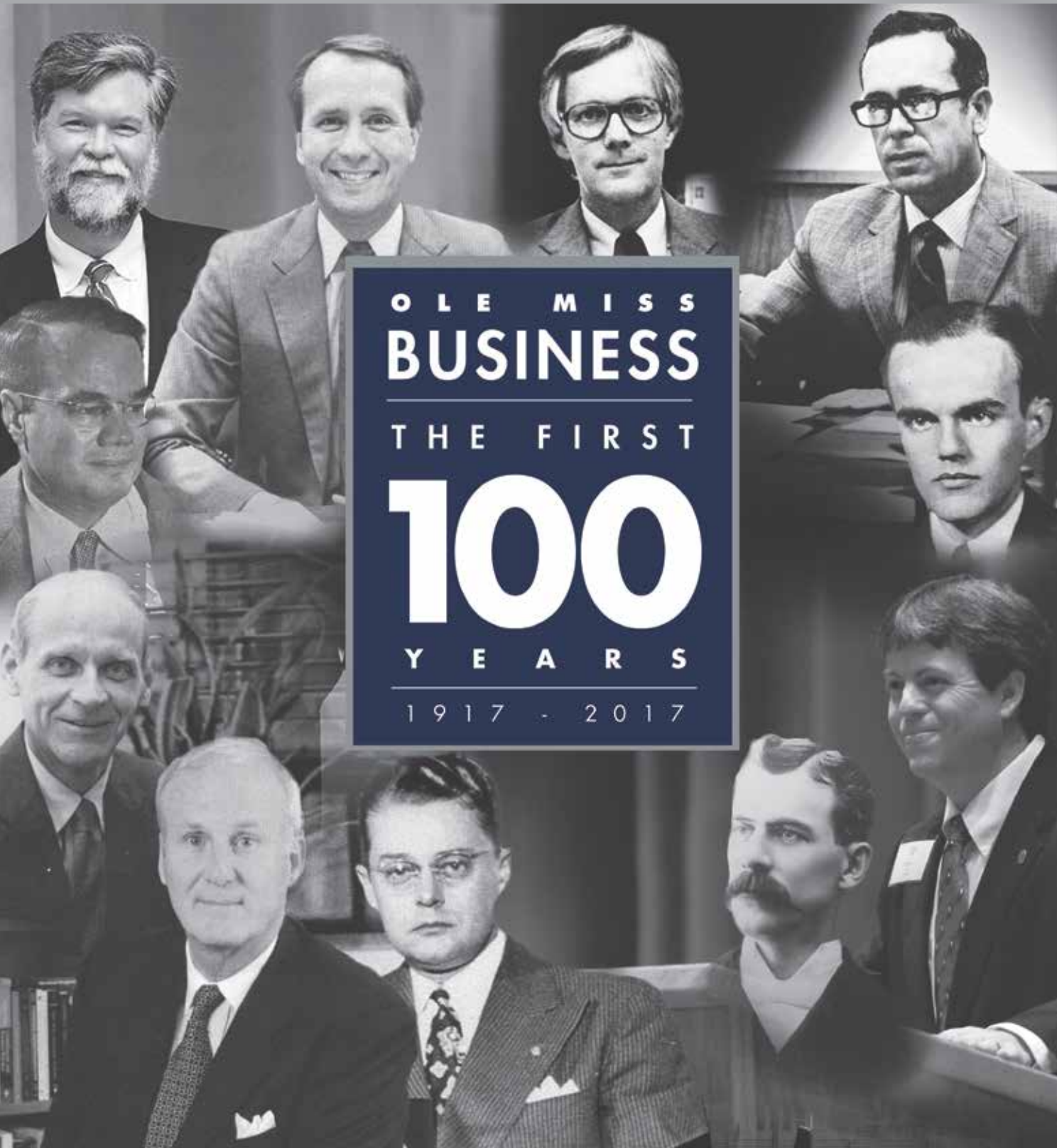




BUSINESS FIRST

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



GREETINGS FROM THE DEAN

As we complete the centennial celebration of the University of Mississippi School of Business Administration's founding, it is an appropriate time to reflect on our accomplishments and challenges. The business school has experienced tremendous success since it started 100 years ago, as well as weathered much change inside its halls, and in the business world and society.

The Ole Miss business school is really about the people who come here as students and go on to be successful alumni, and the faculty and staff who help them along the way. Without sustained and dedicated effort over this first century, we would not be ready to face the challenges that lie ahead. To quote Isaac Newton, "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Newton's quote applies to our path toward greater knowledge and continuous improvement in the school.

We have watched technology change from mechanical typewriters to smartphones with more computing power than the computers that put the Apollo astronauts on the moon. We have seen businesses get away from fundamentals such as treating customers well and ethical behavior, only to be reminded that these fundamentals are important and lasting and cannot be replaced.

We have also been fortunate to have financial support from our alumni and friends to help us create the sum of interactions, experiences and knowledge gained throughout our history.

We have seen fads come and go, and the complexity of our world increase, but the bedrock principles of business have remained true, and our focus on these foundational principles have allowed our graduates to have a business education for a lifetime. Our people really do make a difference, and it shows in our success and will do so for the next century.

In this issue of *BusinessFirst*, we celebrate several outstanding alumni, faculty, students and donors. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and appreciate the efforts that have allowed us to build on the shoulders of the Ole Miss Business giants who have come before us.



Ken Cyree
Dean



KEVIN BAIN



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STELLA CONNELL



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Students receive feedback from coaches and present their speeches to judges as part of Speaker's Edge.



The School of Business Administration (Ole Miss Business) at the University of Mississippi is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

BUSINESS FIRST

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Published September 2018

253 Holman Hall
 P.O. Box 1848
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Carole Lynn Meadows

Book celebrates first 100 years of UM business school



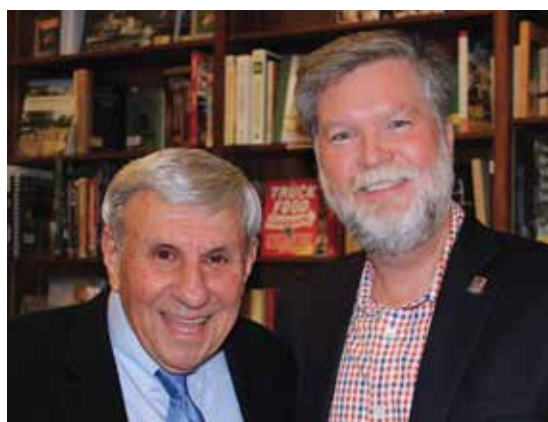
Candie Simmons and Joe Meadows



Celia Muths and Lyn Roberts



Robert Van Ness and Sam Hammoud



Henry Paris and Dean Ken Cyree

The University of Mississippi School of Business Administration concluded a series of events celebrating its centennial with a book launch Nov. 10 at Oxford's Off Square Books.

The event featured signings and a video commemorating "100 Years of Ole Miss Business."

The book, *Ole Miss Business: The First 100 Years*, a 200-page illustrated history of the school, takes the reader on a journey from the inaugural 1917 semester as the School of Commerce, led by Dean James Warsaw Bell, through the spirited leadership of Ken Cyree, the school's current, and 11th, dean.

The volume opens with the speech Cyree made in September at the kickoff event in the courtyard of Holman Hall, the school's home, which was newly adorned with centennial banners along the front.

"Thousands of lives have been changed, thousands of opportunities created and thousands of people making a difference," Cyree said. "I look

forward to the next 100 years and know we are poised to do great things with the dedication and commitment of this group of people in the business school."

Bell was not only instrumental in the school's launch but also in the university's athletics programs. In the early 1900s, he personally financed the football squad. As a member of the athletics committee, Bell was also instrumental in hiring C.M. "Tad" Smith, the school's longest-serving athletics director, who coincidentally married the school's first female graduate, Frances "Bunch" Clark Smith.

The book explores the move from the Lyceum to Conner Hall in 1961, when enrollment spiked from several hundred to 1,100. Many observers



Gen. Leon Collins

partially credit the explosion in enrollment to the fact that Conner Hall had air conditioning and the Lyceum did not.

It chronicles the extraordinary accomplishments of the school's graduates in the 1950s, the enrollment of its first black students in 1965 and the peaceful separation of the schools of Business Administration and Accountancy in 1979.

The school has more than 3,800 students, 63 faculty members and 21 staff members, making it the largest business school in Mississippi. It offers 11 majors, a top 10 insurance program and a new Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

In honor of the centennial, the UM Foundation created the 1917 Order, a fundraising effort to recruit faculty, provide scholarships and increase class offerings, among many other initiatives. Membership begins with a gift of \$25,000 or greater, with pledges scheduled over five years.

"This effort will allow us to continue to grow in national rankings, recruit top students and faculty, and reach for new heights of excellence for the school," said Tim Noss, one of the school's development officers.

PHOTOS AND STORY BY STELLA CONNELL



Ann Canty, Bonnie Van Ness, Ashley McGee



Danielle Ammeter, Mary Ann Connell, Tony Ammeter

CFO mentors students to excel in job interviews

Finance executive Blair Bingham visited the University of Mississippi to educate, inspire and direct students on how to develop and tell their story to stand out in the job interview process.

Bingham spoke on this approach Feb. 22 in Conner Hall and Feb. 23 in Holman Hall.

The chief financial officer for the Alabama Housing Finance Authority helps college graduates develop their personal story for use in interviews. He guides clients through a process of examining their college and high school experiences to identify skills employers are looking for in job candidates.

He visited Ole Miss in September 2017 at the invitation of the business school's advisory board, and his presentation was well-received. His talk last year was titled "Your Story and How It Gets You Hired," and he received rave reviews from students who attended.

"More lectures like this one would be very helpful, not just for a business major, but for all majors, because it is beneficial for everyone to have good interviewing skills," wrote one student in his/her evaluation.

"We are excited that Blair Bingham is coming back to enrich our students' understanding and abilities in their career preparation," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration, before Bingham's visit. "Our students greatly benefit from Blair's expertise and enthusiasm, and we are glad that he will continue to add value to our efforts in careers and job placement.

"The business school is delighted to offer all UM students the opportunity to benefit from Blair's knowledge and wisdom."

Developing a personal story to prepare for interviews is a solid approach for graduates in all fields, not just business, Bingham said.

"Every graduate entering the workforce has a story to tell: their own story," he explained. "That story is much more than reciting a resume. This hour is designed to show how to take your own experiences and make you a much more attractive candidate in the interview."

Bingham earned a bachelor's degree in accountancy and a Master of Business Administration from Millsaps College. He lived in Jackson for 37 years, working in finance for the Mississippi Home Corp., WorldCom and Regions Bank.

While serving as the CFO of Mississippi Home Corp. for 10 years, Bingham interviewed numerous



STELLA CONNELL

Bingham speaking to UM business students in Conner Hall in February 2018

candidates for corporate positions. This experience led to an avocation in mentoring and coaching students to enter the workforce quickly and with great success.

"We know we have a great product in graduates, and we want to help them land their dream job," said Melanie Dowell, president of the Business Advisory Board. "The board established several outreach programs we call 'Rebel Connect' to help connect our graduates land their dream jobs.

"Through the devotion to Rebel Connect board members Bill Andrews and Stan Viner, we have launched what we expect to be a very integral part of our students' career paths."

‘Hickman Girls’ pay tribute to parents with scholarships

The late Dewey and Will Hickman were known for their committed service to the University of Mississippi and the state’s other universities, the Oxford-Lafayette County community and its economic development, local schools, their church and – most of all – their three daughters.

“Our parents led by example, with the message being to us that demonstrating love and loyalty to each other is an important value,” said daughter Jenny Hickman Poole of Batesville.

Those daughters – known around Oxford as the “Hickman girls” – are expressing that affection and devotion by establishing two scholarships at Ole Miss to pay tribute to their parents. Poole and sisters Debbie Hickman Little and Lisa Hickman Tollison, both of Oxford, have funded the Will A. and Dewey C. Hickman Memorial Law Scholarship Endowment for full-time students in the School of Law who are Mississippi residents and have financial need.

The second scholarship is the Will A. and Dewey C. Hickman Memorial Scholarship Endowment designated for full-time students who are community college transfers and Mississippi residents with financial need; first preference will be given to students in the School of Business Administration.

“When we lost our parents, we knew we wanted to do something for these special people who did so much for others,” Poole said. “Their love for Ole Miss was so strong and such an important part of their lives that



HEATHER COSBY POOLE

Known while growing up as the ‘Hickman girls,’ Jenny Hickman Poole (left), Debbie Hickman Little and Lisa Hickman Tollison have created two scholarships at the University of Mississippi to pay tribute to their parents, Dewey and Will Hickman, pictured in the portraits.

establishing something at the university in their names seemed appropriate.”

“Our parents left a wonderful legacy of dedication and service, which we want to memorialize with this gift,” Little said.

The designation of the new scholarships models the Hickmans’ paths in higher education. After losing his father at the age of 12, Will Hickman, a native of Monticello, attended Hinds Community College on a basketball scholarship while doing custodial work on campus. Meanwhile, Dewey Hickman graduated as salutatorian of Meadville High School and enrolled at Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

“They educated three daughters, who earned degrees from Ole Miss, and were instrumental in educating their seven grandchildren,” Tollison said. “Although

we were blessed, not everyone gets the same opportunity to receive a formal education. Our parents would be very pleased to know these scholarships will aid other young men and women.”

