

# The View from Ventress

News from the College of Liberal Arts | LIBARTS.OLEMISS.EDU



## Arabic Language Flagship

“Here in Oxford, at the University of Mississippi, is one of the best Arabic programs in the country.”

—JOHN CHAPPELL

*Rhodes Scholar finalist and Arabic Flagship graduate*



*John Chappell (BA international studies and Arabic '19) photographed fellow students riding in a caravan on the Erg Chebbi Dunes of Tafilalet, Morocco.*

In 2018 the Department of Modern Languages was awarded an Arabic Flagship Program, sponsored by the National Security Education Program, a federal initiative to create a wider and better-qualified pool of US citizens with foreign language and international skills. The federally funded languages currently offered at 21 universities are Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, and Turkish.

Our modern languages department is the only one in the nation with both Arabic and Chinese Language Flagship programs. Chinese was established in 2003.

“UM is a de facto hub of critical language learning in America,” said Allen Clark, associate professor of Arabic and codirector of the Arabic Flagship Program. “We believe we have the number-one Chinese and Arabic Flagship programs in the US, unrivaled. We recruit a strong pool of language

learners with the ambition and determination to make positive changes in all sectors—public and private—through a well-grounded, balanced view of the Arab region.”

The Flagship provides funds to hire new faculty, add courses and experiences, and increase study-abroad opportunities.

“When UM started teaching Arabic in 2008, we modeled our program on the Chinese Flagship. We believe we’ve been Flagship-quality for years,” said Daniel O’Sullivan, chair of modern languages.

“Majoring in Arabic at UM was a great decision because teachers and peers pushed me to excel,” said Cynthia Bauer, who also majored in international studies. “I read Arabic literature and conducted ethnographic research. The program brought me to a level able to converse in Arabic with anyone on the street. It is hugely important for my career.”

*To read more about this program and students, turn to page 18.*



FROM  
THE  
DEAN  
*Lee M.  
Cohen,  
PhD*

It is difficult for me to believe that this fall will mark the start of the 5th year that I have had the honor of working on our beautiful campus as the dean of the College of Liberal Arts. As I look through this newsletter, I feel a sense of pride and amazement of our accomplishments. In fact, each year I think, “It can’t get any better than this,” and each year, to my delight, I am proven wrong.

As I reflect on the last year, one word comes to mind: **excellence**. Realizing academic excellence is not easy; it is admired because it is difficult to attain. For example, this year our university had its “Very High Research Activity” (R-1) Carnegie Classification renewed, placing us, once again, as one of the premier research universities nationwide. This is important for a number of reasons. Specifically, it impacts how government officials, independent analysts, and academic groups perceive our institution. It gives us recognition as a significant player on the national research stage. It helps recruit and retain faculty as well as increase the quality of the student body. Finally, in a competitive market, the R-1 label can significantly help our already strong reputation. However, the pursuit of academic excellence is more than achieving a prominent national ranking. It is striving to better understand ourselves and the world around us. It is maximally developing one’s intellectual capacities to achieve professional and personal success, and ultimately to serve humanity.

We are strong because of the many talented and hardworking individuals who were part of the 2018-19 academic year in the College of Liberal Arts. We are also strong because of the generations of alumni who have come through the College. Our alumni are making meaningful contributions to society and all sectors of the economy.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter, and gain a renewed sense of pride in what is happening on campus to prepare the next wave of graduates. ▣

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## National Honor for the Honor Society

Only 10% of US colleges and universities shelter a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation’s oldest undergraduate honors organization. The UM chapter, started in 2001, recognizes students with outstanding academic performance in liberal arts classes through a faculty nomination process.

PBK gives a Certificate of Recognition to six outstanding chapters every three years: two public universities, two private universities, and two liberal arts colleges. The UM chapter was recognized as one of two outstanding chapters at a public university.

“The diligence of our faculty and PBK officers in identifying and following up with qualified students gives us one of the highest national acceptance rates,” said Sandra Spiroff, associate professor of mathematics and PBK chapter president. “Our website and promotional materials earned us praise at the national PBK meeting.”

“Tremendous support from the Chancellor’s office and the College of Liberal Arts indicates the value the university places on a liberal arts education,” said Luanne Buchanan, instructional associate professor of Spanish and PBK secretary-treasurer. ▣



2019 Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony

## Rhodes Finalists

For the first time ever, UM boasts four finalists for prestigious Rhodes Scholarships to study at the University of Oxford in England. And, Jaz Brisack is our 26th—and first woman—Rhodes Scholar! The win puts UM in the top 10 public institutions in the nation for the number of Rhodes Scholars—tied for first with Vanderbilt among SEC schools.

Brisack, a general studies major minoring in journalism, public policy leadership, and sociology, is a Truman Scholar with a long history as a champion for human, civil, and labor rights. President of the College Democrats and a frequent contributor to the *Daily Mississippian*, she participated in the Sunflower Freedom Project.

Jarvis Benson, an international studies and Spanish major, president of the Black Student Union, and Truman finalist, is active with civil rights, voting rights, immigration, and education issues.

John Chappell, an international studies and Arabic major, 2017 Barksdale Scholar, and Mississippi Votes cofounder, works on issues of international human and civil rights.

In addition, Chinelo Ibekwe, a 2018 chemical engineering graduate from Lagos, Nigeria, was a Rhodes finalist for West Africa. Abhijaya Shrestha, a mechanical engineering student from Nepal, was a semifinalist in the Global Rhodes Scholarship category.

“Our pride and joy are immeasurable,” said Douglass Sullivan-González, professor of history and dean of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. “That our university has produced four finalists for the prestigious Rhodes scholarship means that our faculty and staff have worked with some incredible scholars who have stood up to the questions of the day, and the world has taken notice.” ▣

*Jarvis Benson (from top left), John Chappell, Chinelo Ibekwe, and Jaz Brisack.*



# Barbour Center Engages and Inspires

The Department of Political Science is home to the new Haley Barbour Center for the Study of American Politics.

Focused on campaigns and elections, the Center is designed to attract students entering many fields with opportunities to learn about American politics and civic responsibility through classes, interactions with political practitioners, and internships. The mission is to promote a more engaged citizenry and inspire students to take an active role in government.

“We don’t think that every student from the Haley Barbour Center for the Study of American Politics will become a congressman, or even an alderman,” Barbour said. “There will be campaign managers, physicians, lawyers, nurses, and accountants who will understand the importance of government and become hard and effective workers for good government.”

The Center mission is two-pronged. The first focus is academic, including an endowed chair and a series of courses to advance students’ knowledge and interest in campaigns and elections. The second focus is outreach, bringing high-profile speakers to campus and hosting national conferences and summer



*Joseph Haney (from left), Abby Wood, Ed Goetas (president and CEO of The Tarrance Group), Julia Johnson, Governor Haley Barbour, Shelby Maynor, Krista Perkins, Bailey Griffin, Cally Perkins, and Professor Conor Dowling discuss survey research and strategy at BGR Group in Washington, DC.*

programming. Students participate in a range of topics and experiences to prepare for engagement in the American electoral process as citizens or as political party activists, paid campaign advisers, or electoral process managers.

“The current climate of American politics suggests the need for young people to engage in the election process and be prepared for the reasoned, respectful political debate that supports a healthy democracy,” said Lee M. Cohen, dean of liberal arts. “The College already produces engaged, knowledgeable citizens, and the addition of the Haley Barbour Center for the Study of American Politics takes this training to the next level.”

John Bruce, chair and associate professor of political science, noted Barbour’s “long arc in American politics. He started work in national politics as an

undergraduate, and has never left. A thread running through his career is activity in campaigns and elections, and it is this aspect that we hope the Barbour Center reflects.”

Barbour’s life in politics began in 1968 as a field organizer on Richard Nixon’s presidential campaign. From 1973 to 1976, he was executive director of the Mississippi Republican Party. Presidents Gerald Ford, George H. W. Bush, and Ronald Reagan were among the many Barbour advised. He was political director of the Reagan White House and cofounded BGR Group, a prominent Washington government affairs firm. From 1993 to 1997, Barbour chaired the Republican National Committee and managed the “Republican wave” in 1994, which led to Republican control of both the Senate and House of Representatives. In 2004, Barbour started his first of two terms as Mississippi governor. 

## FIRST CLASS OFFERED

During January intersession, Conor Dowling, associate professor of political science, taught a Study USA course in Washington, DC, to give students an insider’s view of the political scene.

Barbour scheduled speakers and created networking opportunities. Students had face time with political party operatives, interest group leaders, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senators Cindy Hyde-Smith and Roger Wicker, and newly elected US Representative Michael Guest, among others.

“There were important networking opportunities for internship and job opportunities,” Dowling said. “The course provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about the political apparatus required to run a modern political campaign.”

Barbour called the maiden voyage for the Center a “striking success.”



*Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) greets University of Mississippi students Bailey Griffin and Krista Perkins at a National Republican Senate Committee Reception at BGR Group in Washington, DC.*

“While I am honored to have the Center named for me, my biggest thrill is seeing students immersed in real campaign and elections political science. The speakers/teachers are a superlative group of some of the best-known political operatives from both parties

as well as from think tanks, trade associations, and super PACs. We hope students will be inspired to have an active life in politics, whether professionally, as candidates, or as volunteers.”

Cally Perkins, a political science and paralegal studies major, got a jump-start on life after graduation. “The course was a great opportunity to network with people who have successful political careers. It was eye-opening to learn about all the career paths in political science.”

Bailey Griffin, a political science major, liked the “firsthand, personal experiences of working in Washington. Governor Barbour allowed us to interact with some of the most influential people in Washington and I will be forever grateful.”

# Courageous Words

Born and raised in Jackson, Kiese Laymon, Otilie Schillig Professor of English and Creative Writing, is author of the novel *Long Division* and a collection of essays, *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*.

In *Heavy: An American Memoir* (Scribner), Laymon writes of his difficult childhood. The memoir won the Andrew Carnegie Medal and *Los Angeles Times* Christopher Isherwood Prize and was named Best Book of 2018 by *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, NPR, *Southern Living*, and *Entertainment Weekly*. The audiobook, which he narrated, was awarded Audible's Audiobook of the Year.

"I wrote it to the place and people that raised me," he explained. "It's been shocking to see other people feel so much because of the book. I've been traveling a lot, and everywhere, from the East Coast to California, people seem to be thanking me for saying stuff that they wanted to say and couldn't.

"They say, 'Thank you for having the courage to find those words.' It's strange to create a piece of art that way more people than you intended to love, love."

From his boyhood to his time in New York as a college professor, Laymon looks at the complex relationship with his mother, grandmother, identity, body image, race, writing, and other subjects. *Heavy* is "gorgeous, gutting...generous" (*The New York Times*).



Professor Laymon (right) discusses his most recent book with students at the Oxford Conference for the Book.

"My mother made me write, she made me read, but that's not why I'm here," he said at the Carnegie Medal ceremony. "I'm here because she made me reread and she made me revise.

"She taught me that revision is great on the page, but the revision we do in our relationships is the revision that matters the most."

Laymon's essays, stories, and reviews are in *Esquire*, *McSweeney's*, *The New York Times*, *Granta*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Best American Series*, *Ebony*, *Paris Review*, and other publications. [▼](#)

# Music Alumna Achieves Highest State Honor

Hannah Gadd (BM music education '13; MM choral conducting '15) loves teaching music at Lafayette High School, in part because she sees students learning much more than music.

"My students get used to what success feels like, but they also learn how to handle failure and how to adjust, and that is just as important."

Gadd's effective teaching strategies, creativity, and compassion earned her recognition as the 2019 Mississippi Teacher of the Year.

She teaches classes in music, directs several choirs, and develops new programs that use music to promote student learning and growth in other areas.

"My choir students help teach basic concepts through music to special needs students at Lafayette Upper Elementary. In turn, the elementary students performed at our Winter Concert, and were wonderful," said Gadd.

Students take the baton in Gadd's student conductor program. "There are only so many solos in a concert. This is another opportunity for kids to lead and be successful. Student conductors focus on others and build confidence. They learn respect and communication. And, they love it."

She credits Donald Trott, director of choral activities, with the mentoring and support to help her succeed.

"My assistantship with Dr. Trott and other amazing professors at Ole Miss showed me how to connect with students."

Gadd stays in close contact as director of the Oxford Children's Chorus, a program of the Department of Music.

"Those kids love being there, they love music, they want to be challenged and coached, and they're not afraid to grow."

"It's a thrill to see Hannah lead the Children's Chorus and her own stellar program at Lafayette," said Trott. "She richly deserves the honor of Teacher of the Year." [▼](#)



Hannah Gadd

## The Sound of Music

At the fall 2018 National Association of Singing Regional Vocal Competition four UM students won high honors:

Caitlin Richardson—1st Place, Younger Advanced Women  
Maddi Jolley—3rd Place, Younger Advanced Women  
Ben Rorabaugh—2nd Place, Younger Advanced Men  
Isaiah Traylor—2nd Place, Junior Men



## Higher Learning

Elam Miller, a senior majoring in public policy leadership and president of the Associated Student Body, was an honoree at the 32nd annual Higher Education Appreciation Day-Working for Academic Excellence awards program in Jackson.





Christina Wallace

## Prescription for Success

**C**hristina Wallace (BA chemistry '04) graduated in May apparently as the first member of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to earn an MD from the UM School of Medicine.

"It took me years to get here, and it couldn't be better," said Wallace, who started a residency at UMMC this summer. "I plan to practice in Mississippi and stress to my patients the importance of preventive care. At some point, I want to get back to my community."

"Christina knew as a first-year student she wanted to be a primary care physician," said Dr. Lyssa Weatherly,

assistant professor of medicine. "She asked what she could do to be more competitive, and she did it.

"She's going to be a force to be reckoned with in this state."

