

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

Name DAVID J. DENNIS DATE 1/6/65
FULL GIVEN NAME DAVID JAMES DENNIS RACE AFRICAN AGE 24
BIRTHDAY 10/17/40 WHERE WERE YOU BORN? OMEGA, LA.
What is your home address? (not your project) 1900 PHILLIPS ST.
APT. 5 - NEW ORLEANS, LA.

What other cities have been your hometown
SLYBONE PORT, LA FROM 10/17/40 TO 11/1/61
JACKSON, MISS. FROM 6/1-62 TO 11-64
FROM _____ TO _____

Currently receiving financial support from:
 National CORE _____ Mississippi CORE _____ COFO Subsistence _____ SNCC _____
_____ Personal (savings, family, etc.) None _____ Other-What? _____
_____ Supporting group- Name of organization _____
Person you deal with _____
Address _____

How much do you receive? (if other than national CORE or SNCC)\$ _____ every _____

How much longer do you expect to work in civil rights in the south?
AS LONG AS I AM IN THE SOUTH.

When did you join CORE staff or start Southern Civil Rights work? 11/1/61

Where are you working now? NEW ORLEANS WHICH PROGRAM? Southern Regional

Other places you have worked as CORE staff:
Location LOUISIANA FROM 9/61 TO 6/1/62 PROGRAM _____
Location MISSISSIPPI FROM 6/1-62 TO 11-64 Program _____
Location _____ From _____ To _____ Program _____

Other civil rights experience and activities. Please give specifics such as dates, cities, organization, type of activity, arrests, etc.

1958 wrote newsletter for NAACP; Active in NAACP until 1960
Mass March ^{SPRING} 1960 4500 people to capitol in Baton Rouge - participated
CORE - Nov. 1960 New Orleans Chapter

EDUCATION HISTORY

From-To Grad? Major or field

High school Holy ROSARY INST. 55-58 12

CITY & STATE LAFFAYETTE, LA

COLLEGE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY 59-60 FR. MATH

CITY AND STATE BATON ROUGE, LA.

OTHER DILLARD UNIVERSITY 60-61 SOPH-JR. REL SCI.

CITY AND STATE NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Employment history (do not include civil rights work, do include military service)

From '56 To 60 Firm FLORENTINE CLUB

Their kind of business NIGHT CLUB City and State Shreveport, LA.

What kind of work did you do? COOK

FROM _____ TO _____ FIRM _____

Their Kind of business _____ City and State _____

What kind of work did you do? _____

From _____ To _____ Firm _____

Their kind of business _____ City and State _____

What kind of work did you do? _____

Persons to contact in case of emergency:

Name Mrs. Mattie Dennis Relation to you WIFE

Address 1129 Maple St. Apt. 8D Home phone 354-1548

JACKSON, MISS Business phone _____

Persons to contact in case of emergency:

Name Mrs Kizzie Sheppard Relation to you MOTHER

Address 5403-2nd St Home phone 868-5230

Shreveport, LA Business phone _____

Hometown, campus, or other newspapers, radio and TV stations which might be interested in your activities:

Shreveport SUN

Please list civic, religious, campus or other groups which might be interested in your work and your project; give a person to contact and an address if possible

Distinctions/Comments: Please use this space to add to any previous answers, and/or to make, and/or to list any distinctions you have had the good luck or misfortune to acquire, such as student body president at school, first Negro mayor of Birmingham, Merit Scholarship winner, etc.

Pres of Class Soph, Jr 57 years at Holy Rosary, Anst.

2 yrs Pres of Altar Boy Society, St. Joseph's La. Lady of Blessed Sacrament
LUNCH COUNSEL
In first jail - New Orleans 11/60 1st meal hog head cheese sandwich on french bread

How many times have you been arrested? approx 20 times

How many times for civil rights work? approx 20 times

(If you were taken into custody at any point count it and list it below, even if you were bailed out or had your fine paid before you were booked and put in a cell)

CIVIL RIGHTS ARREST RECORD
HOW LONG

CURRENT STATUS - on appeal, fine paid (how much), number of days served on sentence, etc.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CHARGE</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>BAIL</u>	<u>IN JAIL</u>
'60	Distributing	N.O., LA		
		N.O.		
'60	Distributing	LA		
		New Orleans		
'61	Picketing without permit	LA		
	Obstructing	New Orleans		
'61	Traffic	Louisiana		
	Disobeying an	New Orleans		
'61	officer			
'61	Violating the	Shreveport, La.		
'61	peace			
	Blocking sidewalk	Baton Rouge		
'61				
	Picketing without	Baton Rouge		
'61	permit			
'60	Distributing	New Orleans		
	leaflets without permit			
'61	Distributing	Jackson, Miss		
	peace			
'63	Contributing to	Jackson		
	Delinquency of			
'61	Disobeying an officer	Baton Rouge		
'61	arson	Shreveport		
'61	obscenity	Shreveport		
'61	loitering	Shreveport		

In 1962 10-15 traffic & other harassments in Miss.