Will Hickman, a senior law partner with Hickman, Goza and Spragins, made far-reaching contributions as part of the leadership on the board of trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning for 13 years, where he served a term as president. The IHL is the governing body for policy and financial oversight of Mississippi’s eight public universities.

His experience in desegregation and civil rights cases within public schools and with Ole Miss made his service “valuable” on the board of trustees during the Ayers case, a civil rights case that sought to correct inadequate funding for Mississippi’s

three historically black universities, Little said.

“My dad was an advocate for educational opportunities for everyone.”

Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter praised the daughters for choosing to honor their parents through student scholarships.

“Dewey and Will Hickman were outstanding alumni who will always be part of this university,” Vitter said. “We are extremely grateful to their daughters for this gift of scholarships bearing their names and reflecting their parents’ strongly held belief in extending educational opportunities to others.

“Will Hickman provided transformational leadership and service to the IHL board that will be felt for generations of students attending Mississippi’s eight public universities. Likewise, Dewey Hickman was a source of unwavering support to her husband throughout this meaningful service and also worked tirelessly to strengthen Ole Miss, local schools and other institutions. Their generous spirit could be seen in that they often opened their home for Ole Miss events.”

Will Hickman also was uniquely poised to influence the community as the board attorney for the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors, Oxford School District, Oxford-Lafayette County Hospital and Northeast Mississippi Electric Power Association. He was president of the Oxford-Lafayette County Chamber of Commerce and the North Mississippi Industrial Foundation, as well as chairman of the education committee of the Oxford Economic Development Foundation.

Will Hickman served in the U.S. 5th Army, commanded by Mark Clark, in the Italian theater during World War II, fighting all the way to France. Afterward, he enrolled in Millsaps College, where he met the love of his life, fellow student Dewey Cobb.

After graduation they married, moved to the Oxford campus and lived in the “Vet Village” while Hickman earned his law degree from Ole Miss.

Dewey Hickman taught school in Abbeville for five years and earned a master’s degree in business administration from UM. They had planned to move back home to south Mississippi but chose to remain in their adopted hometown of Oxford.

Will Hickman served Oxford as mayor pro tempore and as an alderman for two terms. His contributions were recognized in 1986 when he was honored as Oxford’s Citizen of the Year. Hinds Community College named him Alumnus of the Year in 1988. He was inducted into the Ole Miss Alumni Hall of Fame and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the university in 1996. The Ole Miss School of Law selected him as its 1998 Alumnus of the Year.

“They fell in love with Ole Miss and Oxford,” Little said. “They were the typical Southern couple, stately and courteous. Mom was the serious one, and Dad had an excellent sense of humor. He was a good man to have on your team.

her parents are “commitment, hard work, determination, giving and family.”

That family also includes their three sons-in-law: Ray Poole, Larry Little and Grady Tollison.

Dewey Hickman was named Woman of the Year by the Business and Professional Women’s Club of Oxford. She taught business communication at Ole Miss for a year. She was active in the community and the First Presbyterian Church for many years. Leadership positions included chair of the Easter Seal Campaign, secretary of the Lafayette County Library Board, member of the V.F.W. Auxiliary and the Oxford Army Advisory Committee and president of the Cosmopolitan and Oxford Garden clubs.

“Our parents were heavily involved in all our activities,” Poole said. “They drove us to everything – cheerleading, Girl Scouts and more. They gave so much of their time and resources to the community, but they were always present for their daughters.”

Both the Will A. and Dewey C. Hickman Memorial Law Scholarship and the Will A. and Dewey Hickman Memorial Scholarship Endowment are open to accept

“

OUR PARENTS WERE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN ALL OUR ACTIVITIES. THEY DROVE US TO EVERYTHING – CHEERLEADING, GIRL SCOUTS AND MORE. THEY GAVE SO MUCH OF THEIR TIME AND RESOURCES TO THE COMMUNITY, BUT THEY WERE ALWAYS PRESENT FOR THEIR DAUGHTERS.” – JENNY HICKMAN POOLE

“Dad always gave credit to Mom whenever he was recognized. Mom was the creative, behind-the-scenes person. She had a servant’s heart and wrote notes of encouragement to people all her life. They believed the family unit to be critical, with Dad often saying, ‘If you don’t maintain close family ties, you’ve lost something that will be difficult to regain.’”

Poole said the words that come to mind when describing

gifts from individuals and organizations. Send checks to the University of Mississippi Foundation, with the fund(s) noted in the memo line, to 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; or give online at umfoundation.com/makeagift.

For more information, contact William Kneip, development officer for the College of Liberal Arts, at 662-915-2254 or Kneip@olemiss.edu.

BY TINA HAHN

VENTURE CAPITALIST PLAYS PIVOTAL ROLE
IN BUSINESS SCHOOL'S GROWTH

John Palmer

Hon. John Palmer's best friend, John W. "Jack" Barksdale, introduced him to a catchphrase "ABC," which became an acronym for "Always Be Closing." Throughout Palmer's extraordinary career, as a mentor, entrepreneur, philanthropist and venture capitalist, he still lives by his late friend's advice to "follow your ABCs."

BY STELLA
CONNELL

"It has certainly been a good axiom for me," Palmer said. "If you have an effort going, whether it is in the arts or in the business school, 'Always Be Closing' in what you pursue."

Palmer and Barksdale came to Ole Miss on basketball scholarships: Palmer (52) from Corinth, and Jack Barksdale (53), the senior of the six "Barksdale boys," from Jackson. Both entered the business school, where Barksdale was elected president of the school.

"Unfortunately, (Barksdale) passed away at the young age of 35 after an extraordinary career with IBM," Palmer said. "He was one of their top performers."

Palmer, one of the nation's pioneers in telecommunications, recalls great friends from the basketball team and his undergraduate days in the business school such as Dugan Abernathy, who continued on to be a professor of economics at the University of North Texas; Eddie Stenftenagel, who returned to Indiana to run Schneider's Department Stores; Denver Brackeen, who went on to serve as adjutant general of the Mississippi National Guard; and fellow Corinthian Jerry Bynum, who had been his high school teammate, along with Cob Jarvis, who went on to coach at Ole Miss from 1969 to 1976.

Palmer credits professor Eugene Peery with encouraging him to "hang in" the accounting program despite the



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Palmer announcing a partnership between MCCA and NPR in 1982

difficulties he faced balancing a challenging major and the responsibilities of being a student-athlete.

"It was very difficult to go on a one-week road trip with all the homework assignments the accounting students had to complete," he said.

After returning from service in the U.S. Army, Palmer returned to UM to pursue a Master of Business Administration degree.

"We had a course based on Harvard's case studies, and my memory is the fun

“

IF WE WANT TO DIFFERENTIATE OUR SCHOOL AND BE ONE OF THE BEST, THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAS TO STEP UP. – JOHN PALMER



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A lunch at the White House included Prime Minister José Manuel Barroso of Portugal, former National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Vice President Dick Cheney, President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell and Hon. John Palmer.

we had thinking through how to solve some of the actual problems from the case studies,” he said.

After completing his studies and passing the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam, he said, “I felt I was prepared to go up against any New York banker and had the confidence to pursue an aggressive future.”

Versatile Career

Palmer worked for Ernst & Ernst (today known as Ernst & Young). In 1965, he purchased his first radio common carrier business with the approval of the Mississippi Public Service Commission, thinking it would be a side business and he would enjoy it more than his CPA work.

“My goals were simple and changed every few years as growth enabled us to set new goals,” he said. “My first goals were a Mississippi system and then a Middle South system.”

The real value for the company internally was the engineers, who were developing the technology they needed to become competitive in the emerging cellular market. The one Palmer remembers best is Jai Bhagat, who served as the company’s first engineering officer.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Palmer played on the 1952 basketball team and lettered as a freshman.



Frank Mankiewicz (left), president of National Public Radio with Palmer (second from right) and associates

“Jai is brilliant and contributed so much in intellectual properties,” Palmer said.

Eventually, Palmer expanded the company to Mobile Communications Corp. of America (MCCA) and began to work with large corporations such as Motorola, Ericsson and AT&T. Competition was growing rapidly, and Bhagat submitted filings in the top 30 markets.

MCCA won Los Angeles and Houston, and then, through a partnership with BellSouth, acquired firms operating in Indianapolis, Richmond, Milwaukee and Mobile.

“After success in Houston, we changed our strategy to large markets,” he said.

From there, Palmer took the company in the direction of paging and changed the model of the company to a subscription-based business – the first of its kind.

“We developed a customer base, and each month their subscription gave us the ability to manage cash flows and other financial guidelines.”

Then, in October 1988, the stock market crashed.

“No one could convince our board where the economy was headed, and our board took the safe road and exchanged

our stock for BellSouth stock, which was a very significant transaction,” he said.

The judge in the case would not allow BellSouth to obtain Skytel’s inter-regional services in the agreement, and MCCA retained Skytel’s satellite-based national and international paging services.

Skytel eventually began working closely with Microwave Communications Inc., better known as MCI, with the company providing long-distance services for Skytel and reselling its paging services, bringing Skytel’s customer base to 1.6 million by the late 1990s.

On May 29, 1999, *The New York Times* announced that MCI-WorldCom acquired Skytel for \$1.3 billion in stock with approval by both company’s boards, the Justice Department, the Federal Communications Commission and Skytel’s shareholders. Palmer remained chairman of the board of Skytel until its sale to MCI-WorldCom.

In 2001, Palmer was named ambassador to Portugal by President George W. Bush. Palmer described working with Secretary of State Colin Powell to enhance the relationship between the U.S. and Portugal as his best accomplishment

and the best job he ever had. He served in that role until September 2004, when he returned to his venture-capital company, GulfSouth Capital, with the goal of bringing more technology and young companies to Mississippi. Two of the company's success stories are Bomgar and SmartSynch.

Mentor and Philanthropist

In 1984, Chancellor Gerald Turner established the Campaign for Ole Miss with the goal of raising \$25 million. Many alumni thought Turner's goal was too high. At the same time, Palmer was trying to help Lynn Spruill, dean of the business school, recruit high-achieving students.

While mentoring students for the MBA program, Palmer approached a young woman, who had attended the University of Virginia as an undergraduate, to encourage her to go to Ole Miss instead of the University of Texas. She inquired about what sort of financial support the school could provide, and his answer was "none."

"It made me realize we had to have an endowment to get good students," he said. "Good students are as important as good professors."

Palmer's commitment to the MBA program came in the form of a \$1 million gift from his company, MCCA, to establish an endowment for scholarships for MBA students in 1986.

This was the largest gift ever given in the history of the university at that time, and it solidified Palmer as a mentor and philanthropist of the highest order.

"The amazing part of this story is that the GPA of our MBA students increased almost a full point in the first year when we were able to offer scholarships from this endowment," Palmer said.

"I do not think there is an alumnus out there who can't realize from that story why private funding is imperative to both private and public schools," he said. "It is a vital part of differentiating your university and making it what it is today."

"John Palmer has an amazing legacy through his gift that has funded more than 600 MBA students since the original endowment," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration. "Without his help, we would not have enjoyed the success we have had in our MBA program."

"Private giving from extraordinary and passionate alumni like the Hon. John Palmer is so vital to the margin of excellence expected of a nationally and internationally recognized educational and research institution," said Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter. "We're so appreciative of John's visionary and sustained support over the years, which has had a tremendous impact upon our business school and our ability to recruit high-achieving students.

"Part of John's legacy will be his contributions toward boosting the university's stellar academic profile and accelerating our growth, reach, impact and success."

Education is our future, Palmer said.

"If we want to differentiate our school and be one of the best, the private sector has to step up," he said. "It will not only bring in better students, better professors, better research. It's just part of what we must all do to inspire our alumni base to think about doing more for the university."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The team that built Skytel. Seated: Hon. John Palmer. Back row: Carroll McHenry (left), vice president of sales and marketing; Richard Weatherholt, CFO; Rainer Sontermeister, COO; Jai Bhagat, chief of engineering and president of Skytel

Gillespie Competition completes successful year

An online, captive business concept that connects high school students with college students for homework took first place in the 14th annual Gillespie Business Plan Competition at the University of Mississippi.

Shortwork LLC, conceived by Will Tribble and Sam Harres, is a tutoring app for high schoolers looking for solutions to homework questions. With this model, customers pay \$3 to submit a photo of their homework problem, and Shortwork's approved solvers claim the problems and respond with filmed explanations of the answers.

"We've been working on this since we came up with the idea in January," said Tribble, a junior engineering major from Charlottesville, Virginia. "We've already started talking with tutoring companies and even high schools about partnering with them to expand our reach and connect as many students as possible with a new tool to get ahead in their studies."

"We plan to use the Gillespie prize to create a significant social media presence while offering plenty of sign-up incentives for both customers and solvers," said Harres, a junior accounting major from Columbia, Illinois.

Shortwork won \$10,000 and a year of free office space at the Innovation Hub at Insight Park, the university's business incubator.

"We are thrilled to have the Gillespie Business Plan Competition in the School of Business since it provides not only an experiential learning opportunity for budding entrepreneurs, but also because it provides seed money to actually start the business they are pitching," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration.