Growing up in Tucker, one of eight Choctaw Indian Reservation communities in Neshoba County, Wallace didn't know any Native American physicians. But she did know a traditional healer, her grandfather. Her mother was a registered nurse at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Jackson.

"I saw how she interacted with patients, and it intrigued me at a young age," Wallace said. "I learned from my mom how to treat people."

Wallace's compassion was recognized with the 2019 UMMC Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award.

"She makes patients and their families feel at ease and explains things in an easy-to-understand manner," said Dr. Michelle Horn, associate professor of medicine. "It's part of Christina's nature, and patients respond." 

## Her Life's Calling

**G**rowing up in a politically active family may have sparked her interest in public service, but Christine Dickason (BA public policy leadership '15) found her life's calling when she volunteered in high school as an ACT tutor in Memphis public schools.

"I attended school only 30 minutes away but saw drastic differences in educational quality and access. It made me question the wide educational gaps."

While at UM, Dickason was a founding member of the UM Food Bank; leader with the Associated Student Body, Ole Miss College Democrats, and Mississippi First; and a Truman Scholar finalist. Her focus on education continued through coursework, presenting ideas at a national conference, and an honors thesis that included a documentary film on college preparation and student

aspirations in Mississippi public high schools.

After graduation, Dickason was First Lady Michelle Obama's Deputy Director of Correspondence.

"The once-in-a-lifetime experience taught me so much—from how the highest levels of the federal government operate to how to plan a trip to Yosemite National Park for the First Family," she said. "Most importantly, it taught me to be flexible with my plans and stay open to incredible opportunities."

While earning an MA in public policy at George Washington University, Dickason worked at the Government Accountability Office, the Center for American Progress, and the Global Development Incubator. She is pursuing a PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Vanderbilt University.



Christine Dickason

"I'm still exploring career options. I want to research education policy and reach a broader audience to inspire not only public discourse but public action—something PPL professors inspired me to pursue."

In her reflection on the PPL program, Dickason said that it is an incredible program that is offered at a graduate level at many schools.

"PPL allows students to build enduring relationships with excellent professors. Through the program, I interned in DC (twice!), visited local farms to learn about food policy, and took a creative approach to my honors thesis. PPL provides a solid foundation to build a variety of careers, whether it be participating in Mississippi Teacher Corps, working for a senator, or making your way to the White House!" 

## Mount Vernon Leadership Fellow

Mitchell Palmertree, a public policy leadership major, spent his summer at the six-week institute as one of 16 rising college juniors with unparalleled leadership learning and networking opportunities at the estate of US President George Washington.

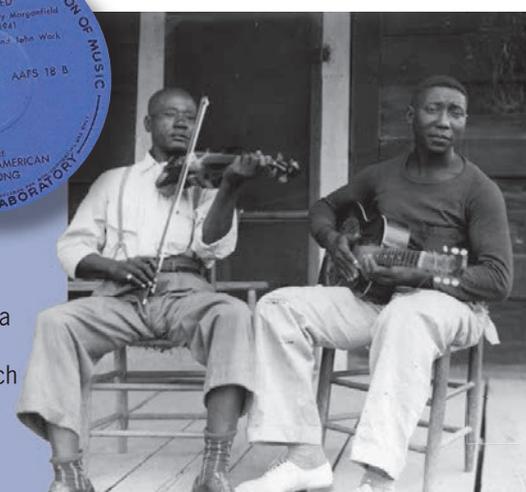


## Listening to the Mississippi Delta

"Coahoma" is a new podcast series by Scott Barretta, an instructor of sociology, former editor of *Living Blues* magazine, and longtime host of the *Highway 61* radio blues show who has worked on the Mississippi Blues Trail and the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center.

Barretta uses the nearly 600 recordings made in Coahoma County in 1941-42 by Library of Congress folklorist Alan Lomax and researchers from Fisk University to reveal a rich portrait of African American life in the region.

*Muddy Waters (right) and Son Sims.*



"I hope it will equip me with the skills to turn my dream of a freedom project in Winona into a reality. I want it to be an engine for change and progress in my hometown."

# 19th-Century French Art & Civilization

Students learned about 19th-century French art and civilization during a winter study abroad course in Paris taught by Louise Arizzoli, instructional assistant professor of art history, and Anne Quinney, professor of French.

“The students were open-minded about French culture, intellectually curious, and ready to tirelessly explore art,” Arizzoli said.

The course covered art of the pre-Revolutionary period and ended with early modernism. Topics included the influence of revolution, the shift from history painting to scenes of everyday life, landscape painting as an autonomous art form, and the effect of modern life on the Impressionists.

The group toured landmark monuments including the Gothic cathedral of Notre Dame, just months before the fire destroyed its spire and most of its 12th-century roof.

“Two weeks of visiting museums, exploring the city, and immersing ourselves in Parisian life left me with a sense that I could understand the whole picture—how art and life were interrelated during this fascinating century—and how its imprint lives on in France today,” Quinney said.

Art history major Pearson Moore said the trip was incredible, but for different reasons than she expected. “I was surprised by the cultural differences. The submersion into French culture for two weeks taught me so much about communities different from my own.”

*Students and faculty visited the Rodin Museum in Paris, stopping in the museum's gardens to view the sculptor's famous work The Thinker. From left: Maia Pimperl, Kathelyn Hoffman, Greyson Keel, Drew Davis, Mary Claire Hayes, Olivia Jordan, Louise Arizzoli, Michaela Gay, Ryan Darby, Sarah Reiminger, Madeline Stratemann, and Pearson Moore.*



## CLASSICS' LATIN CLUB

Beginning in January 2018, a team of classics faculty and students ran a weekly after school Latin Club for 5th and 6th graders at Oxford Intermediate School. They support literacy skills while learning about Latin and Roman culture through fun activities and games. Undergraduate students get hands-on experience leading a class, working one-on-one with students, and participating in a team.



## MUSEUM OF WOMEN IN THE ARTS SCHOLAR

Charlotte Burge, a transfer student from Itawamba Community College pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in sculpture, is the recipient of a visual arts scholarship from the Mississippi State Committee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC.

“I hope my art can be a picture for people who haven't dealt with mental illness, depression, or anxiety,” Burge said. “I want to give insight to the stress and the reality of the world—that it's not a perfect Instagram post.”

“A lot of my pieces represent that we are colorful blocks on the outside, but messy and disorganized on the inside.”

Durant Thompson, professor of art, describes Burge's work as “inviting and whimsical at first encounter, while upon further investigation, the viewer realizes that there is deeper content dealing with often overlooked life struggles.”



## ON STAGE

Sailors prepare to “launch” Dick Deadeye in a recent UM Opera Theatre & Orchestra production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* at the Ford Center for the Performing Arts. The cast was composed of university students, faculty, and administrators—including Interim Chancellor Larry Sparks and Dean Lee M. Cohen—alongside community participants.

## Shining Example

Two awards celebrate Jacqueline Certion, assistant director of Foundations for Academic Success Track (FASTTrack)—a first-year learning community easing the transition from high school to college: the 2019 Black Student Union Guiding Light Award and the Northeast District Harriet Tubman Award from the Magnolia Bar Association for her work with students of color.

“FASTTrack means connections to peers, role models, and adults who genuinely care. Ms. Certion is the prime example of a role model,” said Rashad Collier (BA computer science ’17), a software engineer for C Spire in Ridgeland. “No matter the person or the circumstance, she’ll stop at nothing to help, regardless of your situation, and won’t judge. Make no mistake, she’ll be on your case if you’re in the wrong, but it’s conviction laced with care that makes all the difference.”

Certion said, “I love having sophomores, juniors, and seniors continue to come for mentorship and to talk about life. Having students feel I am a confidante, an advocate, and a resource beyond freshman year means the world to me.”

[Read her story, visit VFV online.](#)

## A Wealth of Knowledge

Higher education is a top profession of many College alumni who have a passion for their chosen discipline of study, understand the value of a liberal arts education, and want to “pay it forward.”

Dr. Johnny Ducking (BA economics and mathematics ’04; MA economics ’06), an associate professor of economics at North Carolina A&T State University, has that passion from within the discipline of economics. His interest was captured in his first economics class when the professor “made difficult economic concepts seem simple. Economics provides a framework to think critically about solving problems. It involves studying how scarce resources are allocated and how individuals respond to incentives, which is beneficial to individuals in many professions.”

Ducking was a scholarship member of the football team before injuring his ankle. He then became a student coach for the team, was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Omega Psi Phi fraternity, and Reading with the Rebels, and was selected to many honor societies.



The decision to pursue a PhD in economics instead of a law degree came when a professor encouraged him to attend a summer American Economic Association program at Duke University. Since earning the PhD at the University of Kentucky,

Ducking teaches labor economics, sports economics, statistics for decision making, and econometrics. His research focuses on minimum pay scales and discrimination in professional sports, including projects on the role of sports in the integration of universities and how sports conference championships influence college enrollment.

“Economics majors have experienced success in a wide range of fields, even in areas such as coaching and journalism due to their ability to think critically and use economic theory to support their positions. Bill Belichick and Bomani Jones are examples of successful economics majors in coaching and journalism. These two are examples that an economics degree can be useful in many different areas.”

## Poker Star Discusses Decisions

Annie Duke, winner of the 2004 World Series of Poker Tournament of Champions, discussed her book, *Thinking in Bets: Making Smarter Decisions When You Don't Have All the Facts*, at the annual Oxford Conference of the Book.

Neil Manson, professor of philosophy, invited Duke to participate on a panel about cognitive psychology because of the book’s focus on behavioral science and decision-making.

“I knew her to be incredibly smart, successful, and charismatic. She has a strong background in cognitive psychology from before she started playing professional poker,” Manson said. “One of the most important things you can learn in college is how to make decisions. That’s what her book is about.”

Duke’s message is to not equate the quality of a decision with the quality of its outcome. If you make a play in poker where you win a big pot so long as the dealer does not turn over an ace of spades, then you made a great decision—even if the dealer turns over an ace of spades. The decision was great, even though the result was bad, because you can’t control chance outcomes. That’s just life, she said.

Duke talked with Manson’s Logic class. “The students challenged me with insightful questions and I encouraged them to embrace uncertainty to become better decision makers,” she said.



## English Students Explore Careers with Alumni

The inaugural “Next Chapters” networking program introduced students to alumni who have translated their study of English into a variety of careers.

“Students benefit from the wisdom and experience of our alumni, and our alumni enjoy returning to campus to speak to future graduates,” Jason Solinger, associate professor of English, said of the two-day event he organized with his department, the College of Liberal Arts, and Outreach’s UM Internship Experience Program to explain the value of an English degree in today’s job market.

New Chapters opened with a panel discussion by six English department alumni who excel in their careers:

- Kimbrey Dandridge, an attorney for Gap Inc. in San Francisco
- Kent Jackson, senior product manager for Core Logic in Oxford
- Campbell McCool, an entrepreneur and developer in Oxford
- Lindsey Neyman, production talent manager for FuseFX in Los Angeles
- Nicole Tisdale, subcommittee staff director for the US House of Representatives Homeland Security Committee
- Kayleigh Webb, associate publicist for HarperCollins Publishers in New York

Panelists described ways the English program prepares students for success in life and the work

[Visit VFV Online, to read alumni feedback about the event.](#)



UM alumnae Nicole Tisdale (from left) and Kim Dandridge discuss their career paths in government and the legal fields with English major Hannah Woods.

place: communication skills, analyzing information, articulating concise arguments, and showing empathy for a wide variety of people.

Alumni discussed how high tech industries focus on humanities majors because they can communicate the idea, not just invent products.

English courses helped Tisdale master and articulate different topics. “I didn’t graduate being an expert in ISIS and Chinese espionage, but I did learn how to immerse myself in the subject matter and provide analysis for the variety of material I studied each semester.”

For Dandridge, “How I word a contract or place a comma makes a big difference, and my English background gives me an edge.”

Advice included don’t be afraid to show personality in your resume and letter, lead with the skills you have, learn how to market yourself on social media, make an impact with handwritten letters, and utilize alumni networks.

LinkedIn plays a big role when Neyman hires employees. “Check out backgrounds of people with

careers you’re interested in. Where did they start? It may show the first rung on the ladder to where you want to be.”

Jackson discussed preparation for the job interview. “Whatever field you pursue, learn the vocabulary. If you do research on the company and the field before you go into an interview, it will help.”

McCool urges students to connect with alumni. “Offer to take them to coffee and ask how they got where they are. Stay in touch afterwards. Follow-up is important to let mentors know how you are proceeding with the job search and any success.”

One-on-one speed networking sessions offered mentoring by alumni who are clergy, publishing house associates, art directors, business writers, crime prevention directors, financial advisors, health care administrators, philanthropy coordinators, and attorneys.

Emily Capponi, a junior English major, said the alumni gave her confidence. “They reassured me I am prepared for a great career. Several completed their degrees while still being undecided about which field to go into, and obviously it worked out!”



## SUMMER FUN WITH MATHEMATICS

The Rebel Upward Bound Institute, hosted by the Department of Mathematics and the Center for Mathematics and Science Education, targeted students from Bruce, Calhoun City, Coffeeville, and Vardaman high schools. Affiliated with the federally funded education program Upward Bound, each session focused on a different aspect of mathematical knowledge, such as algebra, geometry, probability, and statistics.

UM faculty instructors included James Reid, chair and professor of mathematics; Laura Sheppardson, associate professor and associate chair of mathematics; and Thái Hoàng Lê, assistant professor of mathematics and colead instructor of the institute. Michael McCrory, an assistant professor of mathematics at Blue Mountain College, was the other colead instructor.

“We kept students engaged in math and gave them a head start on the fall semester,” said McCrory, who earned his bachelor’s, master’s and PhD in mathematics from UM.

