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Tyler Morning Telegraph

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County to pay \$1.5M settlement in jail case

LEEZA MEYER

A federal judge in Tyler approved a \$1.5 million class-action settlement against Smith County regarding an allegation the county jail held 102 formerly incarcerated individuals beyond their scheduled release dates.

The 2023 lawsuit, Hughes et al. vs. Smith County, alleged the jail detains peo-

ple for "unreasonably long periods of time" after their felony sentences because the jail "relies on a disjointed, paper-based system" for sharing information to agencies that send records to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in order to finalize release, according to United States District Court documents.

These allegations violate 14th Amendment, guar-

anteeing due process and equal protection under the law against state infringements.

Plaintiffs Ladarion Hughes, who was detained for more than 27 additional days from late 2021 to early 2022; Angela Alonzo, who was over detained for 33 days in 2022 and Demarcus Lively, who was over detained for eight days in 2022

sought money damages on

behalf of themselves and as representatives of others in similar situations.

"This is a story about a county prioritizing its own convenience over the rights and interests of the people it's supposed to be serving," said Nathan Fennell, attorney with Deason Center Policy, a part of the litigation team, in a statement from

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The Smith County Jail in downtown Tyler is pictured. (Tyler Morning Telegraph File)

Judge weighs in on hospital merger

Newsom says Mt. Pleasant residents will benefit from Christus influence

JORDAN GREEN

If Hopkins County Judge Robert Newsom had his widowmaker heart attack more than a decade ago, he'd have been dead.

Fortunately for him, it happened the morning of Nov. 12, 2025, after a decade of innovation at the hospital in Sulphur Springs.

In the decade since Christus Health took over the facility, the nonprofit healthcare corporation invested millions to upgrade its facilities and the services available there.

Newsom, 74, needed to undergo an advanced heart procedure immediately.

"They used to not be able to do these operations," he said. "They'd take me to Tyler or somewhere else, and now they do it here. Well, that's huge because that saved my

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Since mid-January, McGee has taken over the role once held by her childhood mentor, DeAnna Hargrove Holliday, leading the theatre with the same dedication that first inspired her at age eight. (Jennifer Scott/Tyler Morning Telegraph)

'Full-Circle Moment'

Tyler Civic Theatre stage vet Allison McGee steps into managing director role

JENNIFER SCOTT

From student to stage director to managing director, Allison McGee has come full circle at Tyler Civic Theatre Center. In mid-January, McGee took over the role once held by her childhood mentor, DeAnna Hargrove Holliday, leading the theatre with the same dedication that first inspired her at age 8.

"The theatre has been a part of my upbringing and my raising, and I feel very connected and dedicated to it," McGee said. "And it's such a cool full-circle moment for me. My first experience here was with DeAnna as my teacher, and now I get to step into the role she held."

FROM THE STAGE TO THE OFFICE

A Tyler native, McGee attended Rice Elementary, Hubbard Middle School, and Tyler Legacy High School (formerly Robert E. Lee) before earning her associate degree at Tyler Junior College and a



Allison McGee portrays Miss Hannigan during Tyler Civic Theatre Center's production of 'Annie' in June 2025. (Contributed Photo)

bachelor's degree from UT Tyler. She later completed a master's in theatre at the University of Houston.

On stage, she has

tackled a wide range of roles, from Bottom in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to Miss Hannigan in "Annie" and the title

role in "The Drowsy Chaperone." McGee said she played some of her most memorable roles at the theatre, including Patsy

Cline in "Always... Patsy Cline," a part that allowed her to tour local nursing homes and helped cover her college expenses.

"There was, at one point, I did three solid years of shows here in my twenties," McGee said. "I really can't count how many productions I've done here, but each one of them is very special."

As one last 'hurrah' on the stage, McGee is directing the upcoming production of "The Importance of Being Earnest," a classic Oscar Wilde comedy set that hit the stage this pasts weekend. Tickets and more information can be found at tylercivictheatre.com.

Her decades-long involvement with Tyler Civic Theatre Center — as performer, director, educator, and board member — gives her a deep understanding of both the artistic and administrative sides of the theatre. As managing director, McGee's role put her at the center of everything that

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