Placing second in the contest, good for a \$5,000 prize, was Lala Letter LLC, a daily planner and stationery company founded by Bella Gonzalez, a senior from Bay St. Louis with a double major in marketing and graphic design. She founded the business in Oxford in 2017, and it has grown into a successful startup with more than \$3,000 in revenue in just one month of sales.

"I'm so thrilled to have been a part of such a fun and helpful competition," Gonzalez said. "I'm honored to have won second place and can't wait to take on Lala Letter full time after graduation."

In third place was Frazee, winning \$2,500. Founded in fall 2017, Frazee sells custom, embellished sunglasses that are fun for parties, souvenirs and group trips. The frames typically feature bold colors and beads, and customers can customize their own glasses for any occasion to look unique on social media.

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to have participated in the Gillespie competition," said Elizabeth Lanford, a sophomore from Ridgeland who is majoring in integrated marketing communications

Judges at the Gillespie Business Plan Competition



KEVIN BAIN



TONG MENG

Ken Cyree (left), dean of the UM business school; Will Tribble and Sam Harres, founders of Shortwork; and Clay Dibrell, professor of management

and co-founded the company. “We have learned a lot about starting a small business. It has been so fun to get some hands-on experience, and we are excited to see what the future holds for our business.”

“It has been so fun watching Frazee grow, and competing in the Gillespie competition helped us gain skills that will be important in the future of our business,” said Lindy Goodson, a sophomore from Maryville, Illinois, majoring in integrated marketing communications and the company’s other co-founder.

“The opportunities and learning experiences we’ve received through the business school at Ole Miss are priceless.”

“The Gillespie Business Plan is our marquee event for the academic year,” said Rich Gentry, director of the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. “Our event, now in its 14th year, is unique in that we provide such dedicated mentoring throughout the process, exposing students to different judging panels, who all have different experiences and areas of expertise that they make available to our students.”

This year, 38 student entrepreneurs entered the competition. An internal business school faculty panel evaluated all entries and selected 16 businesses to advance in the contest.

The semifinals featured 16 participants presenting eight-minute pitches to a panel of judges. The top six advanced to the final round on April 20.

Presentations were followed by 10 minutes of questions from the judges, who included Lawrence



TONG MENG

Bella Gonzalez (left), Lindy Goodson and Elizabeth Lanford

Adams, a Jimmy John’s Pizza franchisee; Jeff Conley of Conley Buick GMC in Florida; Jan and Lawrence Farrington; Mac Haik of Mac Haik Enterprises; Liza Cirlot Looser of the Cirlot Agency; Josh Mabus of the Mabus Agency; Johnny Maloney of Cowboy Maloney’s Electric City; John Oxford of Renasant Bank; Stuart Coleman of Chevron; and Benton Turnage of Gulf Point Advisors.

Besides the winners, others competing in the finals were Axiom Materials, a building demolition and material recovery firm; DeltaTech, a co-worker space that targets low-income Mississippi Delta communities; and Subly, an app for students interested in subleasing their apartments or rooms.

For more information about the Gillespie Business Plan Competition, go to olemisscie.com/programs/gillespie-business-plan.

BY STELLA CONNELL

RETIRED FEDEX VICE PRESIDENT
SHOWS UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR OLE MISS

Mike Glenn

Organic chemistry was the game changer for Mike Glenn, retired executive vice president for market development and corporate communications at FedEx and committed University of Mississippi alumnus. The Memphis native came to Ole Miss in 1974 as a pharmacy major. He made it through his freshman year, but his attempt at organic chemistry as a sophomore made him realize pharmacy was not for him.

BY STELLA
CONNELL

“I changed my major and entered the business school, which was a much better fit for me,” Glenn said. “Most of the classes, except for accounting, came fairly easily for me.

“It’s funny when you think about it. If it were not for the challenges I had with organic chemistry, I would have never had a career with FedEx.”

Glenn credits what he learned as a student in the business school with giving him the skills and knowledge he needed to move through the ranks at FedEx into senior leadership.

“My experience at Ole Miss, and specifically in the business school, provided an excellent academic foundation for my professional career,” he said. “The basic marketing principles I learned in the

business school were the same ones we applied at FedEx to build the brand and grow the business.”

Interacting well with people and treating them professionally and respectfully were also skills Glenn learned while in school, he said. In turn, he has served as a guest lecturer for the MBA program and presented FedEx case studies to undergraduate students.

“I served on the business school advisory board and also provided guidance to a number of students as they were preparing for their careers,” Glenn said. “The most fulfilling part has always been the interaction with the students.”

Glenn is an outstanding supporter of the business school and the university,



BILL DABNEY

Rose Flenorl (left), Mike Glenn, Donna Glenn and Mary Haskell at the Ole Miss Women’s Council’s Rose Ceremony in 2017



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Glenn family in the Grove. Back row: Mike (left) and son, Tucker; front row: daughter Katherine (left), Donna and daughter Hatley

said Ken Cyree, dean of the UM School of Business Administration.

"He has given back in many different ways, including talking to students via programs and class, serving on search committees, hiring our graduates and providing financial support," Cyree said. "Mike is a shining example of what it means to be an Ole Miss Business Rebel and the impact our graduates have in the world."

A little over an hour northwest of Oxford is Memphis, the global headquarters of FedEx, a publicly traded company with annual revenues of \$60 billion. Many Ole Miss business students vie for positions within the company.

"When I spoke to our FedEx intern class each year, it was always fun for me to identify the interns from Ole Miss and let them know how proud I am to be an Ole Miss graduate," Glenn said.

Glenn showed his partiality toward Ole Miss when asked what sort of advice

he might offer a high school student considering the university.

"We have the most beautiful college campus in the country, outstanding academic programs, an increasingly diverse student population with a wonderful school spirit," he said. "I continue to be impressed with our leadership, faculty and staff, and the school's vision for the future."

Because of his enthusiasm for the university and so many graduates have been or are employed by FedEx, Glenn said it was important for the company to have a visible presence on campus. This enthusiasm resulted in the company's sponsorship of the FedEx Student-Athlete Academic Success Center and additional financial support for other academic programs.

"Mike Glenn is a truly exceptional individual who has a tremendous impact on every endeavor he undertakes, from effecting change at a global company to nurturing the development of students,"

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MIKE GLENN IS A TRULY EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS A TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON EVERY ENDEAVOR HE UNDERTAKES, FROM EFFECTING CHANGE AT A GLOBAL COMPANY TO NURTURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS.” – JEFFREY VITTER

said Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter. “Mike is to be commended for his deep commitment of time, energy, passion and resources that have contributed to the transformation of our university.

“We are so grateful for his leadership and his unwavering support as a fiercely loyal member of the Ole Miss family.”

An Ole Miss alumna and former FedEx employee reiterated Glenn’s influence as a leader.

“Mike is an extraordinary leader who always ignited confidence and pride in the employees who worked for him,” said Parul Bajaj, a native of Clinton, Mississippi, who received her MBA from Ole Miss in 2007 and worked for FedEx from 2007 to 2014 as a senior communications specialist. “Fed Ex is an internationally recognized and respected brand because of his leadership.”

Glenn’s love for Ole Miss is contagious. He and his wife, Donna, met over 30 years ago, when they were both new employees at FedEx. She is a graduate of the University of Memphis. However, throughout their courtship, she came to learn how important Ole Miss was to Glenn and that she would be marrying into the “Ole Miss family.” Over the years, she has come to love and appreciate the university as well – so much that Glenn often refers to his wife as a “walk-on alumna.”

In 2017, Glenn honored his wife by endowing an Ole Miss Women’s Council scholarship in her name.

“Donna has a degree in journalism, and she is a very talented communications professional,” he said. “After her career at FedEx, she has continued to use those skills in support of numerous charitable organizations in Memphis. The scholarship will support a student majoring in journalism, which seems



SUBMITTED PHOTO

appropriate given Donna’s degree and professional background.”

Glenn credits his education at the Ole Miss business school with giving him the confidence he needed when he began his professional career as a sales representative in the elevator division of Dover Corp. in Memphis, and two years later began taking classes in the evenings to earn his MBA degree at the University of Memphis.

After completion of his MBA degree, he went to work for FedEx, where he ultimately came to serve in the executive vice president position as well as one of five members of the company’s executive committee.

As a mentor to Ole Miss students, Glenn stresses the cultivation of strong communication skills and the ability to work as part of a team.

“Unfortunately, I have seen many very bright individuals fail to maximize their potential because they lacked the strong communication skills and could not be a productive member of a team. Finally, it is never too early for a student to start developing his or her leadership skills.

“My undergraduate work in the business school really prepared me for the MBA program,” he said. “Ole Miss provides an outstanding college experience, and I really enjoyed my time in the business school. I will never forget how much fun it was and the impact it had on my career.”



KEVIN BAIN

Walter Davis, faculty adviser, and Ashley McGee, director of the UM School of Business Administration's MBA programs

Online MBA program ranks in *U.S. News*' top 25

The University of Mississippi's online Master of Business Administration program has been named as one of the best in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. The rankings, released Jan. 9, place Ole Miss at No. 25 nationally.

"We are thrilled to have this external recognition of the success of our online MBA program," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration. "This achievement is a reflection of the dedicated faculty and staff who have created an excellent learning environment for our online MBA students who are not able to leave their jobs in order to obtain their degrees.

"We are excited to continue the strong tradition in our online program and to receive these accolades for our efforts and for our online students."

MBA programs have a greater enrollment than any other type of graduate business degree program in the country, the *U.S. News* release noted. Prospective students often narrow their research exclusively to programs that award MBAs.

To aid their efforts, the publication compiles annual

rankings of distance-education MBA programs.

"A strength of our online program is that all of (the) instructors are full-time faculty at Ole Miss," said Walter Davis, faculty adviser for the MBA program. "The curriculum for the online program is the same as the campus program.

"While students in our online program are always welcome on campus, all course requirements can be completed online."

For the 2018 edition, *U.S. News* ranked online MBA programs using five categories: student engagement, admission selectivity, peer reputation, faculty credentials and training, and student services and technology.

The publication selects factors, known as ranking indicators, to assess each program in the five categories. A program's score for each ranking indicator is calculated using data that the program reported to *U.S. News*

in a statistical survey and from data collected in a separate peer-reputation survey.

The strength of the Ole Miss curriculum is a plus for businesses in the state, said Ashley McGee, the program's director.

"Today's professional is busy," McGee said. "They are concerned with projects at work. They are caring for their children. They are involved in their communities. Our online degree is designed for them. It is flexible and entirely online.

"The curriculum allows for those in any field to utilize the knowledge learned in the program and progress within their career."

UM edged Oklahoma State, ranked No. 30, and ranked ahead of the University of Arizona, No. 33; Syracuse University, No. 42; and Louisiana State University, No. 51.

BY STELLA CONNELL

Alumnus Mac Haik supports student innovation

Mac Haik, of Houston, Texas, knows a little something about entrepreneurship. After a bad experience trying to buy his wife a car, the University of Mississippi alumnus and former pro football player decided to open a dealership of his own.

Mac Haik Automotive Group has grown into the largest independent automotive company in Texas and, as one venture has led to another, Mac Haik Enterprises Inc. employs more than 3,250 associates and owns land, commercial office buildings, retail space, medical facilities, restaurants, hotels and outdoor media.

Haik's interest in starting businesses inspired his most recent donation to Ole Miss: a \$50,000 gift that will support the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship within the School of Business Administration. Haik said he wants to challenge others to match his gift, which will be payable in \$10,000 increments over the next five years.

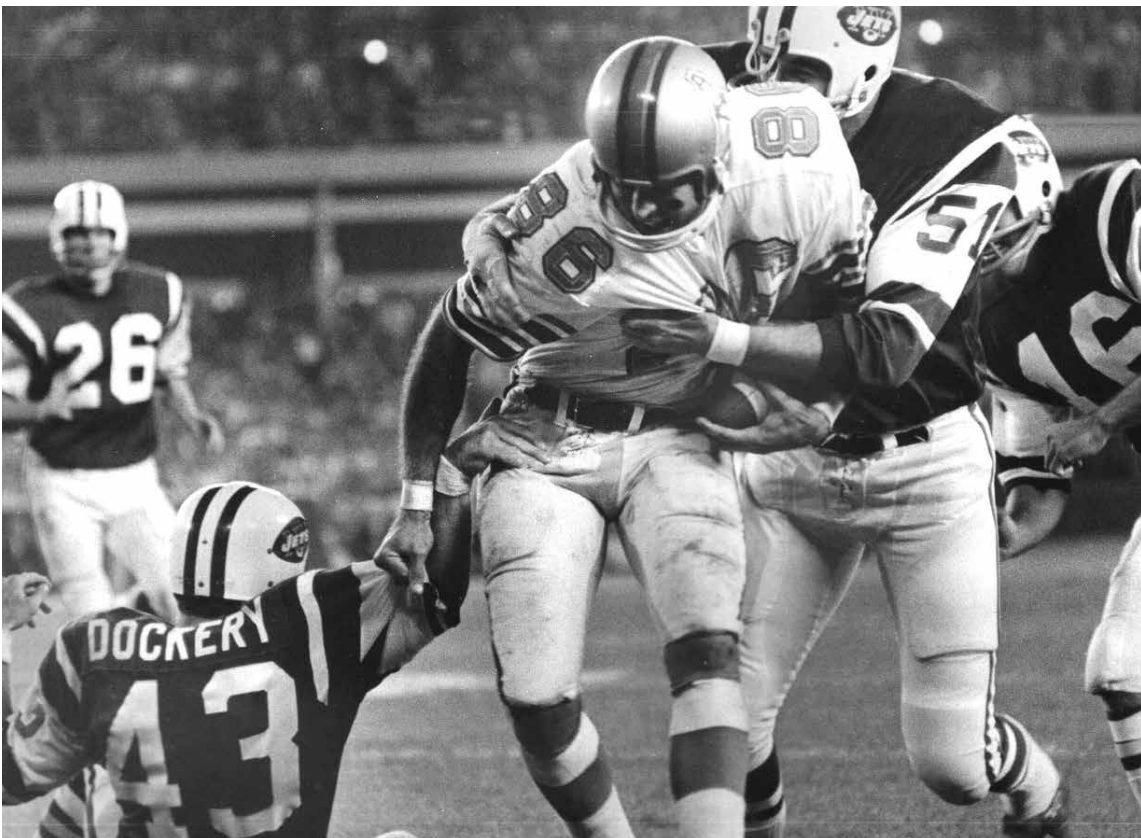
"Mr. Haik is a builder of companies," said Clay Dibrell, CIE executive director. "His gift serves as a building block for the CIE and our student entrepreneurship programs.

