



AYERS CHEROKEE EAST BROAD
VALLEY STREET WALLACE DRIVE

VALLEY STREET CAMPUS

65th Campus Anniversary

1960-2025

**YOU'RE INVITED
TO THE
VALLEY STREET
CAMPUS
TO CELEBRATE
GADSDEN STATE!**



**AYERS CHEROKEE EAST BROAD
VALLEY STREET WALLACE DRIVE**

**100 YEARS AS A COLLEGE,
65 YEARS AT VALLEY STREET**

GADSDEN VOCATIONAL TRADE SCHOOL/GADSDEN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

MONDAY, JULY 7 @ 11 A.M.

JOB CORP GYM | 600 VALLEY STREET, GADSDEN, AL 35901

PROGRAM THEME:

**REMEMBERING OUR
LEGACY WHILE
EQUIPPING TODAY'S
STUDENTS
WITH EXCELLENCE
AND OPPORTUNITY.**

FEATURED SPEAKER:



**STEVEN W. HOYT
BIRMINGHAM, AL**

A RECEPTION WILL BE HELD AFTER THE PROGRAM.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO THIS CELEBRATION!

QUESTIONS? CONTACT RICKY TILLIS, VALLEY STREET DIRECTOR, AT 256-549-8678 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

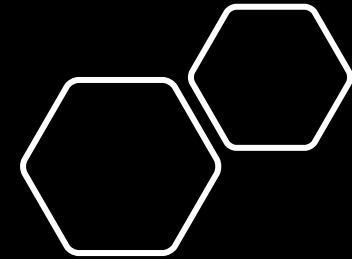
**The Celebration
of a Legacy**

A Dream A Reality A Heritage
EUGENE NED PRATER
Founder



 **GSCC-Valley Street Campus**
Designated
Historical Black College - HBCU

October 1997
Dedicated
February 27, 2008



THE HISTORY OF THE COFFEE SHOP AS TOLD BY MR. PRATER



The History of The Coffee Shop

What was the need for this? Just how did it come about? This building came into existence because of application for practical nursing. The first person contacted was Mrs. Roger Watts to draw up some tentative plans for a nursing program. Mrs. Watts drew up these plans and this building was thrown into the embryonic stage of development. During this stage, the project was discussed with friends of the school. Everyone agreed that now is the time to accept the challenge and to light a candle for the others to follow and show them the need for such a program in our school. We alone must make the first steps and let all who are concerned know that we intend to have a program at all cost, and we did.

The next step was discussed with Mr. T. B. Slaughter, who was then our Brick Masonry instructor. He agreed that it was a good project, and he, along with his students, would cooperate with such a valuable project. Mr. Slaughter requested that one other professional, Brick Mason work with him. He suggested that Mr. C. H. Wallace, a friend of his, as this other person. Upon calling and explaining to Mr. Wallace what was trying to be done, Mr. Wallace readily consented to help and worked for only \$2.50 an hour with a total 232 hours to aid in the progress of this program.

The foundation was laid out by Mr. T. E. Clark and Mr. T. B. Slaughter. Students and Teachers alike worked hard trying to accomplish our goal. After the foundation was laid, the building began to rise. It was this time that the announcement came from the State Board of Education saying that they would build a new school. This school is to be “second to none.” As a result of this announcement, the idea of practical nursing to the curriculum was abandoned.

The Board members surveyed the school and noticed the inadequate conditions and said that no one likes or wants to be in a bad environment. It was a result of this observation that they decided to build a school that would create an adequate and conducive setting for advancement. This, in turn, would strengthen the students’ outlook on life for we want to train the students to have the desire to be a part of the good and better thing in life. With this in mind, we formed a mental picture of all working together as one; not by mouth, but by deed.

THE HISTORY OF THE COFFEE SHOP (CONT.)



It is our ardent desire that the efforts put forth will be an asset to the community as long as it exists. The torch is handed to Mr. Bell and Mr. Clark. Mr. Watts and his students sold scrap iron for the doors for this building, and campus debris in order to buy the paint. The Ragland Brick Company gave 1,000 bricks for the floor, The Piedmont Brick Company gave 1,000 bricks for the fireplace and any other need that might arise for bricks. Mr. Bell, along with his students did the building, Mr. Clark and his students took care of the woodwork, Mr. Stickland assisted with the electrical work, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Thomas, along with his students worked on the plumbing, Mr. Johnson and his students made the drapes, and Mr. Watts, along with his students in the auto-mobile laboratory, gave assistance wherever they were needed.

THE HISTORY OF THE COFFEE SHOP (CONT.)



On behalf of the Administration, we would like to express thanks and appreciation for all that you have done and express our thanks to our many friends for helping to make this project a success. A beautiful dream has indeed come true. “As long as life is in my body, I will be grateful for the cooperation that you have given to Gadsden State,” the closing words from our dedicated director, Mr. E. N. Prater in his dedication address. This eighteenth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty-four.

I hereby submit my name:

E. N. Prater, Director

THE HISTORY OF THE
COFFEE SHOP (CONT.)



The Celebration Program



Valley Street Campus

65th Campus Anniversary | 1960-2025

"Remembering Our Legacy while Equipping today's Students with Excellence and Opportunity."

