



## TOUGALOO COLLEGE NEWS

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### **Tougaloo College Senior Writes Play to Benefit Restoration of Ballard Hall**

Tougaloo, MS – Tougaloo College senior ICOHM (Interdisciplinary Career Oriented Humanities Major) with an emphasis in music, Clinnesha Dillon, has written a play to raise funds for Ballard Hall on the Tougaloo College campus. Ballard Hall, which houses the music and theatre programs, is the third oldest building on the campus and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Dillon, who is also Miss Tougaloo College, is a native of McComb, MS and will be producing the play in McComb to benefit Operation Noah's Arc, Inc. (ONA).

The play, "Hand Me Down Blues," is the melodic, soul-stirring and , life-affirming story of three sisters, Clayre, Chauncy and Carmen Gordon, and their longing for peace, happiness and stability. Overcome by negative childhood memories, these three women struggle with an overall positive image of self and the pleasures of affection due to negative past experiences with their father and blues master, Silas Gordon. Often isolated, battered and indecisive, Clayre, Chauncy and Carmen reside solemnly in the state of Georgia, while Silas dwells in Mississippi, battling a heart condition and discovering the power and grace of self-forgiveness. When novelist and breadwinner, Clayre learns of Silas' critical illness, she calls on her two siblings to discuss reconciliation with their once-sadistic and abusive father. Bitter and uncompromising, Chauncy and Carmen oppose, leaving Clayre with the dispirited heart of a child yearning for freedom. Clayre and her sisters finally come to the realization that God wanted to walk with them through their years of pain so that they could discover a wonderful truth. The play's subtitle is: "A subconscious power...passed down."

Performances of the play are scheduled for April 20 and April 21, 2006 at 8:00 p.m. in the Kroger Gymnasium of the Health, Wellness and Human Resources Center at Tougaloo College. For tickets or information, phone 601-977-7870.

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*Founded in 1869, Tougaloo College is a private, historically black, coeducational, four-year liberal arts institution, located in Madison County, on the northern edge of Jackson, Mississippi. Known nationally as "The Cradle of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi," the College is led by its first female president, Dr. Beverly Wade Hogan. The 13th president of Tougaloo College, Dr. Hogan is a 1973 graduate of the College and a native Mississippian. Under her visionary leadership, the College boasts a student retention rate of 78% and ranks as one the top five historically black colleges and universities whose graduates earn their PhDs in the sciences. More than half (66%) of its graduates enter graduate and professional schools immediately after graduation. Today, Tougaloo College is the leading producer of African American health professionals, including over 40% of the physicians and dentists, practicing in the state of Mississippi. It has produced more than one-third of the state's African American attorneys and educators, including teachers, principals, and school superintendents.*