"We look forward to working with other donors to cement the program gains, which Mr. Haik has started through his gifts."

An additional gift establishes two scholarships - the Sunny Sue Haik and the Francis Haik Jordan awards for entrepreneurship - honoring Haik's wife and mother, respectively, and benefiting qualified freshman or sophomore business students.

"The principles that I was exposed to at Ole Miss helped me establish a foundation that allowed me to be, and become, the best that I could be," said the Meridian native who graduated in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

"I hope my gift will in some small way allow others to maximize their skills and opportunities, especially those students who might not have the opportunity to do so, without a little help. I would ask my fellow alumni to support the CIE, as well."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Houston Oilers wide receiver Mac Haik (86) battles New York Jets John Dockery (43), Ralph Baker (51) and Bill Baird (46) for yardage.

KEVIN BAIN



Haik said he wanted to support the CIE in particular because he believes it's a catalyst for great improvement beyond the borders of campus.

"The CIE will give many students the opportunity to learn about business at an escalated pace and to hopefully apply those entrepreneurial skills in Mississippi, creating a mushrooming effect that will stimulate many opportunities for others," he said.

Dedicated to the success of student entrepreneurs at the university, the CIE was developed to inspire students to create innovative businesses and to enhance the economic value of all businesses in the state.

"Mr. Haik's generous gifts will enable our student entrepreneurs to transform their dreams from ideas to viable businesses," Dibrell said. "Entrepreneurship transforms lives, and the skills these students will learn from their startups will serve them long after their time at Ole Miss.

"We thank Mr. Haik for supporting these student entrepreneurs and for enhancing the CIE program offerings."

At Ole Miss, Haik was an Academic All-SEC and Academic All-American student.

"But I can truly say that the present students enrolled in entrepreneurship are way ahead of where I was at the same time in my college life," he said. "Ole Miss is doing a great job."

Haik went by his middle name, Michel, until high school when someone said he cut through football opponents like "Mack the Knife," and the moniker stuck. His athletic prowess was recognized by Ole Miss coaches Johnny Vaught and Frank "Bruiser" Kinard, who offered him a full academic scholarship to play for the Rebels.

"Mother and I both took a liking to them at Ole Miss from the very beginning," Haik recalled. "Some of my best memories are of the good, decent people and the warm and friendly atmosphere on campus. It was like a large family."

At split end, Haik helped lead Ole Miss to three straight bowl games and a record of 21-11-1 during his three years as a member of the receiving corps. A co-captain during his senior season, he was named All-SEC second team in 1967 and received

Academic All-America honors from the Associated Press in 1966. Haik is ranked among the Ole Miss single-season receptions leaders with his 33 catches in 1967.

During his UM career, Haik pulled in 54 receptions for 755 yards – an average of 14.0 yards per catch – and six touchdowns.

"Ole Miss allowed me to have great memories and receive some recognition that helped me later in life."

That includes being selected the Houston Oilers' first draft choice for wide receiver in 1968. Haik caught 32 passes, including eight touchdowns, his rookie year and was the first NFL player to catch a touchdown indoors.

In 2001, he was inducted into the Ole Miss M-Club Hall of Fame.

Soon after moving to Texas, Haik attended the Houston Rodeo, where he caught the eye (and heart) of a young lady working as a professional model for Ford Motor Co. He credits Sunny, now a successful interior designer, and his mother for his success; the scholarships in their names will serve as a perpetual tribute.

"My dad died when I was 9 years old, but he was a great person, and my mother was an extremely positive influence on my life," Haik said. "I always felt if I could only be half as good as she was, I would be OK.

"Also, my wife, family and friends contributed greatly to my success, but most of all the good Lord blessed me way beyond what I deserve."

When they're not working, the Haiks enjoy family, friends, travel, football and "trying to be of value to other people as much as we can."

Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration, thanked Haik for his generosity.

"We are very grateful to Mr. Haik for his time and long-term commitment and for our many loyal donors like him who offer crucial private support to the university," Cyree said.

To make a gift to the University of Mississippi, visit umfoundation.com/makeagift.

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**THE CIE WILL GIVE
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 A MUSHROOMING EFFECT
 THAT WILL STIMULATE
 MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR
 OTHERS.”** – MAC HAIK

BY BILL DABNEY



Business school kicks off centennial

BY STELLA CONNELL



The University of Mississippi School of Business Administration kicked off its centennial celebration Sept. 8, 2017, with an early fall reception for faculty, staff and alumni in the courtyard of Holman Hall.

Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter led his remarks by recalling the state of the university in 1917, the year the business school was established. That year, the university had an incoming class of 150 students, the population of Mississippi was 1.8

million, John D. Rockefeller became the world's first billionaire and only 8 percent of homes had a telephone.

This past fall, the school had more than 3,800 students, 63 faculty members and 18 staff, making it the largest business



school in Mississippi. It offers 11 majors, a top 10 insurance program and a new Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

"I challenge the School of Business to imagine a future in which we increase entrepreneurship and connections to businesses and other external entities to support research programs, academic programs and creative initiatives," Vitter

said. "Our School of Business is well-poised to increase the reach and potential of the university's creative outputs and garner additional resources to propel us to even great heights of excellence."

New banners celebrating the milestone went up on the outside columns of the school as students settled into a new academic year. The business school also hosted a tent in the Circle for tailgating around the Ole Miss-University of Tennessee at Martin game for faculty, staff and alumni.

"This centennial celebration is really a celebration of human accomplishment, a celebration of the people who have been dedicated for 100 years to improving the understanding, the teaching and the service to advance business and business principles," said Noel Wilkin, the university's provost. "One hundred years is a significant milestone, one that signifies the perseverance of human accomplishment toward improving the practice of business for an entire century."

The Master of Business Administration program, started in 1941, is ranked among the nation's best, at No. 36 among the nation's public universities by Bloomberg Businessweek News Service, and the



TOP TO BOTTOM: Shirley Crawford (left) with Jan and Lawrence Farrington; Billy Gottshall (left) and Owens Alexander; Stephanie Crosbie (left), Beth Whittington and James Flanders

PHOTOS BY STELLA CONNELL





online program came in at No. 22 in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2017 ranking.

"Thousands of lives have been changed, thousands of opportunities created and thousands of people making a difference," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration.

"I look forward to the next 100 years and know we are poised to do great things with the dedication and commitment of this group of people in the business school."

In honor of the centennial, the UM Foundation has created the 1917 Order, a fundraising effort to recruit faculty, provide scholarships and increase class offerings, among many other initiatives. Membership begins with a gift of \$25,000 or greater, with pledges scheduled over five years.

"To grow the endowment for the UM School of Business Administration, we have created the 1917 Order," said Tim Noss, development officer for the school. "This effort will allow us to continue to grow in national rankings, recruit top students and faculty, and reach for new heights of excellence for the school."



PHOTOS BY STELLA CONNELL



TOP TO BOTTOM: Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration, addressing faculty, staff, alumni and friends; Bill and Mary Nell Bryson; Rebecca Phillips and Matt O'Keefe; Neil White (left) and Del Hawley; Meg Barnes (left), Danielle Ammeter and Wesley Dickens



BILL DABNEY

Celebrating Thomas Colbert's 50 years of leadership in the banking industry are (from left) Sharon Vitter, UM Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter, Thomas W. Colbert, Community Bank's Chairman of the Board Freddie J. Bagley and President-CEO Charles W. Nicholson Jr. Community Bank has created two new funds in Colbert's name at the School of Business Administration to strengthen opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs and students.

Gift from Community Bank honors Thomas Colbert

Fifty years is a long time to be at the forefront of an industry, but business visionary Thomas W. Colbert's legacy began as Mississippi's youngest bank CEO in 1968 and led to his founding the state's first-ever bank holding company in 1977. And he keeps leading, now as senior chairman of the board for Community Bancshares of Mississippi Inc.

To mark Colbert's golden anniversary in banking, Community Bank has expanded his legacy with a gift of \$340,000 to the University of Mississippi School of Business Administration. New initiatives at his alma mater bearing his name will provide educational opportunities for emerging young entrepreneurs and business students.

The surprise announcement was made March 21 at a dinner in Jackson.

"We are so honored to make this contribution to pay tribute to our visionary leader," said Charles W. Nicholson Jr., president and CEO of Community Bank. "I always think of Thomas as an extraordinary entrepreneur who just happens to be a

banker. He has done so much for the community, his friends, family and the entire staff at Community Bank."

Colbert responded to the gift by sharing his family's longtime relationship with UM.

"We go back to (wife) Ann's great-great uncle, Dr. Christopher Longest in the 1900s," Colbert said. "He was head of the English department and interim chancellor. Obviously, Ann and I are graduates; my daughter and son are graduates; my brother is a graduate.

"Our roots go deep at the University of Mississippi, and we're just delighted by this gift. I really cannot have asked for a higher honor than this being bestowed on me tonight."

The Thomas W. Colbert Lectureship in Venture Capital and Entrepreneurial Finance Endowment will provide funds to recruit and retain faculty members to the business school's Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Annual income from the endowment can be used for salary supplements, research and creative activity support, and more.

The Thomas W. Colbert-Community Bank Innovation Award Fund will underwrite an annual \$5,000 prize to a student entrepreneur venture team for an outstanding venture driven by innovation in a product, process or service through the application or development of a technological change. The judging

panel for the annual Gillespie Business Plan Competition, the marquee event for the CIE and business school's academic year, will determine the winner.

Colbert, who was inducted into the Mississippi Business Hall of Fame in 2005, developed a successful model for Community Bank and, at the same time, became a great role model for business students and others who want to become entrepreneurs, UM Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter said. His model of creating separately chartered banks that operate independently but share services within a holding company has been a key to one of the South's fastest-growing financial institutions.

"When our students look to Thomas Colbert's professional life, they will see a visionary who has been driven by a strong entrepreneurial spirit and a deep commitment to customer service," Vitter said.

"We want to equip Ole Miss students with problem-solving skills to achieve greatness, just as Mr. Colbert has always done. Having his name attached to funds that will elevate opportunities for our students is a great honor, and we are very grateful to Community Bank for this gift.

"In addition, Mr. Colbert has shown how leaders can also go beyond their industry to impact countless people. We appreciate the service Mr. Colbert devoted to the state Institutions of Higher Learning board as a member and as president. Having a stellar higher education system plays a crucial role in our state's economic climate."

With few acquisitions, Community Bank has grown from \$6 million in assets and a couple of offices to more than \$3 billion in assets, 47 offices and more than 785 staff members in four states. Community Bank has been named one of the "Best

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STELLA CONNELL

Marketing professor recognized for research in food labeling

By Stella Connell

Christopher Newman, assistant professor of marketing at the University of Mississippi (pictured above), has been selected for the 2018 Emerging Scholar award by the Marketing and Society Special Interest Group of the American Marketing Association.

The MASSIG Emerging Scholar award is given to honor the contributions of researchers, in the early stages of their academic career, who tackle societal issues of significance that advance an understanding of their area of research to their peers.

"Demonstrating how marketing can be used to positively impact consumer welfare supports the business school's mission to improve both society and business," Newman said. "It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by my colleagues in this way.

"It helps highlight the meaningful research that the faculty is conducting here at Ole Miss and in the business school."

Newman was chosen for his scholarship on nutritional labeling, which has led to him becoming one of the leading experts in this area. His published work has appeared in numerous publications, including the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Journal of Consumer Affairs* and *Journal of Consumer Research*.

He has established himself as an emerging scholar contributing to improving the health and well-being of the consumer. His nomination for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Risk Communication Advisory Committee is another indication of the influence his scholarship is having on society.

"We are pleased that Dr. Newman's scholarship and impact in the area of nutritional labeling is being recognized by the AMA's Special Interest Group," said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration. "We are glad to have outstanding scholars at Ole Miss who are able to impart their expertise in the classroom and advance business knowledge.