Notes on biography of Dave Dennis

1958 wrote a newsletter for the NAACP in Shreveport but did not participate in the direct action

spring 1960 participated in mass march 4,500 of students to capitol in Baton rouge while a student at Southern U.

in Nov. 1960 while a student at Dillard joined New Orleans CORE chapter, first arrest came that month, remembers his first meal in jail as hog head cheese sandwich on french bread

he continued in the sit ins and was arrested several more times, picketing too May, 1961 went with Doris and Oretta Castle on freedom ride from Montgomery to Jackson. arrested in Jackson but after 5 days was extradited back to New Orleans because to the ~~Pr~~ Parish prison. They had gotten out of that prison just before leaving to go to Montgomery to join freedom ride, and conditions of release from prison was that they were no supposed to leave the state. Dave had been in the prison for 30 days for picketing without a permit. After extradition was in 2 days before bonded out Was still a student at Dillard during this and returned there in June to take final exams after all other students had left

summer 1961 speaking tour in Chicago, New York with Jerome Smith picketin in Washington July 4, 1961 with Wash CORE also during the summer was elected regional rep b y national conv or council

July 1961 back to Shreveport to organize a CORE chapter; first project was desegregation of bus terminal which they did. in the course of the project Dave was arrested for vagrancy, loitering etc in one instance he was arrested for "disturbing the peace" while sitting in a parked car; the officer said he was disturbing his peace by being there. It was also during this time that a small freedom ride came thru through Shreveport led b Rev. E. Elton Cox, it had come from Arkansas and went to New Orleans. There was a hostile scene at the bus station in Shreveport with about 1000 whites, fortunately there was little violence. During the summer at a banquet sponsored by Shreveport CORE at a church two bombs were thrown in the windows while Dave was addressing the banquet. No one was injured but a part of the church burned. After the fire was wput out Dave

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Dave had a plan at that time to use the 50 students as a "non-violent Army" and scatter them in Louisiana and some in Miss. This was the forerunner of the existing CORE Task Force. The national office didnot accept the idea at the time and when summer came the students left and the project apparently disintegrated more or less.

June 1962 went to Mississippi, that summer COFO was organized to work on voter registration and as an instrument of getting grants from VEP, ^{on a state-wide basis} at that time there were only about half a dozen civil rights staff workers in the state Dave hired people out of his own salary and then with VEP money when it came. ~~He~~ He was working in Jackson, Hattiesburg, Greenville and Nulleville. Others involved then were Lawrence Guyot, Bob Moses, Lafayette Surney, Tandy McFair and James Jones Dave was arrested between 10 and 15 times during this period, mostly if not all were for various traffic offenses. One time he was arrested and the officer told him, when Dave asked what the arrest was for, "by the time we get to the jail I'll think of something. Prior to COFO there was the Jackson nonviolent Movement composed of CORE and SNCC, an instrument organization to involve the freedom ride students. It was generally in this period, June-December 1963 that the Miss. food program was organized, one of its first projects was to take food to people in the Delta who had lost jobs trying to register. Also Dave was one of those who first developed the idea of a community center, he along with Moses and James Bevel

January, Feb. March ~~XXXX~~ 1963 Dave continued his general work, Greenwood was added. The quilt cooperative in Nulleville was organized. George Raymond worked there for a while before going to Canton. It was during this time, and earlier than Dave met his wife to be Matte ~~XXX~~ Bivins in Hattiesburg/^(also her home town) where she worked for SNCC (2 yrs altogether) as Bob Moses' secretary.

April 1963 Dave went to Canton to start work there and in June George Raymond came down from Nulleville to work Canton. During this period Dave recruited various people in the state to work or from outside the state to come and work, including: Doris Castle, Annie Moody, Jerome Smith, Jean Thompson, one of the Dearon boys from

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near Canton, Doris _____ (from Jackson), Barbara McHair, Hezekiah Watkins,
and Matt Suarez

June, July 1963 Dave worked in Jackson organizing the demonstrations
at the request of the NAACP. He worked closely with ~~ZZZ~~ Medgar Evers and Dave
remembers that the day he was killed he had been using Medgar's car all day
in Canton and missed most the mass meeting that night. He returned that car
that night and saw Medgar shortly before he (Medgar went home). Dave remembers that
he left a pack of Kent cigarettes in Medgar's car.

Fall 1963 sometime about here Dave was elected Asst Program director of COFO.
in the fall was the first freedom vote Aaron Henry for Governor, Edwin King for
Lt. Gov. After the freedom vote was over Dave turned himself in to the Jackson
police. He had been wanted for charges of contributing to the delinquency of
a minor since July (probably in connection with the Jackson demonstrations).
As it was not convenient for him to go to jail until after the freedom ballot,
he had to avoid the police for about four months, the measures to do that included
being smuggled out of Jackson in a car trunk. The police searched his apt. looking
for him, etc.

From Jan 1964 to November 1964 Dave served as the Asst Program director of cofo,
an increasingly large job as COFO grew in size, preparing for the summer program.
In January three workers arrived from New York, Dick Jewett and Rita and Michael
Schwerner. Jewett was sent to Canton where he was put in jail for 32 days after
he had been there less than 24 hours. Dave had by this time received approval
from the national office ~~to~~ for his community center program and asked the Sch-
werners if they would like to work in the community center in Meridian. They
agreed and went to Meridian only to find that there wasn't any community center
at all, only five ~~rooms~~ empty rooms. They called him and asked him how they were
to set it up; since there were no other centers in the state and they were
about to establish the first one, there was little Dave could tell them. Perhaps
that was best, because left on their ~~of~~ own, they established a beautiful center.
In ~~November~~ ^{October} 1964 Dave left Mississippi to work in the CORE southern regional office
as the southern program director.