# Create Your Own

National employer surveys tell us the top skills and qualities desired in job applicants are written communication, problem solving skills, ability to work on a team, initiative, quantitative competence, strong work ethic, oral communication, leadership, attention to detail, and technical proficiency.

To develop those skills we encourage students to join clubs and organizations. However, some students take it a step further: they create their own.

For example, psychology majors created Autism UM and the UM chapter of Youth Movement Against Alzheimer's. Students in the Intelligence and Security Studies minor helped found the Society for Future Intelligence Leaders.

Here are some College of Liberal Arts students who saw a need on campus, and responded.

**Jacqueline Knirnschild** (BA English '20) cofounded the online magazine *Sharp Oxford*.

"Daniel Payne (journalism) and I created *Sharp Oxford* because we saw a space that needed to be filled. It crosses stylistic boundaries, grants writers creative freedom, and serves as a hub for sharing ideas. The first issue topics include fraternity hegemony, misogyny in drag shows, and my essay about sleeping in a former slave quarter at Rowan Oak."

Knirnschild is proud of how "swiftly and efficiently" they produced the magazine.

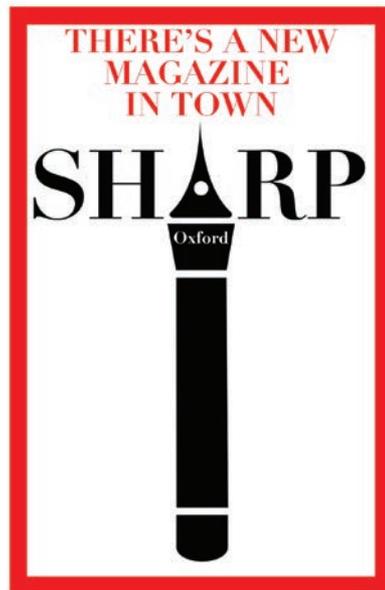
"The inception of the idea occurred in February, and we gathered writers, worked on their drafts, collected images, designed the digital layout, and published in April."

The experience inspired Knirnschild to pursue an English major and "to embrace and trust the power of my own voice."

**Katherine Levinston** (BA Arabic and international studies '19) reestablished a Jewish organization on campus, renaming it UM Hillel and inviting Jewish students to a founding meeting.

"We held first High Holiday Services of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the Paris Yates Chapel, and were honored to have Henry Paris attend.

"The development of a Hillel chapter contributes to the practice of Judaism on campus and helps our Jewish community feel more at home."



**Richard Easterling** (BS biology '19) also revived a defunct organization—MEDLIFE (Medicine, Education, and Development for Low Income Families Everywhere) to coordinate medical mission trips abroad.

"MEDLIFE membership had dwindled to one person. To learn more, I traveled with the organization to Ecuador to serve with a mobile medical clinic. Afterwards I restarted



Students on a MEDLIFE trip to Peru.

our chapter by spreading the word about the life-changing experience of stepping out of your comfort zone to provide care to those who need it most."

The next year five students traveled to Lima, Peru; the year after that, 20 students went to Cusco, Peru. Together with Global Brigades, the two organizations encourage global service among students.

**Sydney Stanard** (BA political science '19) cofounded both the *Mississippi Political Review* magazine for a higher level of political discourse on campus and the Center for Open Source Analysis (COSA) publication.

"Being a part of something is wonderful, but establishing something and experiencing setbacks and frustrations is the most rewarding thing I've done.



Jarrius Adams (right) at a voter registration booth.

These projects taught me more about myself—as a leader, a manager, and a writer—than being in a classroom."

The COSA publication for the Center for Intelligence & Security Studies also helped with Sydney's career prospects. "It's been a great crash course into what I could do in the future, and landed my first job."

**Jarrius Adams** (BA political science and public policy leadership '19) established a UM chapter of Mississippi Votes to engage students in the political process.

"As the Director of Voter Registration and Elections, I organized a team to register at least 500 students on National Voter Registration Day. We registered over 700 students!"

Adams encouraged and educated students by speaking to classes and clubs on campus.

"My greatest accomplishment was providing the resources my peers need to contribute to our democratic society. Being politically active is useful throughout life and it is important that we start young."

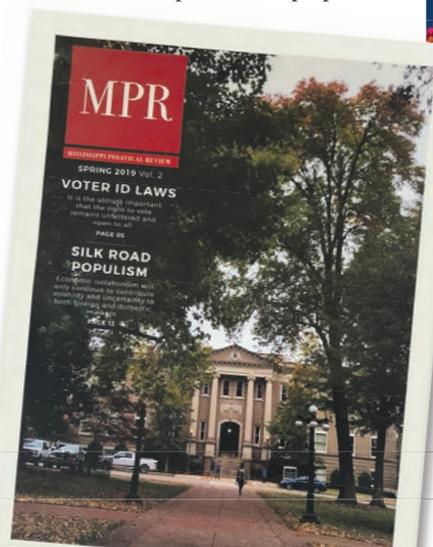
**Taylor Cabrera** (BA biology and physics '20) cofounded *HerCampus at OleMiss*, an online magazine by and for college women.

"It was difficult to get an online publication up and running. We had communication and organizational challenges; however, it was a rewarding, character-building experience to prepare for



the professional workplace.

"Even better, I've shared my story with others, which I hope helps to empower them as they read."



## Boren Scholars

This spring seven students in the Arabic, Chinese, and Swahili language programs received the prestigious David L. Boren Scholarship to study abroad from the National Security Exchange Program—a record number for UM, and more than any other university in critical languages.

Tyler Caple, Jesse Paxton, and Matthew Travers went to China. Lauren Burns, John Chappell, and Lauren Newman headed to Morocco. Claire Sullivan spent the summer in Tanzania.

All are members of both the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and the Croft Institute for International Studies, and six are using the Boren scholarship to complete their capstone

“Living in Tanzania pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me a competitive edge for becoming a foreign service officer.”

—CLAIRE SULLIVAN



(fifth year) programs abroad.

Sullivan is UM’s first Swahili Boren Scholar. “The Boren African Flagship Languages Initiative program provides the opportunity to gain cultural knowledge through a home stay with a local family and cultural excursions, such as a four-day trip to the Enduimet

Wildlife Management Area,” said Sullivan. “Living in Tanzania pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me a competitive edge for becoming a foreign service officer.”

This year 244 undergraduate scholars were selected from 851 applicants nationwide.

“To continue to play a leadership role in the world, it is vital that America’s future leaders have a deep understanding of the rest of the world,” said former US Senator David Boren. “As we seek to lead through partnerships, understanding of other cultures and languages is absolutely essential.”



## 14th UM Goldwater Scholar

Addison Roush, a chemistry major with a biochemistry emphasis, is a national Barry S. Goldwater Scholar—the oldest and most prestigious science scholarship for the next generation of research leaders.

A junior in the Honors College, Addison researches treatment methods to combat Alzheimer’s disease. In his work with Joshua Sharp, assistant professor of pharmacology and research assistant professor in the Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Roush develops new techniques to simplify the study of protein structures and their interactions.

His investigation expanded with Dr. William DeGrado at UC-San

Francisco this summer. “I worked with Dr. DeGrado studying the interaction between amyloid beta, a peptide that is strongly associated with Alzheimer’s disease, and TREM2, a potent genetic risk factor of Alzheimer’s disease, using cross-linking mass spectrometry.”

Roush’s intellectual curiosity exemplifies the attitude faculty hope to nurture in students, Sharp said. “Addison is driven by an intense desire to know, and to find out what’s next. When presented with a problem, he displays an intensity of thought, a capacity for self-motivated scientific exploration, and a rare ability to find and ask the next important question in the field. Addison has new and productive ideas at every turn.”

Roush discovered his love of chemistry taking organic chemistry and changed his major from pharmacy to biochemistry, even though it meant adding a fifth year. He intends to pursue a PhD in biophysics and aims to develop ways to visualize protein-folding events as they occur.

“My career goals have been validated. Academic chemistry research can be an extremely difficult field to break into, especially if one hopes to eventually work at a top institution. It is a supreme honor to have my plans for a career in research be recognized by such a prestigious organization.”

Roush is one of 493 students selected from more than 5,000 applicants nationwide.

### Dance, Dance, Dance

Allen Dillon, a BFA musical theatre major, and other students perform “How Do I Enter?” by choreographer Mary Chase during the slavery tour/civil rights happening at the American College Dance Association Conference held on campus in March.



### Professor Featured in PBS Documentary

Shennette Garrett-Scott, associate professor of history and African American Studies, helps tell the untold story of African American entrepreneurship in the PBS documentary series *Boss: The Black Experience in Business*, which premiered in April. She is a specialist in the history of gender, race, and the political economy in US business in the early 20th-century South.

VIDEO: [Watch, visit VFW online.](#)





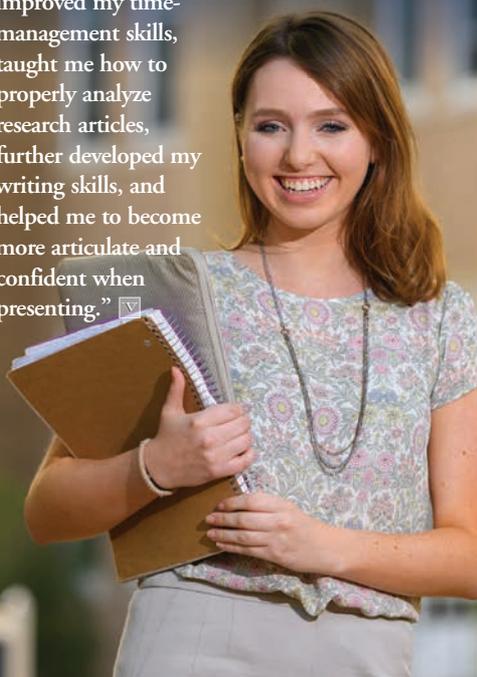
# Student Spotlight

A look at a few of the 5,019 scholars in the College

LAUREN ELLISON, BA psychology '19

"My psychology degree and liberal arts experience are an excellent foundation for a career in law. I intend to practice medical malpractice defense or patent law and think my psychology degree will allow me to understand clients, witnesses, juries, judges, and fellow lawyers.

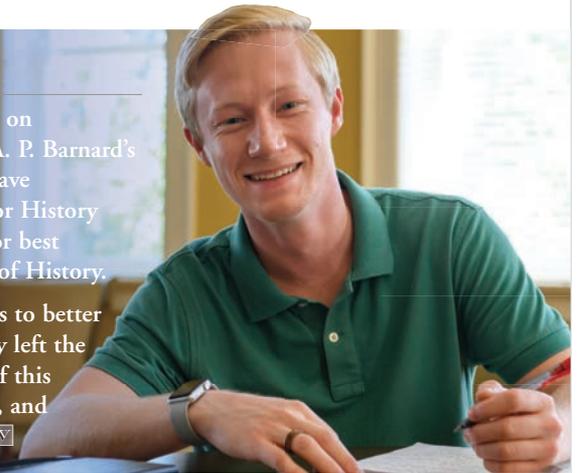
"Completing and defending my honors thesis, "It's Not Just 'Skin Deep': Social Anxiety and Anxiety Sensitivity in Adults with Psychodermatological Disorders," under the guidance of Dr. Laura Dixon, is the highlight of my academic experience. I presented my information at the UM Conference on Psychological Science. Working on this project improved my time-management skills, taught me how to properly analyze research articles, further developed my writing skills, and helped me to become more articulate and confident when presenting."



JACOB FERGUSON, BA English and history '19

Jacob, a Hall of Fame member, wrote his history capstone paper on "Paternalism and Property Rights in the Slaveholding South: F. A. P. Barnard's Trial at the University of Mississippi, White Southerners, and Slave Testimonies." He presented the paper to the state Symposium for History Undergraduate Research and received the Franklin Riley Prize for best undergraduate paper from the Arch Dalrymple III Department of History.

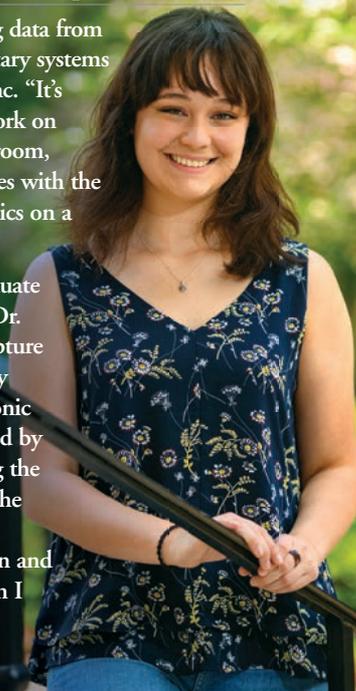
"I took classes on the 20th-century South and slavery at Ole Miss to better understand this place I call home. Although I had not previously left the country, I studied in Venice, Italy, and after realizing the value of this experience, studied in Scotland. Exposure to new cultures, ideas, and ways of learning made me a better student and global citizen."



RENÉE SULLIVAN-GONZÁLEZ, BA physics '18

Renée is a technical analyst studying data from infrasound sensors and various military systems for Hyperion Technology Group, Inc. "It's exciting and somewhat surreal to work on projects I learned about in the classroom, especially since Hyperion collaborates with the National Center for Physical Acoustics on a number of projects and devices.

"I was fortunate to do my undergraduate research with Dr. Joel Mobley and Dr. Cecille Labuda improving image capture for the measurements of the primary Bjerknes force in a cavitating ultrasonic field. I played with bubbles produced by sound waves in water while utilizing the knowledge and skills I'd learned in the classroom. The experience laid the foundation for my work at Hyperion and introduced me to people with whom I work professionally."