"We are excited about the success Dr. Newman has attained in this area, and I applaud him for this accomplishment."

"This area of research is part of a supply chain to deal with obesity problems in our nation," said Bahram Alidaee, interim chair of the marketing department. "I am pleased the American Marketing Association's Special Interest Group has recognized him as an emerging scholar in this area."

Previous winners include Kelly Martin of Colorado State University, Beth Vallen of Villanova University, Maura Scott of Florida State University and Justine Rapp of the University of San Diego.

Founded in 1937, the American Marketing Association is a professional association for marketing professionals with more than 30,000 members. MASSIG serves as a convivial gathering point for academics interested in the effect marketing has in the world.



Will Tribble (left) and Sam Harres present a pitch for their company, Shortwork, at the Land Shark Tank Competition.

Confidence is key in pitch

It's a Wednesday afternoon, and I'm in a classroom on the ground floor of Holman Hall. I'm waiting for some students to give a business pitch for the Land Shark Tank Pitch Competition at Ole Miss.

The School of Business has hosted the Land Shark Tank competition twice a semester since 2015. I covered last spring's competition as a reporter (I work for Stella Connell, marketing and communications manager for the business school, and she asked me to write about the students' pitches for *BusinessFirst*).

The Land Shark Tank competition is based on the reality show "Shark Tank," where entrepreneurs have the opportunity to start or develop their small business ideas through an infusion of capital.

Last spring, I was in awe at the confidence of the participants. They stood in front of a room full of enterprising students and pitched a business idea. This is a hard thing to do, especially in today's world of nonstop electronic communication. Their business ideas were great – customized gifts, daily planners for Gen Zers, and virtual fashion. Innovative, interesting and, honestly, fun to watch.

I left the first competition inspired. I couldn't wait to hear the ideas for the second competition. I figured the next pitch session would be similar to the first. I was wrong.

Shortly after I arrived and organized my notes and camera, Owens Alexander, instructor in management and entrepreneurship and facilitator of the event, approached me.

"Hey, Haley, have you ever pitched before?" he asked.

"No," I said, a bit confused.



STELLA CONNELL

Haley Myatt pitching at the Land Shark Tank Competition.

"We need one more participant," he explained. "We need you to do a pitch."

I stood quietly trying to find a nice way to tell him there was no way I was about to stand up, without any preparation, and pitch a half-baked business idea in front of a room full of future Warren Buffetts!

Then Mr. Alexander added, "I'll pay you \$100."

I'm a broke college student. "\$100," I thought, "to stand up to talk about a make-believe business for one minute?"

Reluctantly, I agreed.

Stella encouraged me.

"Talk about yourself," Stella said. "Use your own experience, talent and writing skills to help others."

After a few minutes of brainstorming, Stella and I agreed that I should pitch "how to get published before you graduate."

When I was on deck, with just two minutes to go before my pitch, panic set in. Some students had practiced their pitches for weeks, preparing in front of their mirrors at home and in front of peers. They were also dressed in coats, ties and suits –

appropriate attire for a business presentation. I was dressed in jeans, open-toed shoes and a top I might wear to a cookout.

Yet, here I was rehearsing my pitch over and over in my head – all the while talking with Stella.

She boosted my confidence, and without her, I would have been a nervous wreck.

“Relax,” she said. “You are smart, and you can write.”

I stood in front of three judges: Lee Ingram, creator of Collegiate Tutoring; Pontus Andersson, graduate assistant at the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship; and Ferderica Cobb, the recent overall winner of the 2018 Speaker’s Edge Competition.

I took a breath and, for a moment, thought, “Here goes my dignity.”

But then something happened: Words gushed out of me like I had been practicing for weeks. I can’t recall a single word I said, other than something about a 10 percent equity (I have no idea what that means), but I had just heard some other competitor say that and thought, “Heck, they know what they’re talking about, and it sounds good.”

It was intimidating standing in front of such knowledgeable experts. And I really thought my pitch was garbage. But I learned that is not what really matters. The most important part is how you present yourself.

After all the presenters finished their pitches, the judges left the room to deliberate. As I was packing up my things, they returned to announce the winners.

They announced the second- and third-place winners. And then, I heard, “Haley Myatt.”

Somehow, I won. I couldn’t believe it. One of the judges later told me it was my presence that captivated them. It was my ability to pretend like I knew what I was talking about and quickly explain a business idea that would benefit many students.

I’ve told everyone I know about my experience winning the Land Shark Tank competition. It just goes to show that anyone can pitch an idea as long as he or she has confidence.

I really did feel like an entrepreneur.

After all, that day I left with a \$300 profit.

BY HALEY MYATT

COLBERT, FROM P. 27

Places to Work in Mississippi” by the *Mississippi Business Journal* and included in the “Best Banks to Work For” by the American Bankers Association.

Formerly Farmer and Merchants Bank, Community Bank started more than 100 years ago in a small timber community in east central Mississippi. It has grown by employing innovative approaches to one of the nation’s most routine industries.

The generous gift from Community Bank was a fitting way to honor Colbert, given his record as a proven entrepreneur, said Ken Cyree, dean of the Ole Miss business school.

“Our Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship has captured the attention of individuals who, like Mr. Colbert, are gifted with a vision of what can be created to add value and exceed expectations in the marketplace,” Cyree said. “We offer a major in entrepreneurship to business students and a minor in entrepreneurship to all students, and they will be prepared to either start their

own companies or innovate in established companies.

“We are excited about the opportunities this gift provides and have high expectations that these graduates will help advance our state, region and nation.”

After earning an undergraduate degree at UM in 1962, Colbert attended the Senior Bank Management School at Harvard University and the School of Bank Public Relations and Marketing in Chicago.

Throughout his leadership of Community Bank, he has made community service a priority. Besides his IHL service, he is a former chair of the Mississippi School of Banking, a past president of the Forest Rotary Club, a past director for In Touch Ministries of Atlanta and a member of UM’s Lyceum Society and the Ole Miss Alumni Hall of Fame.

Colbert has received the National Community Service Award from the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award.

He is married to the former Ann Brand of Houston, an Ole Miss alumna, and they have one son, Thomas W. Colbert Jr., and two granddaughters, Anna and Claire.

The Colberts established an endowment in the UM Department of Music to memorialize their late daughter, Christy Colbert Butler.

Individuals and organizations can make gifts to the Thomas W. Colbert Lectureship in Venture Capital and Entrepreneurial Finance Endowment or the Thomas W. Colbert-Community Bank Innovation Award Fund by mailing a check with the fund’s name noted in the check’s memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655.

Gifts also can be made online by visiting umfoundation.com/makeagift or by contacting Nikki Neely Davis, executive director of development at 662-915-6678 or nneely@olemiss.edu.

BY TINA HAHN



STELLA CONNELL



STELLA CONNELL



STELLA CONNELL

1. Andre Liebenberg (left), Robertson Chair of Insurance, and Mike McGavick, CEO of XL Group. 2. Mike Chaney, Mississippi insurance commissioner. 3. Joel Wood, senior vice president of government affairs, Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers

RMI hosts annual meeting of industry leaders

Industry changes, ethical dilemmas and cyber insurance were just a few of the topics tackled at the University of Mississippi's 23rd annual Insurance Symposium.

The event, hosted by the School of Business Administration's risk management and insurance program, took place March 21-22 at The Inn at Ole Miss and welcomed industry thought leaders from across the country.

Mike Chaney, the state's insurance commissioner, offered welcoming remarks with praise for the event and for the RMI program, noting the program's national recognition and student job placement. The commissioner also discussed his department's long-standing commitment to addressing rural fires.

"The funding of the rural fire truck program is important to all Mississippians," he said. "Without proper funding, pocketbooks of residents of Mississippi could be affected."

Michael McGavick, CEO of the XL Group, delivered the keynote address on the important role the insurance industry plays in society.

"Our job is to make people's lives more resilient," he said.

Part of McGavick's message focused on the problem of underinsurance in the U.S., pointing out that only 50 percent of residents in Manhattan were properly insured when Hurricane Sandy made landfall in 2012.

Lisa Davis, executive vice president of Sampo Global Risk Solutions and president of JIA Business, addressed challenges affecting insurance and the ever-evolving industry. She discussed the importance of being innovative and how organizations that tap into the motivations of human

behavior and design their customer experience accordingly will be the next industry leaders.

"You can't do today's job with yesterday's methods and be in business tomorrow," Davis said.

Joel Wood, senior vice president for government affairs with the Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers, led a panel that discussed the implications for the insurance industry following the second year of Trump's presidency.

"Eighty million Americans received their insurance through their employer," Wood said. "The No. 1 tax expenditure in the U.S. tax code is the exclusion from health insurance. We have problems from the left and the right."

Besides serving as a moderator and speaker during the symposium, Wood also was named the recipient of the RMI program's annual Outstanding Supporter Award.

Daniel Healy, partner with Anderson Kill PC, discussed the rapidly evolving technological standards of cyber insurance. He also stressed the importance of understanding laws governing the industry and having a response team in place.

Some businesses can go 200 days or more before realizing their data have been compromised, Healy said.

"If you're not following the rules of the industry, you're at risk of getting sued," he said.

Charles Westmoreland, a sales consultant with Allstate Benefits, covered the importance and basic principles of employee benefits. Westmoreland discussed significant events that helped define the varying types of benefits available to employees and also addressed how Medicare and Medicaid affect health care and state budgets.

"The biggest item in health care is the cost shift from Medicare and Medicaid to private insurance," Westmoreland said. "Medicaid is eating up most state budgets."

Lance Ewing, executive vice president of global risk management with Cotton Holdings Inc. and



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PHOTOS BY STELLA CONNELL



5



6

THOMAS GRANING

4. Lance Ewing (left), executive vice president of global risk management, Cotton Holdings Inc., and Ike Trotter, principal, Ike Trotter Agency.
5. Tim Noss (left) and Brett Barefoot, development directors for the School of Business Administration.
6. Hannah Clark (left), vice president of Gamma Iota Sigma and recent RMI graduate, and Lisa Davis, executive vice president of Sompo Global Risk Solutions.
7. Symposium attendees at Mike McGavick's keynote delivery

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7

THOMAS GRANING



Students visit Warren Buffett

A group of University of Mississippi students got career advice and wisdom from Warren Buffett, better known as the “Oracle of Omaha,” during a recent face-to-face conversation at his headquarters in Nebraska.

“This was the first time the UM School of Business Administration had participated in such an event, but the experience proved to be invaluable to students, Dean Ken Cyree said.

“We are thrilled to have our students experience the opportunity of a lifetime by meeting with Mr. Buffett,” Cyree said. “His business wisdom and impact on the U.S. and global economy is legendary, and his willingness to share it with our students is amazingly generous.”

Buffett is chief executive officer and chairman of Berkshire

Hathaway. As of August, he was recognized as the second-wealthiest person in the United States and the fourth-wealthiest in the world, with a net worth of \$81.1 billion.

Andrew Lynch, UM assistant professor of finance, helped arrange the trip through connections made by teaching a Buffett class at the University of Missouri. Cyree and Bonnie Van Ness, chair and professor of finance, helped arrange funding for the trip.

Those efforts allowed faculty to focus on researching and preparing students for the visit instead

of fundraising, said Stephen Fier, associate professor of finance.

“We are fortunate to have a dean and department chair who work tirelessly to ensure that the financial and nonfinancial resources necessary to organize this type of trip are available,” he said.

“A measure of good luck also was involved, said Travis Box, assistant professor of finance.

“A lot of things had to break our way in order to make this trip work,” Box said. “We were thrilled to find out that we had been selected in late August. We



Back row from left: Parker Rutherford (Vicksburg, Miss.); Stephen Fier, associate professor of finance and faculty adviser; Renee Kakadia (Brookhaven, Miss.); Travis Box, assistant professor of finance and faculty adviser; Aziz Al Maskari (Al Khoudh, the Sultanate of Oman); Tyler Adams (Van Alstyne, Texas); Cameron Iadeluca (North Kingstown, R.I.); Sam Sexton (Perry, Ga.); Christian May (Memphis, Tenn.); Makail Johannesson (Red Lake, Ontario); Lamar Norsworthy (Memphis, Tenn.); Ashley Glennon (Austin, Texas); Andrew Lynch, assistant professor of finance and faculty adviser; Alexis Dibenedetto (Auburn, Ala.); Bailey Currie (St. Louis, Mo.); Hannah Clark (Jackson, Miss.)

Front row from left: Charles Fillmore (Fort Worth, Texas); Akilah Showers (Memphis, Tenn.); Ian Soileau (Hernando, Miss.); Warren Buffett, chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway; Kyle Cullen (Houston, Texas); Grant Wiley (Dallas, Texas); Jocelyn Cropper (Houston, Texas); Nicole Georgis (Downers Grove, Ill.)

only had a month and a half to prepare, but Dean Cyree gave us the support we needed to get us back and forth from Omaha on short notice.”

It was a rare opportunity, and Buffett delivered on the promise of the event, Lynch said.

“Mr. Buffett is energetic and engaging, repeatedly reminding students that being a good person is an important part of being a good investor,” he said.

