraordinary challenges. The two-hour film airs on MPB TV Tuesday, March 17 at 7 p.m.

**WHAT:** LocalPanel Discussion and Documentary Screening of “180 Days: Hartsville”  
 **#MPBAMGRAD** and **#JPSStrong**

**DATE:** Saturday, March 7

**TIME:** 10 a.m. to noon

**WHERE**: Russell C. Davis Planetarium in Jackson, Mississippi

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“180 Days: Hartsville was funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) as part of [American Graduate: Let’s Make it Happen](http://www.americangraduate.org/), a public media initiative to stem the dropout crisis by supporting community-based solutions.

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[**Mississippi Public Broadcasting**](file:///\\fileserver2\Home\mirby\News%20Releases\DRAFTS\mpbonline.org) (www.mpbonline.org) provides instructional and public affairs programming to Mississippians through its statewide television and radio network.  MPB enhances the work of educators, students, parents and learners of all ages by providing informative programming and educational resources.  MPB’s locally-produced programming focuses on the people, resources and attractions that reflect Mississippi’s unique culture and diverse heritage. Children’s television programs constitute a major portion of the daytime and weekend morning schedules.  MPB provides a valuable resource to Mississippians in disseminating information as part of the state’s emergency preparedness and response system. Since 1970, MPB has won over 400 national, regional and statewide awards, including Emmy®, Edward R. Murrow and Parents’ Choice® Awards.

[**American Graduate: Let's Make it Happen**](http://www.americangraduate.org/) was launched in 2011 with 25 public media stations in high need communities to spotlight the high school dropout crisis

and focus on middle and high school student interventions. Today, more than 80 public radio and television stations in over 30 states have partnered with over 1000 community organizations and schools, as well as Alma and Colin Powell's America's Promise Alliance, Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University School of Education, Alliance for Excellent Education, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and