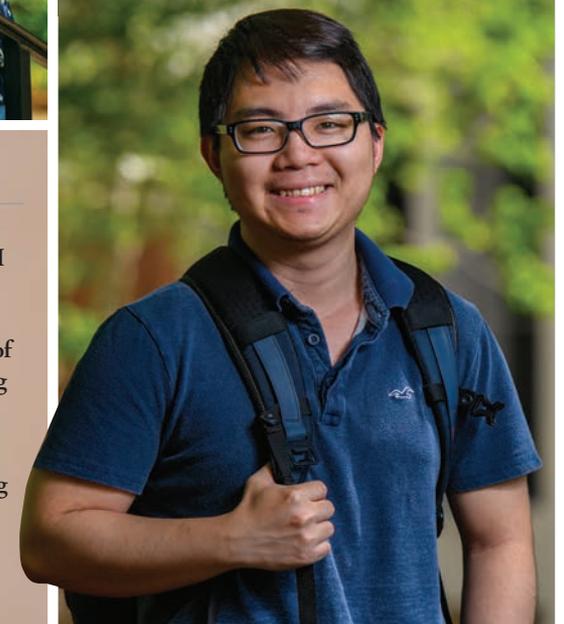


HOANG NGUYEN

BS mathematics and managerial finance '19

"I study investment and the knowledge regarding portfolio management. I will pursue a doctoral degree in financial mathematics and in the long run I want to become a financial analyst. Participating in the Putnam competition, the most challenging university-level math competition in the US, as an Ole Miss student representative is the proudest achievement of my college years.

"I learned a lot from the international student community. As president of the International & American Student Alliance, the largest international organization on campus, I hope the university will facilitate and improve cultural integration and diversity."



DARIUS MARCUS WOODARD, BM music '19

"I chose music as my major simply because music has always been a vital part of me and is one of the things that I do well. I cherish the relationships I've made with the many wonderful staff and students of the music department who all have made my college experience an enjoyable one," said Darius, winner of the Cabaret Competition for the Department of Music's Living Music Resource™ third annual hUMANities event.

"Being able to sing with various ensembles in the music department and student teach in a professional teaching setting has given me a glimpse of what is to come as I prepare to become a school choral music educator after leaving the University of Mississippi."





**MARISA KUTCHMA, BS biology '19**

A Marshall Scholarship finalist and Academic Captain of the Women's Soccer Team, Marissa coauthored "Multigenerational Consequences of Early-life Cannabinoid Exposure in Zebrafish," a study of the reproductive toxicity of the active ingredients in marijuana.

"I worked in the Environmental Toxicology Lab because, as an aspiring OB/GYN physician, I aim to impact the reproductive health field. As the only undergraduate on the project, I learned the value of professional collaboration and problem-solving skills to reach a goal. The experience helped me during the interview at the British Consulate for the Marshall Scholarship and inspired me to work in the Ugandan reproductive health sector with the Peace Corps before medical school." ❏

**TY GILL, BA classics, linguistics, and Spanish '19**

Ty studied in Spain and Italy, worked on the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, and attended the Summer Linguistic Institute at the University of Kentucky, where he will begin a master's degree next fall. This year he holds a Fulbright grant as an Auxiliar de Conversación (English Teaching Assistant) in the Principality of Asturias, Spain.

"All three of my majors—classics, linguistics, and Spanish—fit my goal to work with computational sociolinguistics and historical linguistics studying the dialect formation of Latin into modern-day Romance languages. I also want to work with modern sociolinguistics improving artificial intelligence and Natural Language Processing. My end goal is to be a Computational Sociolinguist at Google and then teach at the university level." ❏



**ASHTON KEEN, BFA ceramics '19**

Ashton's ceramics BFA thesis exhibition, "Hidden," is featured on these two pages.

"Within this body of work, I'm striving to combine the visual strength of architectural construction with the beautifully cluttered line I see in Islamic calligraphy. Drawing inspiration from historical and ceremonial utilitarian forms, specifically teapots and platters, I utilize pulled handles as an exploration of form, line, and negative space. Accentuating the attachments to the forms, I want people to relate these lines to traditional ceramic objects within the realm of function. However, I strive to convey a more fluid line that moves the eye and brings question to its conceptual function. By pulling out the musculature of the object, leaving it with only the bones of the piece, these forms become cagelike in structure, bringing a feeling of weightlessness in these large objects." ▼

**HEATH WOOTEN**

**BA anthropology, English, and linguistics '20**

"The workshop structure of my writing classes illuminates an emotional world different from my usual academic experiences. Much in the way that studies in archaeology allow me to connect emotionally with populations of the past, poetry workshops allow me to learn about and connect with individuals in the present through their work.

"In workshop, we directly exchange personal worldviews, empathies, neuroses, and paranoias. Reading and discussing poetry written by people of diverse backgrounds who occupy the same space fosters an intimate, informative, and unique environment. In this way, I have developed my voice as a poet and gained valuable perspectives from people of unique or marginalized backgrounds all of which have informed my social consciousness." ▼

**SKYLYN IRBY, BS mathematics '19**

The Hall of Fame member held a number of leadership positions on campus and expanded her horizons beyond campus. "An organization serving minority students pursuing STEM degrees, the IMAGE program—Increasing Minority Access to Graduate Education Program—made a big impact by providing resources and mentors to help me succeed in college. As an IMAGE scholar, I participated in a Study Abroad program in Belize studying a river to improve a water system.

"Last summer I served as an undergraduate researcher for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute Undergraduate Program in Berkeley, California. I was ecstatic to analyze statistically an education-related data set! This project encompassed so much of what I hope to do as an aspiring mathematician, as it integrated something I enjoy—math—and something I am passionate about—education." ▼



**CAROLINE BASS**

BA international studies and Spanish '19

"I entered the Croft Institute for International Studies with the expectation that learning Spanish would come from taking a language course each semester. In upper-level classes I realized that, while I was achieving exemplary grades, speaking Spanish is an endeavor requiring self-motivation and hard work, not just doing homework. I began studying grammar and vocabulary daily and listening to and speaking Spanish at every opportunity. Before my study abroad semester I worked harder learning the language than I have ever worked in any class. In the Dominican Republic I was surprised at the level I had achieved and the ease with which I participated in classes taught in Spanish and communicated with my peers.

"Speaking Spanish has opened doors for new friendships, service opportunities, and travels." ▾

**KEELIN CARR, BA forensic chemistry '19**

A Luckyday Scholar and member of the Pride of the South Band who interned at the Mississippi Forensics Laboratory, Keelin aspired "to make a greater contribution" with the UM Gospel Choir, as a Men of Excellence volunteer for the Boys and Girls Club, and as a mentor to college students in the Black Student Union and high schoolers in the Center for Inclusion & Cross Cultural Engagement's Mississippi Outreach to Scholastic Talent (MOST) program.

"As a mentor I work on and off campus to give information about classes, tell about organizations to join, and just be a person to whom students can go about problems. For high school students I provide information about colleges, ACT scores needed for certain classes and scholarships, and advice in general." ▾

**KYLE BRASSELL, BA religious studies '19**

"My honors thesis, "Southern Baptist Influences on Religious Freedom Laws," under the guidance of Dr. Sarah Moses, discusses the impact that teachings of the Southern Baptist Convention have had on the creation and passage of religious freedom laws in the US, specifically Mississippi's House Bill 1523. My paper examines the denomination's resolutions and writings that illustrate the Baptist beliefs regarding religious freedom as well as the ways in a religious group influenced public policy."

Kyle's academic accomplishments included professional meetings of the Society of Christian Ethics and the American Academy of Religion. He was also invited to participate in a department-sponsored public dialogue about religious freedom laws. ▾



**MAKALA MARIE MCNEIL**, BA sociology '18;  
BS integrated marketing communications '18

A Hall of Fame member on the executive board of Students Against Social Injustice and the campus chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Makala held leadership positions in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and served as a mentor for Mississippi Outreach to Scholastic Talent (MOST), an exclusive leadership program for African American rising high school seniors from Mississippi.

She was a senior page for the Mississippi State Senate, an Associated Student Body senator, and student engagement coordinator with the Office of Sustainability. As a student archivist for the Modern Political Archives in the library, Makala assisted in efforts to preserve and encourage research in private papers documenting Mississippians at both national and state levels. ▾

**LEVI BEVIS**, BA public policy leadership '19

"I pursued a public policy leadership major because of my passion for law and government. Policy affects every aspect of our lives, and policymaking is one of the most effective ways to achieve widespread change and improve life for many people. I plan to work in Washington, DC, before attending law school to pursue a career as an immigration or civil rights attorney. Exposure to policy work and advocacy greatly prepared me for such a career.

"Last summer, as a legislative intern with US Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) I experienced policymaking firsthand. I utilized many of the skills and much of the knowledge I had gained through my time at the university." ▾

**MALLIE IMBLER**

BA political science and public policy leadership '19

This Hall of Fame recipient helped found the Future Alumni Network and served as its president. And, she prepared herself for the career goal of working in the public sector in Washington, DC.

"My favorite outside-the-classroom experiences was provided by the Lott Institute—internships during the summers for Senator Wicker and for the White House in the Office of Presidential Personnel. With these opportunities, I've applied academics to achieve and excel. While grades are a factor in being selected for such positions, implementation of both academic and leadership lessons learned in the classroom was also important in enabling me to serve in these capacities." ▾

# Award-Winning Graduate Students

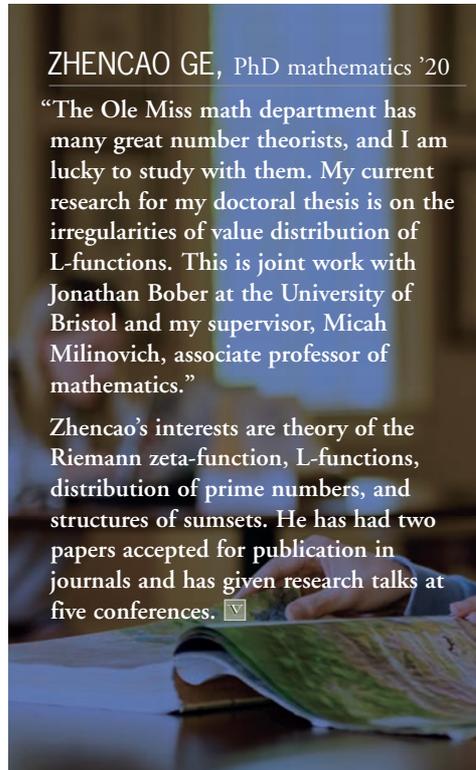
Each year departments present Achievement Awards at Honors Day.



SARAH JOHNSON ARRADONDO, PhD chemistry '19

“Ever since I was a little girl I’ve been interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. However, most of my STEM teachers were men. The few female STEM professors transformed my life and placed me on my current path. I’m getting my PhD in computational chemistry to inspire, motivate, and mentor the next generation of female STEM leaders. I started this journey with the University of Mississippi Women in STEM organization, a network of powerful and creative individuals that help each other with issues women face in STEM fields.”

This fall Sarah joins Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, as an assistant professor of chemistry. 



ZHENCAO GE, PhD mathematics '20

“The Ole Miss math department has many great number theorists, and I am lucky to study with them. My current research for my doctoral thesis is on the irregularities of value distribution of L-functions. This is joint work with Jonathan Bober at the University of Bristol and my supervisor, Micah Milinovich, associate professor of mathematics.”

Zhencao’s interests are theory of the Riemann zeta-function, L-functions, distribution of prime numbers, and structures of sumsets. He has had two papers accepted for publication in journals and has given research talks at five conferences. 



FRANCES “FRANKIE” EVELYN BARRETT, MA Southern Studies '19

For her thesis, “A Bargain at Any Cost: The Rise of Dollar General,” Frankie’s research draws on her undergraduate background in gender studies and critical regional lens at UNC-Chapel Hill to explore the history and effects of the US dollar store industry. During her time at UM, Frankie has served as a teaching assistant and a Graduate Writing Fellow. She received the Lucille and Motee Daniels Award for her essay “Podcasting Place in ‘S-Town’: Construction of Place in the Serial Narrative Podcast.”

In addition to her scholarly interests, Frankie was secretary of OUTGrads, the university’s LGBTQIA+ graduate student organization, and an active member of United Campus Workers Mississippi. This fall Frankie is a PhD student in American Studies at Yale University. 



**HYERIM PARK, PhD economics '21**

“After working with labor statistics at the Ministry of Labor and Employment in Korea, I wanted to study labor economics in both theoretical and empirical ways. At Ole Miss I study gender wage gap and women’s labor supply with my advisor, Dr. Kolesnikova. The purpose of my project is to explain the labor supply of educated women. I have found that highly educated married women with children work less given their high average wage.

“For another project, I address the difference in labor supplies of single and married women from the perspective of the reservation wage and wage distribution. After graduation, I would like to continue to study women’s labor supply.”



**MARCI WEBER, PhD clinical psychology '21**

“I chose clinical psychology to directly impact children and adolescents’ mental health, as well as to do scientific research. I love the mix of conducting research and directly applying it. My research is on disaster-related trauma, sexual trauma, and resilience.”

Marci has published six journal articles and a book chapter, mentored two honors students with their theses, and helped build UM’s disaster sciences minor. Her presentations at research conferences include the International Conference on Positive Psychology and Mississippi Partners in Preparedness Summit. Marci’s clinical education involves conducting therapy and assessments throughout north Mississippi for children in foster care and at Communicare of Lafayette County. She plans a research career with a focus treating PTSD and building psychological resilience among trauma-exposed or at-risk populations.



**ANDREW MARION, PhD history '21**

Andrew conducted research for the University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group and has presented his findings at four academic conferences. He shares this research with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors through campus slavery tours that explain the university’s connections to the institution of slavery. During these tours, Andrew discusses the lives and work of the enslaved on campus; the slaveholdings of university students, faculty, and alumni; the proslavery ideology that faculty promoted; and how the legacy of slavery continued to shape the university’s history following the end of the Civil War.