Lynch, Box and Fier selected the students for the trip through a competitive application process. The students were required to be involved in the Financiers Club or Gamma Iota Sigma, a risk management and insurance business fraternity.

It was a tremendous honor to represent the business school, said Grant Wiley, a senior from Dallas majoring in managerial finance.

“Buffett was funny,” Wiley said. “He was very personable and stressed how important it is to love what you do and to do it with a group of people you enjoy.”

Throughout the semester, students were given reading assignments on Buffett and Berkshire Hathaway for classroom discussions.

“In the final weeks before our trip, these students identified interesting topic areas and drafted a list of questions to ask during our session,” Box said.

The students derived their two questions from weeks of thorough research, including analysis of financial statements, previous interviews, annual reports and various compositions from Buffett.

Students who participated in the event will remember it the rest of their lives, Cyree said.

“Several have commented to me on the impact that the visit

had and marvel at Mr. Buffett’s easy command of intricate business details while engaging the students for over two hours,” he said.

Box said the biggest surprise for him was the sentimentality of Buffett’s comments.

“Despite being the world’s most gifted investor, he weaved into the discussion friends, family, marriage and children into nearly every response.” Box said. “He wanted us to know these relationships and experiences have aided his success.”

Jocelyn Cropper, a senior managerial finance major, and Hannah Clark, a senior majoring in risk management and insurance, said they were inspired that the 87-year-old Buffett takes time to share his wisdom with students.

“Mr. Buffett has an incredible amount of knowledge beyond



Adrienne Perry Fay (third from left), director of marketing and business sales for Borsheims, with students Christian May (left), Parker Rutherford and Tyler Adams

investing capabilities, and he credits this to reading each day,” said Clark, from Jackson. “Mr. Buffett claims that reading has been his talent and hobby, and he enjoys reading business-related material.”

Ashely Glennon, a senior managerial finance major, was surprised to learn that Buffett claims to have read every book on investments in the public library by the time he was 11.

Besides meeting Buffett, the Ole Miss students toured three

Omaha-based businesses owned by Berkshire Hathaway: Nebraska Furniture Mart, Borsheims Fine Jewelry and Oriental Trading Co.

“We were able to see firsthand how efficient they are when it comes to getting orders out in time, and I was able to appreciate the amount of time and effort it takes to receive an online order from a distribution center,” said Glennon, of Austin, Texas.

“It was amazing to see how three completely different companies ran and also to see the

similarities between the three since they are all owned by Berkshire Hathaway,” said Cropper, of Houston, Texas.

Other business schools participating in the event were Gonzaga University; Northwestern University; the universities of Arizona, Minnesota, Nebraska at Lincoln, Nebraska at Omaha, Peru and Tennessee; and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

BY HALEY MYATT

INSURANCE SYMPOSIUM, FROM P. 31

incoming chair of the Ole Miss Insurance Advisory Board, addressed business ethics in the industry.

“You have to have ground rules for how your company operates,” Ewing said, noting that companies will often reward employees who display both honesty and integrity.

Former Gov. Haley Barbour delivered the event’s luncheon address, covering topics such as economic development, tort reform and vocational education.

“It’s the No. 1 job of the state government to give our people a good education,” Barbour said. “We need better workforce training.”

Ken Cyree, business school dean, said he is pleased with the symposium’s impact on the university and the surrounding community.

“We are proud of the impact that our RMI program has had with our students, industry and academic profession,” Cyree said. “The symposium is a

wonderful venue to connect our students to industry leaders and our alumni to learn the latest trends, opportunities and challenges in the industry.”

Andre Liebenberg, associate professor of finance and the university’s Gwenette P. and Jack W. Robertson Chair of Insurance, praised the Ole Miss Insurance Advisory Board for developing this year’s program.

“We are proud to host over 200 industry guests on our beautiful campus and to showcase our nationally ranked program and, more generally, our exceptional university and town,” Liebenberg said. “In addition to being our largest fundraiser, the symposium provides us an opportunity to serve the industry by providing continuing education and to engage with our students and fellow risk and insurance professionals.”

BY LEIGH CAMPBELL

Gentry selected 2019 chair of international conference

The United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship has selected a University of Mississippi professor to chair its international conference for 2019.

The USASBE officers and board members selected Richard Gentry, associate professor of management and holder of the Mac Elliott Chair of Entrepreneurship, to chair the annual conference set for January 2019 in St. Petersburg, Florida. Previously, the conference has attracted some 500 participants from all 50 states and around the world.

"I'm thrilled to participate and support such a huge conference focused on entrepreneurship," said Gentry, who also is director of the Ole Miss Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. "Building the program here in Mississippi has been a tremendous experience, and it has benefited, in no small part, from our commitment to USASBE.

"Being given the opportunity to help lead and shape that effort for the 2019 conference means that we can give back and help other programs build entrepreneurship into their curriculum."

Mark Schenkel, USASBE president and entrepreneurship professor at Belmont University, is among the team with whom Gentry will work in the months leading up to the conference. Schenkel hopes to bring together the best teachers, scholars, practitioners and center directors to engage and share best practices to further entrepreneurship in academia.

“

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS SOMETHING THAT UNIVERSITIES MUST PURSUE ACROSS THEIR ENTIRE CAMPUSES: IN THE CLASSROOM, IN CENTER OFFICES AND BEYOND.” – RICHARD GENTRY

"I'm super-excited to work with Rich in developing an outstanding USASBE conference program and experience in St. Petersburg," Schenkel said. "His leadership and expertise are clear and strongly reflected in both his scholarly work and through his work at CIE."

At Ole Miss, Gentry has helped create a culture of success in academics and entrepreneurship for



KEVIN BAIN

nearly 10 years, as demonstrated in his publications and his role in creating the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

"Entrepreneurship is something that universities must pursue across their entire campuses: in the classroom, in center offices and beyond," Gentry said. "USASBE embraces that reality by functioning as a big tent society where everyone is welcome.

"The conference is a big undertaking, and having the support of the CIE and the School of Business will certainly help to make it more manageable."

Gentry's colleagues at the UM business school support him in this new role. Clay Dibrell, who works with Gentry as executive director of the innovation center, said he thinks Gentry will serve as an excellent ambassador for the university.

"We are excited Rich is chairing the 2019 USASBE Conference," Dibrell said. "Rich is an excellent ambassador for the university's entrepreneurship programs, and we look forward to him learning about innovative initiatives from other entrepreneurship scholars as we grow our student and university ecosystems."

According to its website, USASBE was founded in 1981 and is "an inclusive community advancing entrepreneurship education through bold teaching, scholarship and practice."

For more information on the 2019 conference or the USASBE, visit usasbe.org.



Negotiation skills, competitive pricing, lunch etiquette, business plans, the importance of a proper handshake, proficiency in Excel, and commercial development and filming were just a few of the opportunities offered to a group of middle schoolers recently at the University of Mississippi.

The activities were part of StartUp Camp, sponsored by the university's McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement and the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The students, all sixth-through eighth-graders, were from Como, Lambert, Marks, New Albany, Newton, Oakland and Sardis, as well as Lakeland and Memphis, Tennessee.

The young professionals kicked off the week learning the four basic types of businesses: manufacturing, wholesale, retail and service. After the students decided on the business they wanted to develop for the week, they quickly jumped into

StartUp Camp trains young entrepreneurs

negotiations – the cornerstone of almost any business.

Jessica Clarke, a camp leader and recent UM graduate in integrated marketing communications from Nashville, entered into a negotiation about a calculator with Kevin Hernandez, a rising seventh-grader at New Albany Middle School. Ultimately, Hernandez agreed to pay Clarke \$9.50.

"She started at \$15, and I countered with \$6," said Hernandez, whose business is a 24-hour-day medical clinic and drugstore called "Life Saver Clinic and Drugstore" with free flu shots and price-matching minus 20 percent for B-12 shots – services to attract customers.

"She then said \$10 and said she would go no lower," he said. "So, I took a chance and offered her \$9.50, and she took it. So, I won the challenge."

"The Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is so pleased to co-sponsor the very first StartUp Camp for young entrepreneurs," said Tong Meng, the center's director of student and alumni programs. "This is a great opportunity for us to connect our alumni entrepreneurs with the community and to promote entrepreneurship education in a fun way."

Verkeria Price, a rising eighth-grader at North Panola Junior High, was chosen by her school's guidance counselor





Left: Check for lemonade sale. Right: Playing Network Bingo are Dawn Boddie (left), CEED Scholar; Jaelin Drummond, of Newton; Kody Atkinson, of New Albany; Aliyah Jones, of Newton

TONG MENG

to attend the camp along with classmates Shaniyah Brown and Sabria Henly. Price's business, "Curl Me Crazy," is a hair salon.

Price, who would like to be a registered nurse one day, said she chose a hair salon as a side business. Inspired by her mom, Price said, "She knows how to do hair a little bit, and she inspired me. I also watch a lot of YouTube videos on hair and makeup."

"The McLean Institute is pleased to partner with the CIE to offer this entrepreneurial camp for secondary school students," said Albert Nylander, the institute's director. "Since 2014, McLean's Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development program (CEED) has invested \$1.6 million into the Mississippi economy and provided academic scholarships to more than 50 UM students.

"These university students are then leading K-12 students in developing a mindset of becoming an entrepreneur."

Andrew Wharton, a rising seventh-grader at Grace St. Luke's Episcopal School in Memphis, and business partner Tony Parks, a rising sixth-grader at Christ Methodist Day School in Memphis, were busy scripting the commercial for their business, "A&T Hangers," a clothing hanger recycling business "kind of like eBay," Wharton said.

"We pay for the containers, and then we pay a reduced cost for the hangers – depending on the condition – and then we sell them back to the cleaners," Wharton said.

"I have learned teamwork and how to come up with a cool business idea that is also environmentally responsible," Parks said as the two partners headed out to film their television commercial with Hernandez.

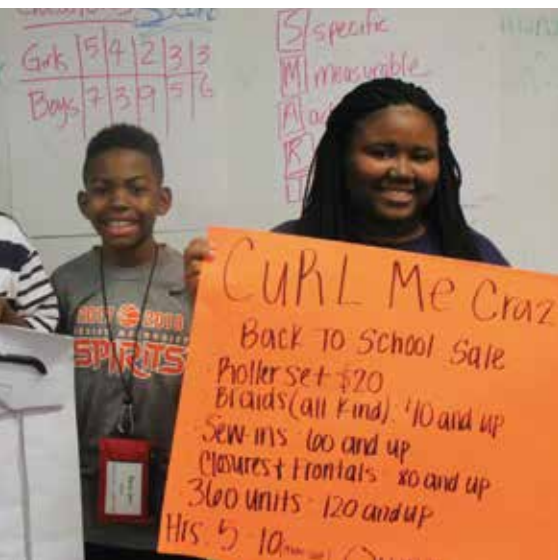
The judges for the camp were Clay Dibrell, UM professor of management and CIE co-director; Allen Kurr, vice president

of Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation; Robert Patterson, a graduate student in health promotion and a CEED Innovation Fellow; Armegis Spearman, learning specialist at the UM FedEx Student-Athlete Success Center; and Lynn Woo, research associate in the UM Center for Population Studies and the State Data Center of Mississippi.

"Leading these young entrepreneurs through the experience of starting a business has allowed me to witness a powerful transformation in these children," said Ashley Bowen, program coordinator, a CEED Innovation Fellow from Lambert and an Ole Miss graduate student in computer science.

"They realize that their dreams can become a reality, and that it can be done right in their hometowns."

BY STELLA CONNELL



Left to right: Working on business plan: Andrew Wharton, of Memphis, Tenn., and Tony Parks, of Lakeland, Tenn. Participants in StartUp Camp: Kevin Hernandez (left) of New Albany; Andrew Wharton, Tony Parks and Verkeria Price of Sardis. Tony Parks enjoys a virtual reality experience.

SUCCESS IN MULTIPLE REALMS OF BUSINESS, EDUCATION

Carole Lynn Meadows

Carole Lynn Meadows sits in the foyer of Bryant Hall, reminiscing about meeting her husband, Joe, in that building, where she took a required speech class nearly 60 years ago.

BY HALEY MYATT

A firm believer of doing her best at small tasks to get the big tasks done, Meadows has always followed her gut instinct, leading her to become president of every single organization in which she was involved. Her go-getter attitude and apparent compassion for others is contagious and a rare quality that makes her a woman worth celebrating.

“Maybe I just like being in charge,” Meadows laughed. “And the harder the goal, the greater the achievement. Getting married, having a family, trying to be a good wife, mother, Christian and teacher, these have been the goals of my life. The goal of creating the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center is high on my list of things of which I am proud.”

Achievement is an understatement considering Meadows’ long list of credentials. Born in Pascagoula but raised in the small town of Lucedale, Meadows was encouraged to be involved.

Graduating from Ole Miss with a master’s degree in business education,

Meadows said the subject matter she learned was instrumental in helping her teach and serve as president of the National Association of Junior Auxiliaries and the Ole Miss Alumni Association.

“Carole Lynn Meadows is an amazing alumna of the Ole Miss business school and a testament to the broad leadership skills and knowledge that she honed while a student here,” said Ken Cyree, dean of the UM School of Business Administration. “She has had incredible breadth in her career and life, and her love and gratitude has inspired her to give back in so many ways.”

