

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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NEWS RELEASE

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"Sloss Furnaces: Then and Now" Exhibition Opens at Lawson State Community College

BIRMINGHAM, AL | Lawson State Community College has brought a part of major industrial history to campus and will house the Sloss Furnaces Exhibition: Then and Now, that depicts the rise of the industrial district in Birmingham, Alabama.

“This unique exhibition is part of a collaboration between Lawson State Community College’s World History classes, Red Mountain Park, and Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark,” said Adjunct history instructor, Gregory Wilson, using the concept of “Place-Based Public History,” seeks to encourage awareness of the rich and diverse local history surrounding Lawson State Community College and the region’s impact on national and world history.

The exhibition includes display panels, artifacts and relics, all highlighting the industrial birth of Birmingham in 1871, including Sloss Furnaces, founded in 1881 by James Withers Sloss, who also operated ore mines on Red Mountain. During the 1883 Louisville Exposition, Sloss Furnaces won a bronze medal for “best pig iron.” Operating for over 90 years, the furnaces served as a precursor to the Birmingham District’s industrial heritage.

Karen Utz, Curator and Historian of Sloss Furnaces, was instrumental in bringing the exhibition to Lawson State. “Sloss Furnaces is more than a landmark or museum. It represents the character and spirit of the South’s industrial heritage,” Utz said.

Lawson State Community College and the surrounding communities are a product of this industrial heritage and have added viable sustainability to the region’s education, labor pool and economic growth. The exhibition runs through February 2017.