Andrew’s dissertation research, focusing on the post-World War II resettlement of displaced Europeans to the US, is funded in part by a research grant from the Harry S. Truman Library Institute.



Lauren Burns

### Why studying Arabic?

"I've always been interested in the Middle East, but never thought about learning Arabic. When I applied to Ole Miss, I noticed the program and thought, 'That sounds like a challenge!' I immediately fell in love with the language and joined the Croft Institute for International Studies where I focus on Middle Eastern governance and politics."

### Favorite experiences in the program?

"I still talk to my friends from Jordan every day! I'll never forget seeing 47 Soul (a Palestinian shamstep band) perform in the Roman Amphitheater in Amman, Jordan. Some of our Palestinian friends dabke'd (a traditional Palestinian dance) so hard that the soles of their shoes flew off."

### Capstone year reflections so far?

"Morocco is different than Jordan! I'd never studied darija (Moroccan dialect) before, and caught on quickly. This summer we study darija, Modern Standard Arabic, and Egyptian dialect. Next year we take content courses at the University of Moulay Ismail in addition to regular language courses."

### Career plans?

"I'm interested in water and energy sustainability as well as civil society development. I haven't decided which path to take, but know I'll use Arabic in either field."

### Why study Arabic at UM?

"We achieve high levels in reading, writing, listening, and speaking; we also learn cultural norms and differences between the Middle Eastern countries and study several dialects. UM offers classes in Egyptian, Moroccan, Levantine, and Libyan dialects in addition to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), giving us a huge advantage over those who only study MSA or one dialect."

# Where Will Flagship Take You?

According to the United Nations, Arabic is one of the world's five most-spoken languages. Students who possess Superior proficiency language skills have intercultural insights that aid careers in government, business, nonprofits, and other fields.

UM alumni work in international law, journalism, education, military, translation, intelligence services, medicine, and economics. Many receive master's or professional degrees. For example, Miller Richmond (2017) is at the Georgetown University School of Medicine; Alex Martin (2017) is seeking a PhD in economics at MIT; and John Chappell (2019) is earning an MA in foreign affairs at Georgetown University.

Arabic Flagship students commit to the program early by participating in intensive language study on campus to learn an entire year of Arabic the summer before freshman year.

On-campus language instruction each semester begins with Modern Standard Arabic before dialect study—Egyptian, Levantine, and Moroccan—is introduced in year three. In the 4th and 5th years the focus is Media Arabic and Arabic Literature. Domestic Arabic coursework is supplemented by peer-to-peer tutoring, domain mentoring, cultural events, an annual language showcase, and two summers abroad in the MENA (Middle East North Africa) region. Most study with classmates at the Modern Arabic Language International Center in Amman, Jordan, and the Arab-American Language Institute in Meknes, Morocco. Others pursue

scholarships from ProjectGO or the Critical Language Scholarship to study in Jordan, Morocco, or Oman.

Arabic Flagship culminates with Capstone, a 12-month experience in Meknes, typically taken as a 5th year of undergraduate study. "Capstone places the student in the ideal language learning environment: setting, culture, and structure, coupled with tailored instruction and applied

"Our students are from all over the US and have extraordinary academic profiles. Aggressive risk-takers willing to go for it, they are a real credit and asset to the university."

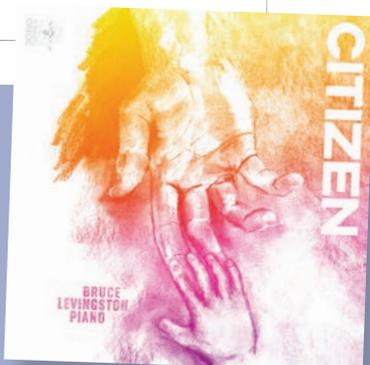
—DONALD DYER,  
associate dean for faculty and academic affairs, distinguished professor of Russian and linguistics, and codirector of the Arabic and Chinese Language Flagship Programs

knowledge and interaction through internships," said Allen Clark.

"The Capstone program trains students to achieve superior—or nativelylike—language proficiency. Students take their language accomplishments to another level and step into any career using Arabic full time," said Sydney Green (BA Arabic and international studies '18), program coordinator.

### On the Cover

Brooke P. Alexander (MFA art '18), visiting assistant professor of art and art history, created the cover art for *Citizen*, the latest album (SONO LUMINUS 2019) by Bruce Levingston, an internationally renowned concert pianist and holder of UM's Fant Chair and Chancellor's Honors College Artist-in-Residence.



### National Russian Essay Contest Winners

Results from the 2019 contest sponsored by the American Council of Teachers of Russian:

- Connor Donlen**, Category A, Non-Heritage Learners, Level 1: Gold Medal
- Pu Ouyang**, Category A, Non-Heritage Learners, Level 2: Silver Medal
- Olivia Myers**, Category A, Non-Heritage Learners, Level 2: Bronze Medal

**Mary Frances Holland** won the 2019 ACTR Post-Secondary Russian Scholar Laureate Award.





Henry Stonnington (BA Arabic and international studies '19) and Sydney Green (BA Arabic and international studies '18) pose in front of the Jordanian flag at one of Petra's highest peaks.

Charles Joukhadar, visiting assistant professor of Arabic, and Brantley Hudnall.



THIS SPRING UM WAS THE ONLY UNIVERSITY WITH A 100% ACCEPTANCE RATE TO THE COMPETITIVE, FUNDED 5TH YEAR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE ABROAD. OUR STUDENTS TOOK THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD SPOTS (OUT OF 42) IN THE NATION. THREE RECEIVED PRESTIGIOUS DAVID L. BOREN SCHOLARSHIPS FROM THE NATIONAL SECURITY EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

“Our status as one of the best Arabic programs in the US is proven through our students’ success.”

During the year in Meknes, studying Modern Standard Arabic, Egyptian, and Moroccan dialects, and practical courses such as translation, each student lives with a family and is paired with a Moroccan conversation partner. Participants engage in a community service project and an internship.

“Studying abroad is crucial to Arabic proficiency. I’ve learned about culture and myself studying in the Middle East and North Africa,” said Caleb Ray, a double major in Arabic and international studies with a minor in accounting. 

**For more information, visit [olemiss.edu/arabic](http://olemiss.edu/arabic).**



Lauren Newman (left) with her Moroccan language partner.

### *Why studying Arabic?*

“I initially chose Ole Miss because of the Croft Institute. Studying Arabic the summer before my freshman year, I realized the strength of the program. Knowledgeable, experienced professors made the intensive program fun, exciting, and rewarding. Arabic initially seemed intimidating, but I knew after that first summer Arabic would become an essential part of my future career.”

### *Favorite experiences in the program?*

“Going abroad is the best experience of the Arabic program. I studied two summers and a semester in Amman, Jordan, and I am now in Morocco. Finding cafés and restaurants to frequent, making new Arabic-speaking friends, traveling to different sites—they have been the best part of studying Arabic and of my college experience.”

### *Capstone year reflections so far?*

“Capstone is great! I’m surrounded by students who’ve made Arabic a priority, which creates a fantastic learning community. My professor is beyond amazing, and the program staff care greatly about our education and experience in Morocco. Other students are kind and encouraging, and I’ve made Moroccan friends who help me learn the dialect. I’m very glad I decided to attend!”

### *Career plans?*

“I hope to attend law school and focus on migration, refugee, and asylum law. At some point, I plan to work with the federal government.”

### *Why study Arabic at UM?*

“Ole Miss has excellent professors who care about each student’s language acquisition. The program goes above and beyond in providing resources and opportunities for students to improve their skills. Additionally, Ole Miss has a number of impressive programs that complement an Arabic degree, such as the Croft Institute and the Center for Intelligence & Security Studies. I am extremely happy, and I wouldn’t change my college experience for anything.”

## Making Music

Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Orchestral Studies Selim Giray’s transcription for violin of Friedrich Gulda’s groundbreaking *Concerto for Cello and Wind Orchestra* was published by Weinberger—one of classical music’s leading publishing houses—in Vienna, Austria.

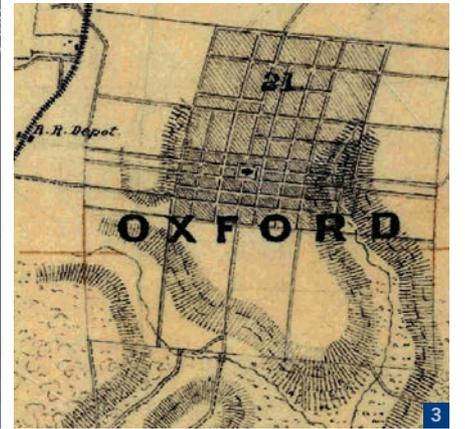


## US State Department Scholars

Four international studies and modern languages majors received 2018 Critical Language Scholarships from the US Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs for summer study overseas: Olivia George studied Korean in Gwangju, South Korea; Paul Hunt spent last summer in Lucknow, India, learning Urdu; Isabel Spafford traveled to Ibbri, Oman, to study Arabic; and Emily Wang learned Arabic in Amman, Jordan.

Emily Wang (from left), Isabel Spafford, Olivia George





1. Touching the finger marks left by those who made the bricks during a tour detailing the history of slavery on campus led by Andrew Marion, a history doctoral student (left). See page 17 to read more about him.
2. Archaeology students shovel test in front of the Barr House at Rowan Oak to identify the places enslaved people lived and worked. At Public Archaeology Day, faculty and students discuss recent fieldwork to search for antebellum deposits circa 1848-1865.
3. Oxford in 1862 is one of the historic maps in the UMSRG and Burns-Belfry Museum & Multicultural Center project digitizing, rectifying, and displaying maps from 1835 to the present day. For online access, visit [burns-belfry.com](http://burns-belfry.com).
4. A group of 50 faculty, college and high school students, and community members visited the Equal Justice Museum and Memorial Park in Montgomery, Alabama, to examine the history of lynching in America. Older community members shared historical information about Oxford and Lafayette County with students.
5. "Slave Dwelling Project founder Joseph McGill discusses preserving structures where slaves lived," said Charles Ross. "His visits to UM facilitate discussions about the institution of slavery, more importantly and specifically about the lives of the slaves themselves." The UMSRG has hosted "Slave Dwellings: Rediscovering the Enslaved in North Mississippi" talks for the public by McGill (fourth from right) along with overnight stays in the old kitchen behind Rowan Oak for students and faculty members.

## University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group

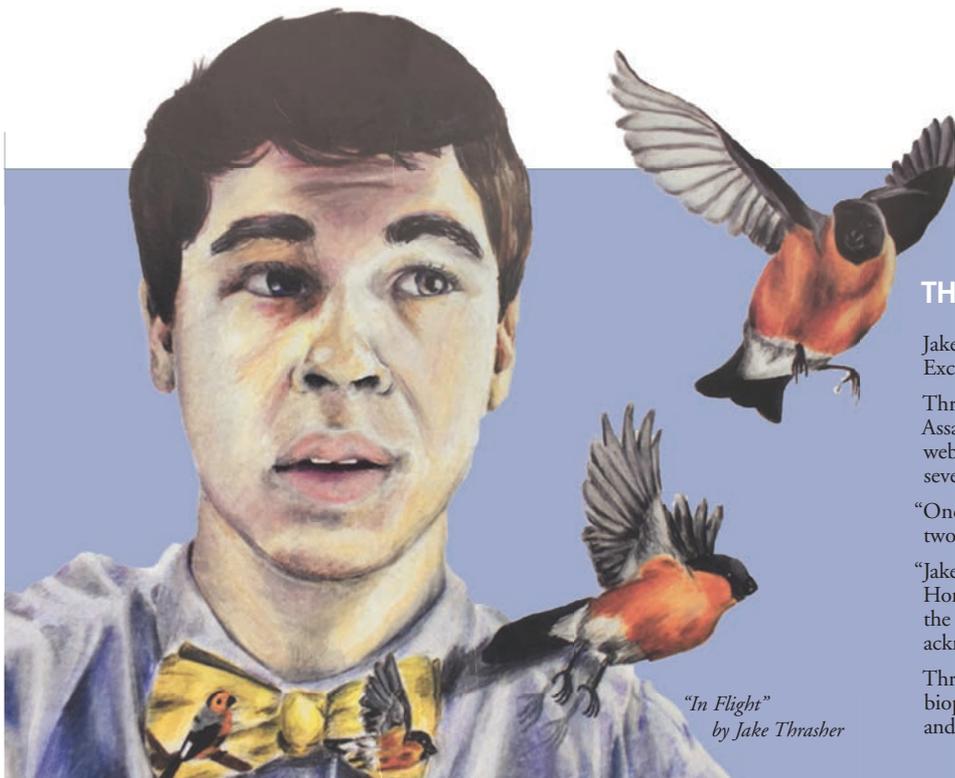
"The goal is to bring attention to the issue of slavery as it relates to the history of our campus," said Jeffrey Jackson, chair and associate professor of sociology and anthropology and cochair of the UM Slavery Research Group since its start in 2014.

The group of faculty members and students in 17+ academic departments focuses on four areas: building relationships with other colleges and universities pursuing similar projects, learning from historians and preservationists, pursuing partnerships with archaeologists who specialize in slavery, and researching the history of slavery and enslaved people on the UM campus and in the surrounding community.

"We want to better understand the lives of enslaved people and their historic significance to the university," said cochair Charles Ross, professor of history. "We also want to examine how this history relates to contemporary issues of race on campus and in our society." 

For more, visit [slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu](http://slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu).