Meadows has succeeded in multiple realms of the business world, not only teaching in it for nearly 25 years at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College but by co-creating the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, the first children’s museum in Mississippi.

The museum in Gulfport has been ranked in the top 50 nationally and has had a positive impact on nearly 2 million

SUBMITTED PHOTO



The Alpha Delta chapter members of Phi Mu fraternity following their initiation in winter 1957. Carole Lynn (Wilson) Meadows of Lucedale is pictured middle row, second from right.



ROBERT JORDAN

visitors since its opening 20 years ago. Named in memory of her daughter, who died in a car accident in 1984 while a student at Ole Miss, the museum holds a place deep in her heart.

“For us, the choice was to make something positive out of that tragedy,” Meadows said. “What better way to remember our daughter than with a place where children could experience learning and laughter, happiness and inspiration, love and joyfulness. The welcoming arms of LMDC call to the child in all of us to reach for the stars in becoming all we can be.

“I know that education makes a tangible difference in the outcome of a life,” Meadows said. “It opens windows of opportunity not afforded otherwise, inspires a person to reach his/her potential as a human being and provides a way of life that benefits a family, a community, a business, and humanity.”

Meadows is the epitome of what it means to be an Ole Miss Rebel, said UM Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter.

“She’s a mentor, a teacher, a leader, a trendsetter and more,” Vitter said.

“Through her teaching, as well as her visionary leadership for the Discovery Center, she has enabled countless learning opportunities for Mississippians and so many throughout the region.

“Carole Lynn has truly made a positive difference in people’s lives and in the vibrancy of her community.”

As far as determining success, Meadows said it is not only what you achieve personally but also what you help others achieve for themselves. She spent five years as a stockbroker with J.C. Bradford Co.

Meadows formed several women’s investment clubs, where she taught women how to invest in the stock market and feel confident in directing their



Alumni Hall of Fame Awards, 1999: From left: George P. Hewes III (BBA 50, LLB 54); Carole Lynn Meadows (BSC 60, MBE 64); Edward O. Fritts (61); Edith Kelly-Green (BBA 73); and Paul Edward Gray (BA 61)

financial futures. From this experience, she learned that teaching was her true calling and was even more prepared to share real-life experiences and practical advice in the classroom.

Becoming the first female president of the Ole Miss Alumni Association in 1994 was never a goal for Meadows but an evolution of her willingness to serve the community.

"It was also a way for me to return the good favor Ole Miss afforded me by way of an education, a husband and an Ole Miss family," Meadows said.

Meadows' involvement in community service is impressive. From serving as the first female executive committee member for the Gulfport Chamber of Commerce to organizing the vaccination of over 5,000 children against rubella, it is no wonder she was so deserving of being inducted in the Ole Miss Alumni Hall of Fame.

"Assume the best until you know differently," Meadows said in response to her advice to any aspiring women starting a career in corporate America.

But what drives Meadows to be so involved?

"Gratitude," Meadows said. "I believe this is the key to why we serve a greater cause than ourselves. My motivation is born of a heart filled to overflowing with gratefulness for the people and the opportunities I have found along my life's journey. A desire to return all the goodness I have received with the best I have to offer comes from a grateful heart."

When she isn't teaching Sunday school or attending Ole Miss events, she is chairing the Gulfport Redevelopment Commission. Meadows beams with excitement at the plans for a new aquarium.

And some may not know, but she has a third degree.

"When a woman's husband went through law school, the norm was that the wife worked to help pay for law school," Meadows said. "The law school 'rewarded' us for our efforts with a degree, 'Putting Hubby Through,' a PHT degree – no kidding. Frankly, I was very proud of it."

As she tells her stories of receiving her scuba diving certification and hanging out at the "Mansion," one of four major restaurants in Oxford during her college days, she reapplies her electric pink lipstick, pink for the Phi Mu chapter. Of course, she was the chapter's president.

After talking for several hours, Meadows realized she had an Ole Miss baseball game to attend with Joe. Walking down the grand steps of Bryant Hall, Meadows looked up at the beautiful ironwork entrance and reminisced, "Ooh, but for that speech class, who knows what might have been my story. I would not have written it any other way. I will always be indebted to that class and Ole Miss."



Lynn Meadows (left), a Phi Mu pledge, and Carole Lynn Meadows, at the Phi Mu house in fall 1983

2018 MBA OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNA

Parul Bajaj

Each year, the MBA program recognizes an outstanding young alumnus/alumna of the program. For 2018, the award went to Parul Bajaj, a senior manager of external communications for Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi in Paris, France, a position to which she was appointed in February 2018.

BY STELLA CONNELL

Bajaj, a native of Clinton, Mississippi, joined Nissan in March 2016 as manager of group communications, manufacturing and labor. She previously worked at Bridgestone Americas, where she served as senior manager of communications. Prior to joining Bridgestone, Bajaj worked for FedEx, where, among her duties, she provided media support for FedEx’s sustainability efforts and managed the company’s media monitoring and measurement initiatives.

“Parul Bajaj is the epitome of what we envision for our Ole Miss MBAs,” said Lila Neely, program coordinator for the MBA program. “She has taken the tools made available to her at the University of Mississippi and reached each goal she set for herself.

“She is always willing to give back to the university through our MBA Mentor Program, and her grace and leadership

have guided her to become the shining star she is today.”

Over the years, Bajaj has been an active volunteer for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital. Besides her MBA, she also has a bachelor’s degree in international business from Ole Miss.

“We are proud to recognize Parul Bajaj as our 2018 MBA Outstanding Young Alumnus,” said Ashley McGee, director of the MBA program. “This award is given each year to one individual who exemplifies the visionary leadership traits that the Ole Miss MBA program embraces.”

“I am proud to be an alumna of the Ole Miss MBA program, and I am grateful for the faculty and the curriculum that prepared me for my career experiences over the last several years,” Bajaj said. “It is an honor to receive this award.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO

At a Nissan event in Nashville in August 2017. From left to right: Ken Srebnik of Nissan; Bajaj; Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam; Jenna Bush Hager; Tennessee first lady Chrissy Haslam; and Rebecca Vest and Tim Slattery of Nissan.



Students discuss their Speaker's Edge presentations. Ferderica Cobb (bottom left) was deemed overall winner of the competition.

Nearly 100 students compete in Speaker's Edge

After a rare snow day pre-empted the final day of the 15th annual Speaker's Edge competition at the University of Mississippi, the School of Business Administration got participants back together to present awards and wrap up the event.

Nearly 100 students participated in this year's edition of Speaker's Edge, which was dominated in the awards by three students from the on-campus Master of Business Administration program.

In the Ethical Dilemmas category, Ferderica Cobb, of Canton, took first place, followed by Jonathan Dowell, of Port Gibson, in second, and Corey Price, of Birmingham, Alabama, in third. In this category, participants presented their best solutions to workplace challenges where suggestions of sexual harassment, bribery, appropriation of intellectual property, plagiarism, per diem abuse and

inappropriate office behavior were presented.

In the Marketplace Pitch competition, Dowell came in first, followed by Cobb and then Price. These presentations were persuasive arguments regarding technology, innovation, productivity, leadership and strategy. Dowell's winning pitch advocated using battery technology to close the performance gap between renewable energy and fossil fuels.

Cobb's stellar performance in both categories earned her the title of overall winner for the competition, which includes a \$1,000 prize.

"Speaker's Edge was a great experience – receiving feedback

from the coaches, moving from room to room, presenting our speeches to judges, competing with classmates – I enjoyed the intensity of it all," Cobb said. "The event challenged me in new ways, and I will take those skills with me into the professional world.

"Everyone's ideas were so interesting, and I knew there were strong presentations from my classmates. I did not expect to win. I was humbled, and it is a huge honor to be the 2018 winner."

This year's edition of Speaker's Edge kicked off Jan. 11, featuring 97 students from the UM School of Business Administration and

Patterson School of Accountancy. More than 50 judges from all over the Mid-South volunteered their time to help at the event.

“Speaker’s Edge provides students an opportunity to develop the communication and presentation skills that are vital to success in business and other leadership settings,” said Walter Davis, faculty adviser to the MBA program. “Students often point to the Speaker’s Edge experience as a highlight of their MBA or Master of Accountancy program at Ole Miss.”

Plans called for a new Team Pitch category at this year’s event, but snow and ice across much of north Mississippi forced the cancellation of the final day of competition, including the Team Pitch presentations.

“It is disappointing that Mother Nature prevented us from the opportunity to review these presentations, but this is something to look forward to in next year’s competition,” said Ashley McGee, director of the MBA program.

The Speaker’s Edge competition was started by Ole Miss alumni in 2003. The event

“

SPEAKER’S EDGE PROVIDES STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP THE COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION SKILLS THAT ARE VITAL TO SUCCESS IN BUSINESS AND OTHER LEADERSHIP SETTINGS.” – WALTER DAVIS

brings together industry professionals, retirees, working alumni and students, requiring students to adapt their message to different audiences.

In preparation, participants spent a week and a half working with volunteer communication coaches to discover the strengths and weaknesses of their own presentation style in front of multiple judges.

“One great thing about Speaker’s Edge: When you see a student move through fear and become the confident speaker they will be for the rest of their lives,” said Joan Andrews, a Speaker’s Edge coach from the College of East Texas.

The annual event helps students find their own voice and grow more confident in their presentations, said JoAnn Edwards, speech instructor, director of forensics and special projects manager at the UM Lott Leadership Institute.

“The outcomes are beyond valuable – they are vital,” Edwards said. “The act of teaching, guiding and coaching that process is, for me and for all the coaches and judges who give of their time and talents, pure joy.”

The Speaker’s Edge competition is a critical program that helps Ole Miss students position themselves for success as they move into the professional world, said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration.

“The competitive nature of the program allows our best student presenters and speakers to get even better while honing the skills of those students who are less confident in this environment,” Cyree said. “We greatly appreciate the dedicated coaches, instructors and judges who are involved in making this an exceptional opportunity for our students.”

BY STELLA CONNELL

CHAD HATHCOCK



Speaker’s Edge finalists: Jonathan Dowell (left) of Port Gibson, Miss.; Megan Garner of Oxford, Miss.; Ferderica Cobb of Canton, Miss.; Corey Price of Birmingham, Ala.; and Shannon Griel of Springfield, Va.



Van Hedges (third from left) has purchased a life insurance policy to support the UM School of Business Administration's risk management and insurance program and its faculty. With Hedges are (from left) Tom Quaka, senior vice president of FCCI Insurance Group in Jackson; Andre Liebenberg, the Gwenette and Jack W. Robertson Chair of Insurance and associate professor of finance; and Dean Ken Cyree.

Alumni couple funds policy to honor mentor, support RMI

Discovering that a friend has purchased an insurance policy on your life would, for many people, be unsettling.

"I am watching my back a little more carefully now," said Andre Liebenberg, playing along with the suggestion that such a situation might cause him to shudder. "As a risk and insurance professor, I think about these things a lot – more than other people.

"So it didn't really have that effect. It was a real honor, actually, that Van and Mary (Hedges) would think about doing something like this, something that would serve the program."

Liebenberg is the Gwenette and Jack W. Robertson Chair of Insurance and associate professor of finance at the University of Mississippi. He also is named as the insured on a \$250,000 life insurance policy endowed by his friend and fellow Insurance Advisory Board member Van Hedges of Nashville, Tennessee.

The two have a history of good-natured ribbing, and Hedges means Liebenberg no ill will, Hedges said. In fact, the policy serves more as a tribute to someone who greatly influenced Hedges' life.

"My wife, Mary, and I wanted to do something for Ole Miss and our insurance program and also to honor our friend and my mentor, Tom Quaka," said Hedges, a 1975 graduate of the School of Business Administration and president of Southern Insurance Consulting. "I thought it would be fun and interesting to build in a key-man life component.

"No prudent, successful business, through their risk management program, would fail to have a key-man policy on someone as important to that business as Andre is to our program."

The Thomas G. Quaka Faculty Support Endowment, which is named as beneficiary at the time of Liebenberg's death, is designed to provide income for the recruitment and retention of faculty members in the School of Business Administration's risk management and insurance program. Therefore, should Liebenberg – 43 years old and the picture of health – suffer an untimely death while serving as chair, some of the proceeds could be used to find his replacement.

Quaka said he is greatly honored by the tribute. "Well, you can imagine, I'm overwhelmed," he said. "We set up a very small endowment years

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Schools of Business and Education, Athletics to benefit from planned gift

Friends and family members of the late Richard E. “Dick” Atkins of Corinth, Mississippi, describe the University of Mississippi alumnus as “uncommonly gracious and generous.” These character traits are substantiated by Atkins’ desire to bequeath financial support to his alma mater.

The UM Foundation recently announced a gift of \$100,000 from Atkins’ estate – portions of which are designated to support scholarships within the School of Business Administration, the School of Education and Ole Miss Athletics.

“It’s in his personality that he would want to give scholarships because that would help change lives for students, and helping people was always his heart’s desire,” said Atkins’ nephew, Jeff Brawner of Corinth. “He acknowledged that God had blessed him in his life, and he felt it was his responsibility to try to bless others.”

Atkins, who played bass drum in the Pride of the South marching band, graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Ole Miss in 1965.