July 7, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

Dr. Keana Howze, Mistress of Ceremony

Welcome	Mrs. Karen Robinson Dental Science Program Director/ Instructor
Opening Remarks	Interim President Alan Smith
Scripture and Invocation.....	Pastor Joseph S. Rowser, Pine Grove Baptist Church, Lincoln, AL
Musical Selection.....	Mrs. Epiphany Cherry
Recognition of Special Guest (former Campus Directors)	Mrs. Joy McCamey, Title III Director
The History of the Coffee Shop as told by Mr. Eugene N. Prater.....	Collaboration
1. Dental Assisting Student- Lela Rogers	2. DMS Student- Amari Headen
3. LPN Student- Monique Cury	4. Construction Tech Student- Sawyer Mabry
5. Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Student- Victor Ramirez	
Musical Selection.....	Mrs. Epiphany Cherry
Introduction of Keynote Speaker	Mr. Ricky Tillis, Director—GSCC Valley Street Campus
Speaker	Mr. Steven Hoyt Birmingham, AL
Recognition of Alumni	Mrs. Shirley Hall (Class of 72) <i>Gadsden Vocational Trade School 1960-1972 Gadsden State Technical Institute 1972-1985 Valley Street Campus 1985-Present</i>
Historical Campus Display	Dr. Demick Griffey
Closing Remarks / Dismissal.....	Mr. Ricky Tillis

EUGENE N. PRATER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

ERECTED 1965



SCENE OF NEW SCHOOL 1965



THE VALLEY STREET CAMPUS HISTORY

The Valley Street Campus History

The Valley Street Campus is the second oldest campus of Gadsden State Community College.

It was formally established on July 6, 1960, as the Gadsden Vocational Trade school. A private vocational training school for African Americans.

It was founded by Mr. Eugene Prater in response to the lack of higher learning opportunities for African American veterans.

The initial courses started were auto mechanics, auto body and fender, plastering and cement finishing, brick masonry, woodworking, dry cleaning and laundry, general business and tailoring.

In 1972, the school was renamed the Gadsden State Technical Institute.

In 1985, the school merged with Gadsden State Community College, becoming the Valley Street Campus of Gadsden State.

In 1997, the Valley Street Campus received the unique Historically Black Colleges and Universities designation from the U.S. Department of education. As a result of this designation, the Valley Street Campus became a Title III grant recipient the following year.

Title III funding assists HBCUs in establishing and strengthening the institution's physical resources, academic programs and institutional management.

This grant enables the Valley Street Campus to invest in learning technologies that provide professional development for faculty and staff, facilitate student services such as advising and tutoring and improved campus facilities through construction and renovation projects.

The Valley Street Campus currently offers HVAC, Construction Technology, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Practical Nursing, Dental Assisting, and several academic courses.

In November 2024, the Eugene N. Prater Administration Building was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage by the Alabama Historical Commission.

As part of Gadsden State Community College, the Valley Street campus prepares students from all backgrounds for success through exceptional education and innovative workforce development with a focus on community and global engagement resulting in a positive economic impact for all stakeholders.

Mr. Eugene N. Prater 1960-1978

Founder/Director, Gadsden Vocational Trade School (7/6/1960)

- Foundation laid for future work
- School became a State Institute (1962)
- School renamed Gadsden State Technical Institute (1972)

Mr. Edward D. Bonner 1978-1982

First President, Gadsden State Technical Institute

- Additional programs
- Campus improvements

Mr. Roger Watts 1982-1996

Provost, Gadsden State Technical Institute

- Campus renamed during the merger to Valley Street Campus (1985)
- Gadsden Job Corps Center Established (1990)

Mr. Willie Duncan 1996-2007

Director, Valley Street Campus

- Campus designated as a HBCU (1997)
- Title III Administration Office Established (1998)

Mr. Carl Byers 2008- 2018

Director, Valley Street Campus/ Instructor

- New Student Center Building erected
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Program began
- Campus improvements

Mr. Ricky L. Tillis 2022- Present

Director, Valley Street Campus/ Instructor

- Dental Assisting Program began
- Academic Classes Offered
- HBCU Organization Partnerships
- Increased Campus Student Scholarships
- Administration Building registered as a Historical Landmark (2024)

VALLEY STREET CAMPUS ADMINISTRATORS

VALLEY STREET CAMPUS 600 Valley Street | Gadsden, AL | 35901 | 256.549.8673



- 200 Prater Hall | 538 North 4th Place
 Administration
 DMS
 LPN
 Library
- 201 Dining Hall (Job Corps) | 546 North 4th Place
- 202 LRC Valley Street | 600 Valley Street
 Learning Resource Center
 CTC (Cardinal Tutoring Center)
 Title III Program Offices
- 203 Carpentry | 604 Valley Street
 Construction Technology
- 204 Air Conditioning | 608 Valley Street
 Air Conditioning & Refrigeration
 CNA
- 205 Storage 1 Valley Street | 602 Valley Street
- 207 Dental Assisting | 540 North 4th Place
 Dental Assisting Program
- 209 HBCU Building | 606 Valley Street