"In Flight"  
by Jake Thrasher

## THE BEST IN STUDENT JOURNALISM

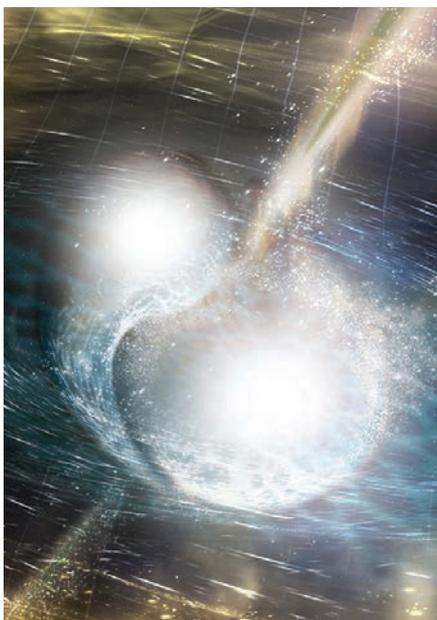
Jake Thrasher (BS chemistry '18) won the Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Award for his editorial cartoons in *The Daily Mississippian*.

Thrasher, a UM Hall of Fame member and former president of Rebels Against Sexual Assault, submitted three drawings to the competition. The one featured on the SPJ website, "GOP Operation," is a satire of the children's board game that combines several issues.

"One of my last drawings for *The DM*, it was a favorite," said Thrasher, who created two or three cartoons each week for the newspaper.

"Jake exemplifies what it means to be citizen scholar for the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College," Dean Douglass Sullivan-González said. "He took the challenges and the risks to explore both the arts and the sciences, and the national award represents an acknowledgement of his great risks to live the answers to the tough questions of the day."

Thrasher currently attends Yale University where he is pursuing a doctorate in molecular biophysics and biochemistry and researches DNA damage repair in the context of breast and ovarian cancers. He is an editorial cartoonist for the *Yale Daily News*. 



## CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Neutron stars, pictured in this artist's illustration of two merging neutron stars, are among the phenomena to be studied at the new Center for Multi-messenger Astrophysics in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Multi-messenger astrophysics investigates "messengers"—electromagnetic waves, high-energy particles, and gravitational waves—to reveal information about the universe.

In the graphic (above), courtesy of the National Science Foundation/LIGO/Sonoma State University/A. Simonnet, the narrow beam represents the gamma-ray burst, and the rippling spacetime grid indicates the isotropic gravitational waves that characterize the merger. Swirling clouds of materials ejected from the collision are a possible source of the light seen at lower energies. 



## Public History

**H**ave you always wanted to work in a museum or historic site? Is Colonial Williamsburg your dream vacation destination? Do you love history but have no idea what to do once you graduate? Public History is the place to start!

So states the syllabus of HST 490: Public History from Colonial Williamsburg to *Drunk History* by Alexandra Lindgren-Gibson, assistant professor of history.

"Public history gives students a chance to get playful and creative with what they learn in class and to make the past meaningful in new ways. Learning history isn't just sitting alone with a textbook, it involves talking

about ideas, working out the best ways to convey them, and sharing discoveries."

Lindgren-Gibson teaches public history through readings, trips to the library, and case studies ranging from the contextualization of our university to the National Museum of African American History and *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Students also examine how history is communicated through television and documentaries, online sources, living history exhibits, and even the opening ceremonies to the Olympic Games and the Broadway musical *Hamilton*.

As young historians they explore history and memory, how to communicate with different publics, new media and digital humanities, historic preservation

and cultural resources management, and museum work.

Winter Intersession 2019 classmates collaboratively investigated the history of an Oxford landmark, Neilsen's Department Store, founded in 1839. They created an online exhibition using store records and other library documents. Their website features the store during the Civil War & Reconstruction, Great Depression, World Wars, Integration, and in the context of Oxford.

"Students worked in teams to become experts in Oxford history, editing, web design, photography, and social media," said Lindgren-Gibson. Their beautiful product shows off our library's collections and their own original archival research."

Cindy Nguyen (BA history '20) enrolled in the course because her career goal is to be curator or director of a historic home. "I learned how museums work, from the curator and director perspective as well as the public's. Using the library archives to create an online exhibit with my peers gave us a sense of the work behind the scenes. My own responsibility was Estelle Oldham Faulkner, who was fascinating.

"The course solidified my career goals and enhanced my internships at Rowan Oak and the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project at George Washington University. I saw different ways history is displayed to the public." 

[Visit VFV online, for a link to the class's project.](#)



IHP founder Josh Burford (center) gave a talk on campus and met with Professor Wilkerson (right) and her Queer Southern History class.

## Invisible Histories

Founded by Joshua Burford and Maigen Sullivan of Birmingham, Alabama, in 2016, the Invisible Histories Project collects and makes publicly available manuscripts and oral histories that document LGBTQ history in the South.

An Andrew Mellon Foundation grant expands the work to include UM partners: the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, the Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies, and the library's Special Collections and Archives. Primary faculty involved are Jessica Wilkerson, assistant professor of history and Southern Studies; Amy McDowell, assistant professor of sociology; and Jaime Harker, professor of English and director of the Isom Center.

"The project provides an opportunity to collaborate across campus, as well as across the Southeast, to bring together scholars devoted to interdisciplinary research," said Wilkerson. "I'm excited to work with my colleagues on a cutting-edge, necessary project to document queer and Southern history."

Wilkerson's Southern Studies graduate seminar is expanding an existing oral history project on Mississippi LGBTQ history. Wilkerson and McDowell received an Isom Fellowship to support the expanding project. McDowell is archiving an LP collection that belonged to Charles Smith, the DJ of Rumors in Shannon, Mississippi, featured in the 2006 documentary film *Small Town Gay Bar*. 



## Isom Fellows

A new Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies faculty fellowship program supports research in the areas of gender and sexuality with funding from the Office of the Provost. Participants contribute to the Center through research, service, and new courses in the gender studies.

"Interdisciplinary collaborations develop robust solutions and advance perspectives that benefit society broadly," said Provost Noel Wilkin. "I appreciate the Isom Center leadership facilitating this important work."

### Fellows and Their Projects

- **Susan Allen**, associate professor of political science  
*How the changing nature of armed conflict and economic sanctions influence the local economic position of women*
- **Rhona Justice-Malloy**, professor of theatre & film  
*Women's playwright summer residency to support emerging artists*
- **Catherine Kilgore**, adjunct professor of law  
*History of women in the development of legal aid and civil rights lawsuits in Mississippi*
- **Carrie Smith**, assistant professor of psychology  
*How men who identify themselves as feminists are viewed by other others*
- **Alysia Steele**, assistant professor of multiplatform journalism  
*Multi-media oral history project of elderly women*
- **Amanda Winburn**, assistant professor of counselor education  
*Understanding of barriers that school counselors face as they advocate for vulnerable and at-risk students in Mississippi*
- **Kenya Wolff**, assistant professor of early childhood education  
*Role of gender and identity formation in early childhood education as the notions of gender continue to evolve*
- **Peter Wood**, instructional assistant professor of theatre & film  
*Avant-garde female artists in the 1970s and '80s*

"All these projects are exciting, innovative, and will invigorate our curriculum and our research focus," said Jaime Harker, professor of English and director of the Isom Center. "They show what you can do practically with what is learned, and these partnerships show why the lens of gender can illuminate things you wouldn't see otherwise." 

### Challenging Research

Viviek Patel, an international studies major with a concentration in Social and Cultural Identity and Japanese, was the first Croft Institute student to be awarded a Ronald E. McNair Grant "to prepare...for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities." Viviek is researching the Japanese student activist group SEALDs and how they use black hip-hop culture to openly engage Japanese youth in politics.



### Physics Alumnus Wins International Award

Hector Okada da Silva (PhD physics '17) received the 2017 Gravitational Wave International Committee-Braccini Thesis Prize for his doctoral dissertation, "Compact Objects in Relativistic Theories of Gravity," during the 22nd International Conference on General Relativity and Gravitation/13th Edoardo Amaldi Conference on Gravitational Waves in Valencia, Spain.





### CERAMICS STUDENT REPRESENTS UNIVERSITY IN CHINA

William McKinney, a Master of Fine Arts student in ceramics, attended the 2018 Taoxichuan Creative Fair in Jingdezhen, China. Selected by the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts, McKinney was one of seven students chosen to represent US universities. McKinney's work in ceramics investigates function versus abstraction and explores environmental changes across the country—specifically in his home state of West Virginia. [▼](#)



Susie Penman visits the Isle of Man.

# First Student Graduates with MFA in Documentary Expression

**S**usie Penman (BA journalism '07; MA Southern Studies '12) is the first graduate in the Master of Fine Arts in Documentary Expression program housed in the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

"I learned a whole new skill set: working with film."

Her thesis film, *The Knowing of People*, about crime and punishment in New Orleans, takes a personal experience and brings it to life onscreen. "I was carjacked by three teenagers who were tried as adults. I didn't know how the justice system worked and I wanted to explore that. My film is a combination of personal experience and field work."

Andy Harper, director of the Southern Documentary Project and instructional assistant professor of Southern Studies and journalism, said, "Susie represents everything we're looking for in students:

someone with a background in documentary work, but more importantly who has a desire to learn more about the intersections of cultural studies and documentary arts.

"Her MFA thesis film on juvenile incarceration is at once personal and provocative—a great example of advocacy-based documentary work so important today."

Penman explains: "I've tried to understand the various ways the incarceration system functions or doesn't function. Many different stories revolve around crime and punishment, but we need to listen to people who have been incarcerated. The individual stories get forgotten."

She hit the ground running with production of four films during her MFA studies, said Ava Lowrey, Pihakis Documentary Fellow for the Southern

Foodways Alliance. "It's been a privilege to watch Susie grow, and her success is a reminder of the importance of this program in shaping a new class of Southern documentarians."

As a doctoral student in American Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, Penman continues pursuing similar themes. Her current focus is on prosecutorial power and political and legal culture in New Orleans in the 20th century. She is also using her documentary skills for their Southern Oral History Program's Stories to Save Lives initiative.

"The MFA program solidified the idea that I want to keep studying incarceration and using documentary methods to do that. It reaffirmed the importance of people's voices and storytelling in doing research instead of just going to a library." [▼](#)

### All That Jazz

The Mississippians, UM's jazz ensemble, performed in multiple jazz festivals in Europe last July. The 19 musicians played in Antibes, France, as well as the Italian cities of Genoa, Santa Margherita, Perugia, and Rome.



### Psyched!

Teacher Tyler Johnson (BS hospitality management '16) and his psychology class from North Panola High School in Sardis visited the Department of Psychology to learn about psychology careers, requirements for a degree, and the types of research being conducted at the university. They toured Peabody Hall and the Cognition Underlying Behavior (CUB) Lab and asked questions about their areas of interest.



# New Faculty Profiles

## Sarah Hennigan

The assistant professor of film production is a writer, director, and cinematographer with a BA in Film Studies from Vassar College and MFA in Film Production from UT-Austin.

Hennigan's award-winning work is seen around the world. Most recently, she was cinematographer for *I Am Mackenzie*, winner of the South by Southwest Film Festival Texas Shorts Jury Prize.

As a member of the Cherokee nation, Hennigan is passionate about Native representation in popular culture. Her film, *Light*, a modern reinterpretation of a Cherokee legend, was an official selection at a number of film festivals, including First Nations Film and Video Festival in Chicago, Phoenix Film Festival, and Maoriland Film Festival in New Zealand.

"My version of the Grandmother Spider Stole the Sun legend explores the idea of what happens if we harm this planet so much that we don't have any light,"



Hennigan said of her post-apocalyptic sci-fi film. Every day has only 10 minutes of light, and people are sent into the darkness to find ways to survive. The main character has an ancestral connection to the land and communicates with beings in the darkness.

Hennigan submitted *Light* particularly to festivals highlighting works by

indigenous peoples. "The Maori people are reclaiming their agency in New Zealand. Their festival recognizes similarities among all indigenous cultures and the importance of our voices being heard everywhere—and amongst each other. The festival celebrates the idea of an international indigeneity, and my movie is about the whole planet.

"It's difficult to build a sense of community around the globe, and art is a pathway to do that." 



Still from the film, *Light*



## Leo Stein

Leo Stein, assistant professor of physics, earned his PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and served as a senior postdoctoral researcher at the California Institute of Technology and a NASA Einstein Fellow at Cornell University.

Stein and his colleagues recently reported the most accurate computer model yet of the end stage of black hole mergers, a period when a new, more massive black hole has formed. The model—aided by supercomputers and artificial intelligence—will ultimately

help physicists perform more precise tests of Einstein's general theory of relativity.

"Einstein replaced our understanding of gravity with the new idea that space and time themselves are curved," Stein said. "The greatest curvature in the universe happens when two black holes merge.

"Astrophysicists want to use observations of black hole mergers to learn about the origins and history of black holes and even if Einstein's equations need to be fixed. Our new tool allows scientists to model the outcome of a merger more accurately than previous models—at the same level of accuracy as simulations that take months of supercomputer time—but in a hundredth of a second."

The simulations took the equivalent of 20,000 hours of computing time. The Caltech scientists' new machine-learning program, or algorithm, learned from the simulations and helped create the final model.

This research is related to a larger effort to study black holes with the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory, known as LIGO, which made history in 2015 by making the first direct detection of gravitational waves emitted by a black hole merger—earning the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2017. Since then, LIGO has detected nine additional black hole mergers.

The researchers say that their model will be of particular importance in a few years, as LIGO and other next-generation gravitational-wave detectors become more and more precise in their measurements.

One of the goals of LIGO and the thousands of scientists analyzing its data is to better understand the physics of black hole collisions and to use these data, in turn, to assess whether Einstein's general theory of relativity still holds true under these extreme conditions. A breakdown of the theory might open the door to new types of physics not yet imagined. 

## Fulbright Scholars

Bethany Fitts, an English major, received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to the Czech Republic. Zachary Gill, a classics, linguistics, and Spanish major, and Katelyn Frazer, a master's candidate in history, are teaching in Spain. Jan Verberkmoes, of Roseburg, Oregon, who earned a Master of Fine Arts degree, has a Fulbright Research Grant to Germany.