“Mr. Atkins’ gracious gift has enabled us to establish an endowment in his name,” said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration. “The Richard E. Atkins Memorial Scholarship will honor him in perpetuity while ensuring that generations of our students receive financial assistance to support their education. We greatly appreciate his gift.”

“

HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOD HAD BLESSED HIM IN HIS LIFE, AND HE FELT IT WAS HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO TRY TO BLESS OTHERS.” – JEFF BRAWNER



PHOTO COURTESY OF DON MORGAN

Dick Atkins (center) enjoys an Ole Miss pre-game party with sister-in-law Mary Jo Morgan and good friend Lee Thurner of Corinth.

After earning his degree, Atkins returned to Corinth, where he taught junior high and high school students, first at Gift Community School and later in the Kossuth, Mississippi, school system. While at Kossuth, he met and married fellow teacher Betty Gwyn Atkins.

Changing careers in 1972, Atkins joined Gould Inc. (later to become Vendo Inc.) as personnel manager. After seven years, he began a third career as administrator at Alcorn County Care Inn, which later became Mississippi Care Center. He served in this capacity for 20 years, retired briefly and returned to work in 2001 as a director of acquisition and development for J&A Management, a property management company. Atkins retired permanently in 2009.

A tireless volunteer and community supporter, Atkins was a Rotarian, serving as president, and a Paul Harris Fellow. He served on the boards of directors of United Way, the American Red

Cross, the Boys Club, the Corinth Welfare Association (president) and the Mississippi Health Care Association (vice president, secretary and treasurer).

Throughout his life, Atkins was an avid Rebels fan.

“We spent about the last 30 years going to football games. Every game day, we would get up before daylight and leave for Oxford and then spend the whole day in the Grove,” said Don Morgan of Corinth, Atkins’ brother-in-law and close friend. The two even spent six months designing and building a rolling cart that easily converts into a picnic table – a contraption that became the envy of their neighbor tailgaters.

“The thing about Dick that I remember mostly was that he was just so loyal. It didn’t matter what Ole Miss was doing, he was always so supportive,” Morgan said. “He was never negative about anything when it came to the school. He really, really loved Ole Miss.”

For information on designating a deferred gift to Ole Miss, contact Sandra Guest at 662-915-5208 or sguest@olemiss.edu.

BY BILL DABNEY

Women in Entrepreneurship Week launches

A new weeklong observance at the University of Mississippi focuses on women and minorities in entrepreneurial businesses, with a goal of encouraging more women to launch their own business ventures.

The inaugural Women and Entrepreneurship Week began Nov. 13, hosted by the university's Career Center, School of Engineering and the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, housed in the School of Business Administration. The series of events was sponsored by the Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation and the Mabus Agency of Tupelo.

Staff at the CIE had wanted to host an event for almost two years to demonstrate to women that entrepreneurship is a vibrant pathway to a career, said Cobie Watkins, the center's director of student and alumni programs.

"Historically, men have possessed a greater hold on the entrepreneurial market, but that's changing now," Watkins said. "We want women to see they can be just as successful in this field as men."

More women are imagining themselves as business owners and entrepreneurs – almost 42 percent in 2015, up from 36 percent in 2012 – and those numbers are continuing to grow, Watkins said.

The center's goal is to have students think about starting their own businesses and broadening their opportunities to become more innovative, said Richard J. Gentry, associate professor of management and CIE strategy director.

"The job market today is much less stable than it was a generation ago," Gentry said. "A primary mission of a college is to help students appreciate the range of employment opportunities in both small and large businesses.

"WE Week is a central part of that, and we're so happy to be partnering with our friends across campus to present it."

The week featured four events, each of which focused on a different aspect of business. The events were designed to coach students in professional development areas that affect female students with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Events included a small business panel and "Be You: Branding Your Life," with regional experts



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Organizers of the University of Mississippi's inaugural WE Week pose with Netflix star Brittany Wagner (second from right) at the conclusion of the week's events. Members of the planning committee included Casey Cockrell Stuart (left), assistant director of employer services at the UM Career Center; Cobie Watkins, former director of student and alumni programs for the UM Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship; Maria Mulrooney, Career Center graduate assistant from Palm City, Fla.; Ivy Elkins, Career Center graduate assistant from Tallahassee, Fla.; and Megan Miller (far right), career planning specialist for the UM School of Engineering.

COBIE WATKINS



Brittany Wagner, star of the Netflix hit 'Last Chance U,' takes a selfie with Will Clay, an engineering major from Madison, Miss., after speaking about her journey from being in higher education to creating her own company as part of the WE Week events last November.

who advised attendees on how to best market themselves in their careers.

"Up, Up and Away: Following Your Passions Beyond Expectations" featured representatives from Sierra Madre Research, a startup in Calhoun City, and Juli and Richard Rhett, a couple who scored a deal with entrepreneur Richard Branson on the television show "Shark Tank."

The closing event featured Brittany Wagner from Netflix's "Last Chance U," discussing her success story.

"I feel like these topics will offer good information to so many students who are interested in these areas for their careers," said Casey Cockrell Stuart, assistant director of employer services at the UM Career Center, prior to the event.

A committee of six women, ages 19 and up, developed the events with the goal of getting attendees to think about the career challenges they face as women, Watkins said.

"We took those ideas and narrowed down the list to showcase subject areas and speakers that would represent a multitude of viewpoints of women in their careers and women as entrepreneurs," she said.

"The world of work is constantly changing, and trends develop," Cockrell said. "Right now is a good time to learn about entrepreneurship as it might be the best and most rewarding career path for a student."

 BY HALEY MYATT

LIFE INSURANCE POLICY, FROM P. 44

ago, and this will add considerable amounts to it for the future. But there really isn't anything more important to us than the welfare of this chair and its long-term continuance."

Quaka, senior vice president of FCCI Insurance Group in Jackson, and Hedges have been longtime friends within the insurance profession and have served together on the Insurance Advisory Board for many years.

"Tom has been the anchor to this board from day one, and I think Andre would tell you that the board has been key to the success of the risk management and insurance program, which is one of only 12 programs in the U.S., and 20 worldwide, to be designated as Global Centers of Insurance Excellence," Hedges said. "So we did this really to honor Tom's service."

Quaka, who frequently benefits from the Ole Miss insurance program, speaks highly of it.

"I employ the students who graduate from here, and I'm happy to say we have 12 of them in our organization," he said. "We have been exponentially successful because of the alumni we've been able to recruit from this program."

Hedges and Quaka are among those who should be commended for their roles in building the insurance program to its current level, said Ken Cyree, UM business dean.

"I hope that I'm long gone by the time we cash in this policy, and I'm sure Andre does too, but it's a wonderful gesture, demonstrating the dedication of people like Tom and Van and others on this board," Cyree said. "Without their support for the program, we simply could not do what we do."

"We would not have had the success we've had and also the success we'll enjoy for generations to come because of their generosity, dedication, time and, truly, the ambassadorship that they've both taken on in the program. Because of that, we've had significant buy-in from the board, and that's been the key component in making this a successful program."

Individuals and organizations may make gifts to the Thomas G. Quaka Faculty Support Endowment by mailing a check with the designation noted in the memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; visiting umfoundation.com/makeagift or contacting Tim Noss at 662-915-5932 or tnoss@olemiss.edu.

 BY BILL DABNEY



Jan and Lawrence Farrington in the Grove before the Ole Miss vs. LSU game on Halloween 1998. Ole Miss beat the Tigers 37-31. Jan Farrington served as president of the Ole Miss Alumni Association in 1998-99. Lawrence Farrington served on the business school's advisory board from 1997 to 2006.

Farringtons support Ole Miss, business school in myriad ways

The name “Farrington” is synonymous with “Ole Miss.” Even people who do not know Jan and Lawrence Farrington personally know of their generosity and love for the university.

Certainly, they have supported the University of Mississippi and its School of Business Administration financially, but they also have given their time and energy to support the faculty and staff, mentor students, and lend a hand to help the university in its mission to innovate, educate and produce graduates of the highest caliber.

“Neither of us can remember our first contribution to the university,” said Jan Farrington (BAEd 65). “Supporting Ole Miss has been a part of our lives for a very, very long time.”

The Farringtons’ support of the business school has come in many forms.

“Lawrence (BBA 58) got involved with the business school in the mid-’90s as a member of the business advisory board,” Jan Farrington said. “I became

interested after I was asked to be on the board of Innovate Mississippi, then known as the Mississippi Technology Alliance.”

Through their involvement in the business school and their investment in businesses in the state, the Farringtons came to know many of the school’s professors and learn about their research and projects.

In 1994, professors Bill Rayburn, Dennis Tosh, Bob Dorsey and John Johnson were working on a real estate appraisal software startup and approached Lawrence Farrington about investing. The company was under the umbrella of the university and housed in Holman Hall, the business school building.

Initially, Lawrence Farrington turned them down, believing he had insufficient knowledge of the proposed company called

Financial Neural Computing, or FNC, a software development company that provided collateral appraisals of real estate for banks and other financial institutions.

Tosh gave it some time, and in the interim, Lawrence Farrington learned more about FNC and the professors. When Tosh approached him again about an investment, Farrington agreed that he and his wife would join a couple of other investors to provide funding for the company.

The Farringtons liked the concept and had great confidence in the four founders. The professors’ diversity of expertise struck the couple as the right combination of talent to build a successful company.

In 1999, FNC Inc. delivered its first solutions, and in 2000, it spun off from the university. The

Farringtons saw the success of a company incubated through the university and became more involved with seed money for startups and other forms of support.

In December 2015, CoreLogic, a real estate data firm in Irving, California, acquired FNC for \$475 million.

In 2004, the business school established the Gillespie Business Plan Competition. The Farringtons were immediately interested in and supportive of this new program. Jan had helped with various business competitions through her work with Innovate Mississippi, and she and Lawrence had become involved with an angel fund established by that organization.

Since 2004, many bright students with innovative ideas have participated in this competition. In 2018, Shortwork, a tutoring app for high school students conceived by Will Tribble and Sam Harres, won the contest, receiving \$10,000 and office space for a year.

The Farringtons have also helped the school in efforts to support startups that could ultimately become thriving businesses in Mississippi. Eventually, Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration, approached them about sponsoring an award for entrepreneurship called the Farrington Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Left: Jan Farrington and Jon Fisher at the Valuation Conference in Las Vegas in summer 2000. Right: Jan and Lawrence Farrington at the School of Business' commencement ceremony on May 11, 2002

This annual award is given to an alumnus or alumna of the school who has shown exceptional success as an entrepreneur and innovator.

Previous winners include Hunter Carpenter of RedBird Capital (2017); William Yates III of Yates Construction (2016); Henry Jones, co-founder of Kopis Mobile (2014); Matt Hedges, founder of Vino del Sol (2013); and Stephen Johnston of SmartSynch (2012). The four founders of FNC Inc. received the prize in 2011.

"Jan and Lawrence are great folks, and both have great entrepreneurial minds," said Clark Love, the 2015 recipient of the prize, who was overseeing Mortgage Trade (now called MTrade) at the time and is CEO of Brighter Health Network, a Mississippi-based health care technology business. "It is amazing what they have done for Ole Miss and entrepreneurship across Mississippi."

Gail Pittman received the award in 2018. Pittman, of Jackson, Mississippi, is the largest

manufacturer of hand-painted pottery in the United States.

"There was no school of entrepreneurship when I started out 36 years ago," Pittman said. "Entrepreneurship is a journey full of ups and downs and exciting opportunities that can ultimately bring reward both personally and financially."

"This year was special because the award was presented to our first woman recipient," Jan Farrington said. "Gail is a creative designer, a successful businessperson, a generous philanthropist and a fantastic role model for our students."

The Farringtons have been amazing supporters and ambassadors for Ole Miss and the entrepreneurship program in the business school, Cyree said.

"They have been great friends to the state and the region through their impact in starting and investing in businesses in Mississippi."

Lawrence Farrington, through a partnership with the business advisory board, has helped establish a new program called "Business Connect," and the school recently hired someone to direct this effort. The program is designed to connect students with Ole Miss alumni throughout the country to help students find internships and jobs.

"This is a way to help students, to reconnect our alumni with the business school and to give them an opportunity to be involved," Lawrence Farrington said.

THOMAS GRANING



Dean Ken Cyree (left), Gail Pittman, 2018 winner of the Farrington Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award, and Jan and Lawrence Farrington



Founded in 1917, the University of Mississippi School of Business Administration now serves almost 3,900 students and is the largest business school in the state. The Ole Miss MBA program, which includes 150 students, is ranked No. 36 among American public universities by *Bloomberg Businessweek*. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks the Professional MBA program among the top 25 programs in the nation.

The Ole Miss business school's extraordinary growth and success over the past 100 years can be traced back to the dedication, involvement and generosity of alumni and friends. Our gratitude is extended to all supporters for both service and financial investments.

All gifts will combine to recruit faculty, provide scholarships, increase class offerings, sponsor guest speakers, improve programmatic involvement for student organizations, fund students' travel to national/global competitions, support the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, supplement the overall business school endowment and more. Attention to these areas will continue to propel the school forward as a leader among SEC and national programs.

We sincerely thank you for all your support,

Dean Ken Cyree

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