The highly selective program enables college graduates and graduate students from the US to study, conduct research, or teach English in 160+ countries worldwide. "With four grantees, it is a record number of awards for UM," said Tim Dolan, director of the Office of National Scholarship Advisement.



## Hands-on Experience

Grace Moorman, a junior art history major, spent spring semester as a curatorial intern at the Smithsonian Institution National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC, for the exhibition *Brilliant Exiles: American Women in Paris, 1900–1939*. "I want to be a museum curator and this internship is a huge stepping stone towards my goal."



## Creation of CLA Student Leadership Council

The Dean's office created a College-wide leadership group with officers from the student organizations in each department. The group met with the College leadership for better communication about issues of concern, planned College-wide events for students, and sponsored a small grant competition to support the activities of the 76 student organizations in the College.



# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS FACULTY AWARDS

## TEACHING AWARDS

### Heather Allen

associate professor of modern languages

2019 Howell Family Outstanding Teacher of the Year

### Colin Jackson

professor of biology

2019 Cora Lee Graham Award for Outstanding Teaching of Freshmen

### Gerald Rowland

instructional assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry

2019 Outstanding Instructor of the Year



Heather Allen



Colin Jackson



Gerald Rowland

## CLA RESEARCH AWARDS

### Nancy L. Wicker

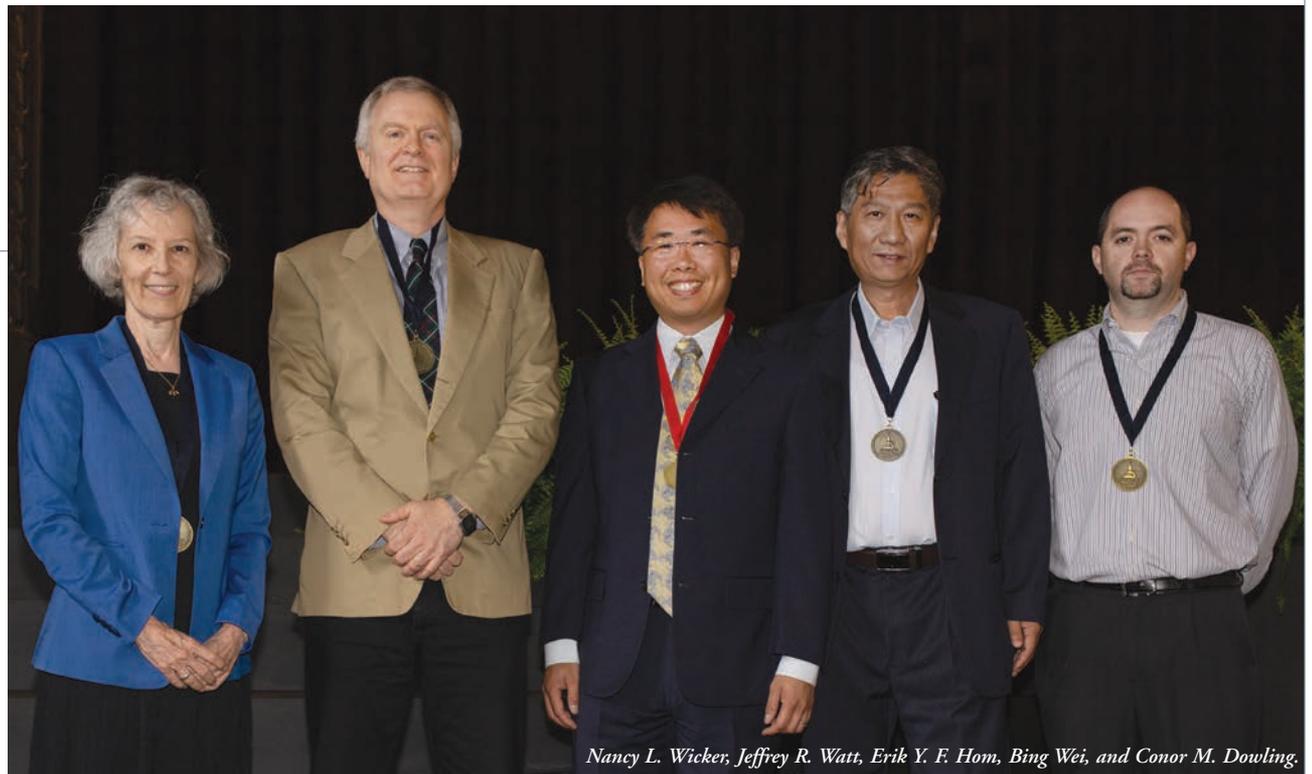
professor of art and art history

Hensley Family Senior Professor Research Award in the Fine and Performing Arts

### Jeffrey R. Watt

Cook Chair & Professor of History

CLA Award for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement in the Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Humanities



Nancy L. Wicker, Jeffrey R. Watt, Erik Y. F. Hom, Bing Wei, and Conor M. Dowling.

### Erik Y. F. Hom

assistant professor of biology

Dr. Mike L. Edmonds New Scholar Award

### Bing Wei

professor of mathematics

CLA Award for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement in the Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Humanities

### Conor M. Dowling

associate professor of political science

Sanford and Susan Thomas Senior Professor Research Award in Social Sciences

### Carolyn R. Freiwald

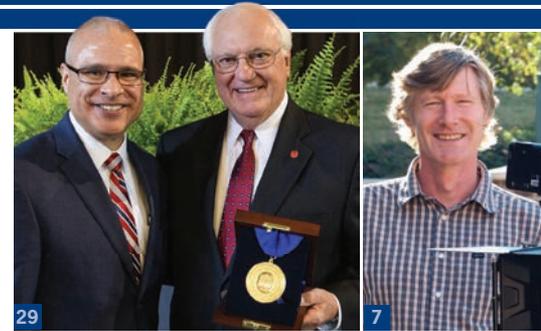
assistant professor of anthropology (not pictured)

Dr. Mike L. Edmonds New Scholar Award

# FACULTY AWARDS

## TEACHING AWARDS

- Brad Cook**, *associate professor of classics*  
Mississippi Humanities Council  
UM Humanities Teacher of the Year
- Beth Ann Fennelly**, *professor of English*  
Graduate School Excellence in Teaching & Mentoring Award
- Andrew Davis**, *instructional design and training specialist* (right)  
**Karen Forgette**, *lecturer and assistant chair of writing and rhetoric* (left)  
**Guy Krueger**, *core lecturer of writing and rhetoric* (center)  
Online Learning Consortium Digital Learning Innovation Award
- Karen Raber**, *professor of English and executive director of the Shakespeare Association of America*  
Southeastern Conference Faculty Achievement Award
- Marc Watkins**, *instructor of writing and rhetoric*  
Blackboard Catalyst Award in Teaching & Learning
- John Young**, *associate professor of psychology*  
Elsie M. Hood Teacher of the Year



## SERVICE AWARDS

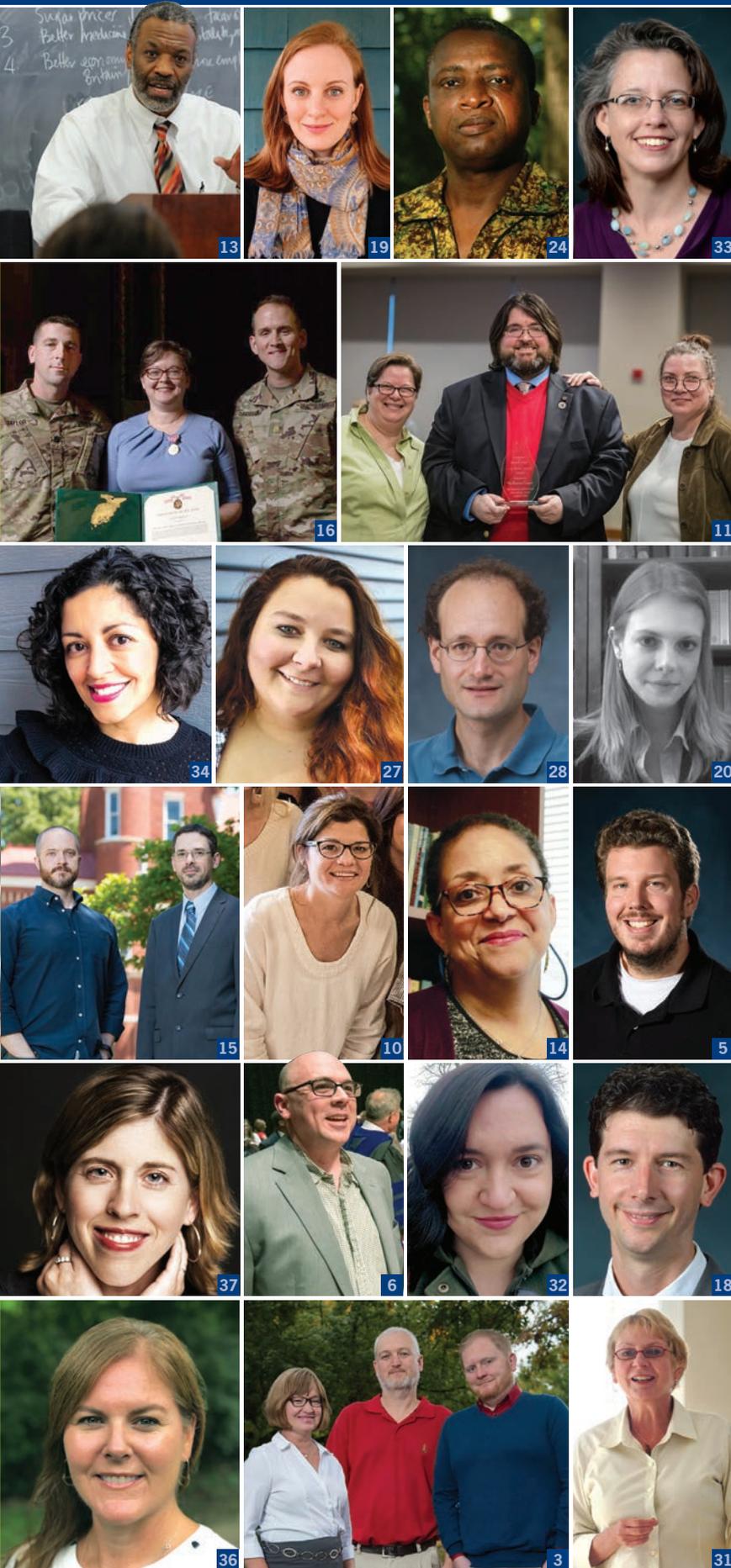
- Alan Arrivé**, *associate professor of theatre & film*  
Access Award
- Michael Barnett**, *chair and associate professor of theatre & film*  
Frist Student Service Award
- Annie Cafer**, *assistant professor of sociology*  
UM Division of Diversity & Community Engagement Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award AND Community Development Society Donald W. Littrell New Professional Award
- Virginia Chavis**, *professor of art and art history*  
UM Excellence in Advising Award
- Kevin Cozart**, *operations coordinator of the Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies*  
UM Black Faculty & Staff Networking Group Lift Every Voice Award
- Carolyn Freiwald**, *assistant professor of anthropology*  
Excellence in Community Engagement Award
- Kirk A. Johnson**, *associate professor of sociology and African American Studies*  
UM Black Faculty & Staff Networking Group Lift Every Voice Award
- Willa M. Johnson**, *associate professor of sociology*  
UM Black Faculty & Staff Networking Group Lift Every Voice Award
- James M. Thomas**, *associate professor of sociology* (left)  
**John J. Green**, *professor of sociology and director of the Center for Population Studies* (right)  
UM Black Faculty & Staff Networking Group Lift Every Voice Award
- Holly Reynolds**, *associate dean of liberal arts and assistant professor of political science*  
UM Army ROTC Battalion Outstanding Civilian Service Award
- Jodi Skipper**, *associate professor of anthropology*  
Excellence in Community Engagement Award
- Steven Skultety**, *chair and associate professor of philosophy and religion*  
National Academic Advising Association Region 4 Certificate of Merit AND UM Excellence in Advising Award



## RESEARCH & CREATIVE AWARDS

- Mikaëla Adams**, *associate professor of history*  
American Council of Learned Societies Fellow
- Lindy Brady**, *associate professor of English*  
Trinity Long Room Hub Marie Skłodowska Curie COFUND Fellow Z
- Annie Cafer**, *assistant professor of sociology*  
Andrew Carnegie Fellow
- Patrick Curtis**, *associate professor of biology*  
International Space Station Flight Opportunity Award
- Jared Delcamp**, *assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry*  
US Department of Energy Office of Science Early Career Research Award
- George Dor**, *professor of music*  
Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow
- Conor Dowling**, *associate professor of political science*  
National Academy of Public Administration Louis Brownlow Book Award
- Derrick Harriell**, *professor of English and director of the MFA in Creative Writing Program*  
Mississippi Arts Commission Fellow
- Sarah Hennigan**, *assistant professor of film production*  
SXSW Texas Shorts Jury Award
- Joshua H. Howard**, *Croft associate professor of history and international studies*  
Institute for Advanced Studies Fellow
- Charles Hussey**, *associate dean for research and graduate education and professor of chemistry and biochemistry*  
UM Distinguished Professor
- Philip Jackson**, *associate professor of art*  
Mississippi Museum of Art Invitational Exhibition
- Rhona Justice-Malloy**, *professor of theatre & film*  
College of Fellows of the American Theatre Fellow-Elect
- Alexandra Lindgren-Gibson**, *assistant professor of history*  
University of Rochester Research Fellow
- Maureen Meyers**, *assistant professor of anthropology*  
Archaeological Society of Virginia Out-of-State Archaeologist of the Year Award
- Aimee Nezhukumatathil**, *professor of English and creative writing*  
2018 Best American Poetry anthology series AND A notable essay for 2018 Best American Essays AND Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Poetry Award
- Karen Raber**, *professor of English and executive director of the Shakespeare Association of America*  
UM Distinguished Professor
- Brooke White**, *professor of art*  
Mississippi Museum of Art Invitational Exhibition
- Caroline Wigginton**, *associate professor of English*  
Early American Literature Book Prize





## Highlighting Professors' Research

Sanford (BA psychology '78) and Susan (BBA banking and finance '88) Thomas of Memphis, gave \$50,000 to establish an endowment that reflects the value they place on academics.

"The Sanford and Susan Thomas Senior Professor Research Award showcases research by professors in the College of Liberal Arts' social sciences. We hope it encourages them and helps to garner much-needed support from others for their work," said Sanford, who serves on the College of Liberal Arts Advisory Board.

The Thomas Research Award recognizes continuous exemplary performance in research and scholarship by senior faculty members in the departments of economics, political science, psychology, public policy leadership, and sociology and anthropology.

"The ideal recipient will have achieved scholarly recognition and influence well beyond the UM community," said Charles Hussey, associate dean for research and graduate education. "This award is a testimony to the success and vibrancy of their academic careers."

Recipients receive a cash prize, a medal to wear at graduation, and a plaque.

"As a Carnegie R1 highest research activity university, it is vital that we publicly acknowledge and reward our most productive faculty for their achievements," said Lee M. Cohen, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

**MAKE A GIFT: Ron Wilson,**  
[jrwilso3@olemiss.edu](mailto:jrwilso3@olemiss.edu), 662.915.1755



Susan and Sanford Thomas

## 21c Museum Hotel Gift for SFA Symposiums

Thanks to a major gift from the 21c Museum Hotels founded by Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, UM's Southern Foodways Alliance will continue to showcase contemporary artists as the centerpiece of its annual fall symposium.

"The SFA tells stories inspired by the South and by Southern experiences," said SFA Director John T Edge. "Exhibiting artists like Lina Puerta in 2017, or amplifying our symposium theme through a reading-room installation like we did last year, offers us bold ways to engage our audiences and challenge them to think about issues like environment, class, race, and gender in new ways."

"Much like gathering for an incredible meal with good friends or new acquaintances, art ignites new ideas and sparks lively conversation," said Sarah Robbins, COO of 21c Museum Hotel, which has hotels in Arkansas, Ohio, North Carolina, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Oklahoma. Others will be opening in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri.

"The relationship with SFA upholds 21c's mission of supporting both emerging and established contemporary artists; their thoughtful programming also provides a platform for the kind of cultural discussion and exchange of thought that we work to evoke through the experience that we provide at each of our properties."

**MAKE A GIFT: Nikki Neely Davis,** [nneely@olemiss.edu](mailto:nneely@olemiss.edu), 662.915.6678



Artist Lina Puerta's From Field to Table: Seven Tapestries Honoring Latino Farm Laborers from the American South was underwritten by 21c for the SFA Fall Symposium in 2017. Puerta's exhibit focused on overlooked and underrecognized Latino women and men who labor on farms in the American South.

# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS GRANTS

EXTERNAL GRANT FUNDING **\$8,004,876**  
*July 2018–June 2019. Grants listed below are valued at \$100,000 or more.*

## Fine Arts \$7,100

**MUSIC \$4,100**

**THEATRE & FILM \$3,000**

## Humanities \$805,038

**ENGLISH \$6,000**

**HISTORY \$182,161**

**MODERN LANGUAGES \$547,647**

Donald Dyer

*Institute of International Education*  
 (Chinese) Flagship Scholarship  
 Support ..... \$131,107

Donald Dyer

*Institute of International Education*  
 Arabic Flagship..... \$274,999

**PHILOSOPHY  
& RELIGION \$69,230**

## Natural Sciences & Mathematics \$6,693,194

**BIOLOGY \$2,260,004**

Joshua Bloomekatz

*American Heart Association*  
 Investigating the Role of the Local  
 Tissue Environment in Heart Tube  
 Assembly.....\$231,000

Patrick Curtis

*National Science Foundation*  
 CAREER: Investigation of Conserved  
 Global Regulatory Systems Using Cross-  
 Organism Comparison.....\$146,096

Tamar Goulet

*National Science Foundation*  
 EAGER: Coral Chimeras—A Novel  
 Perspective on Coral Reef Ecology and  
 Evolution.....\$274,997

Wayne Gray

*Tulane University/NIH*  
 Effect of Immunization Route and Prior  
 Immunity for a Live-attenuated Varicella  
 AIDS Vaccine.....\$103,715

Erik Hom

*National Science Foundation*  
 CAREER: Tempo, Contingency,  
 and Gene Flow in the Coevolution of a  
 Model Microbial  
 Mutualism.....\$414,560

Colin Jackson and Ryan Garrick

*National Science Foundation*  
 Dimensions: Collaborative Research:  
 Processes that generate and maintain  
 phylogenetic, genetic, and functional  
 diversity of the freshwater mussel holobiont  
 across multiple scales..... \$799,456

**CHEMISTRY  
& BIOCHEMISTRY \$3,178,107**

Saumen Chakraborty

*National Institutes of Health*  
 Artificial Hydrogenases Via Rational  
 Metalloprotein Design.....\$317,198

James Cizdziel

*Mississippi State University/  
 US Geological Survey*  
 Assessing Microplastic Pollution in  
 the Mississippi River System and at  
 Oyster Reefs in the Mississippi Sound  
 Estuary .....\$220,173

Amala Dass and Samy Antony

*National Science Foundation*  
 Atomically Monodisperse Palladium  
 Nanoparticles: Size, Composition and  
 Atomic Structure Studies .....\$289,051

Jared Delcamp

*Mississippi State University/National  
 Science Foundation*  
 RII Track-1 Mississippi EPSCoR: Center  
 for Emergent Molecular Optoelectronics  
 (CEMOs).....\$1,582,068

Jared Delcamp

*National Science Foundation*  
 Collaborative Research: SusChEM:  
 Atomistic Switches on Pyridinol Based  
 Pincer Ligated Catalysts for Carbon  
 Dioxide Reduction.....\$150,543

Jared Delcamp

*US Energy*  
 DOE Early Career: Controlling  
 Interfacial Charge Separation Energetics  
 and Kinetics.....\$177,575

Jonah Jurss

*National Science Foundation*  
 CAREER: SusChEM: Precise Structural  
 Control in Transformative Catalysts for  
 Efficient Multielectron Carbon Dioxide  
 Reduction .....\$338,383

**MATHEMATICS \$124,182**

**PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY  
\$1,130,901**

Marco Cavaglia

*National Science Foundation*  
 Improving data quality of Advanced LIGO  
 gravitational-wave searches .....\$120,000

Thomas Marshall and  
 Maribeth Stolzenburg

*National Science Foundation*  
 Lightning Initiation and In-Cloud  
 Electromagnetic Activity in Mississippi  
 Thunderstorms.....\$383,563

### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES FELLOW

**ISAAC STEPHENS**, assistant professor of history, received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship at the Folger Institute in Washington, DC, for his latest book on mass ejections of clergy from parish livings in London during the English Civil War, the Interregnum, and the Restoration. His research throws into sharp relief early modern confessional conflicts that shaped London, if not all of Britain. Mass ejections demonstrated how ordinary Londoners found ways to influence local and national politics despite the fact that many never enjoyed the right to vote, offering fresh perspective on the public sphere, popular politics, martyr speak, the English state, and religious identity and disputes in the seventeenth century. ▣



### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANT

**TAMAR GOULET**, professor of biology, received a NSF grant for her work challenging the assumption of the genetic identity of coral reef colonies, which could have important ecological and evolutionary consequences. The current assumption is that polyps arise from a single coral genotype. But, what if a single coral colony was actually composed of multiple coral genotypes, which is referred to as a biological chimera? Chimerism may confer a competitive advantage within and between coral species, including different responses to changing environmental conditions. ▣





## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS GRANTS

### ANDREW CARNEGIE FELLOW

**ANNIE CAFER**, assistant professor of sociology, is the first UM faculty member—and the first from a Mississippi university—to receive an Andrew Carnegie Fellowship to study community resilience—how communities survive, recover, and adapt in the face of economic and environmental shocks.

Resilient systems last; nonresilient systems do not. Resilience theory is quickly becoming a major driving force in both community development practice and international development policy.

Cafer said her working-class family and neighbors faced many of the challenges she studies—food insecurity, poverty, limited access to health care, and chronic underemployment—and sparked her interest in helping to improve the lives of rural people.

“I want to understand how agricultural practices influence household nutrition in (small farms). I also want to know how educational systems, food environment, and health care systems contribute to population health, quality of life, and residents’ sense of well-being in their community. It’s about understanding the system components and how they interact to produce particular outcomes like resilience or nonresilience.”



Thomas Marshall and Maribeth Stolzenburg

*National Science Foundation* Supplement to Collaborative Research: High-Speed Slitless Spectroscopy Studies of Natural Lightning Flashes .....\$242,177

Breese Quinn

*US Energy*  
Intensity Frontier Studies with Heavy Quarks and Leptons at the University of Mississippi.....\$335,000

## Social Sciences \$443,614

**PSYCHOLOGY \$99,365**

**PUBLIC POLICY LEADERSHIP  
\$201,848**

David Rutherford and Dawn Bullion  
*National Geographic Society*  
National Geographic Professional Development Delivery .....\$201,848

**SOCIOLOGY  
& ANTHROPOLOGY \$142,401**

### CARNEGIE AFRICAN DIASPORA FELLOW

**GEORGE W. K. DOR**, professor of music, traveled to Nigeria this summer to collaborate with professors at the University of Port Harcourt on field research in ethnomusicology, curriculum development, and mentoring of graduate assistants and assistant lecturers.

“We consider the ways indigenous knowledge in traditional ethnic music stays relevant to contemporary communities in Ghana and Nigeria,” Dor said.

Dor’s Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship was the only one awarded in the area of music. The international fellowship is part of a broader initiative that pairs 51 scholars with higher education institutions and partners to increase the movement of skill and talent to benefit African nations, build capacity at host institutions, and develop long-term, mutually beneficial collaborations between universities in Africa and the US and Canada.



### NSF CAREER AWARDS

Two professors are using portions of their National Science Foundation awards to further STEM education in Mississippi.

**ERIK HOM**, assistant professor of biology, and **JONAH JURSS**, assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry, each garnered a prestigious Faculty Early Career Development, or CAREER, award to serve as academic role models in STEM research and education. They are the 9th and 10th CAREER awards in the last 11 years.

Jurss was awarded \$338,383 for Precise Structural Control in Transformative Catalysts for Efficient Multielectron Carbon Dioxide Reduction.

“I am ecstatic that my research group has received a CAREER Award,” said Jurss. “We look forward to building on our efforts to develop and understand new catalysts for carbon dioxide reduction, and continuing to inspire the next generation of students for STEM careers.”

Hom’s project is how microbes and their mutually beneficial relationships change when subjected to different stressful conditions that require both partners to cooperate and thrive. His \$414,560 award for Tempo, Contingency, and Gene Flow in the Coevolution of a Model Microbial Mutualism will pursue students’ college readiness for studying genetics.

“We plan to work with teachers to develop teaching modules that emphasize the scientific research process—e.g., how to design experiments and record observations in a scientific notebook—and concepts of evolution and genetic change.”



Eric Hom



Jonah Jurss

## Centers & Institutes \$55,930

**CENTER FOR POPULATION  
STUDIES \$49,430**

**CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF  
SOUTHERN CULTURE \$6,500**

## FACULTY BOOKS

### Latin American Textualities: History, Materiality, and Digital Media

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS

Coedited by **Heather J. Allen**, associate professor of Spanish

"This innovative volume... proves the importance of studying Latin America's textual history in order to better understand the region's history, society, and culture."

—*Professor Ignacio López-Calvo, University of California, Merced*

### Time Warped: Photography, Temporality, and Modernity

ROUTLEDGE

By **Kris Belden-Adams**, assistant professor of art history

An examination of photography's unique capacity to represent time with a degree of elasticity and abstraction.

### A Friend Is a Gift You Give Yourself: A Novel

PEGASUS BOOKS

By **William Boyle**, adjunct instructor of writing and rhetoric

"A road trip that's so much fun you don't want it to end."

—*Marylin Stasio, The New York Times Book Review*

### Positivity and Noncommutative Analysis: Festschrift in Honour of Ben de Pagter on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday

BIRKHAUSER BASEL

Coedited by **Gerard Buskes**, professor of mathematics

Shows the natural parallels and connections between the fields of positivity and noncommutative analysis.

### Boccaccio and His World

HELIOTROPIA

Coedited by **Valerio Cappozzo**, assistant professor of Italian

Proceedings of the Third Triennial Meeting of the American Boccaccio Association at Duke University.

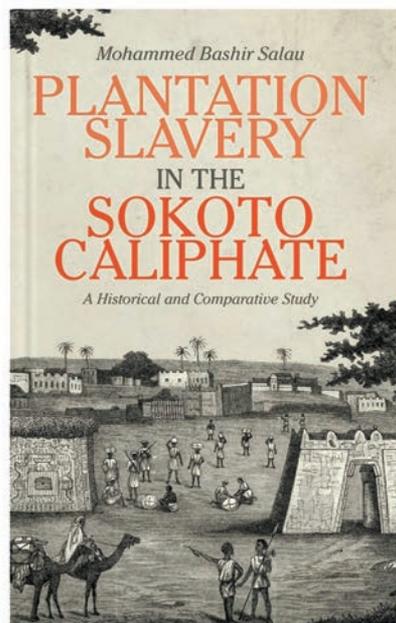


### The Medieval Dream Dictionary

OLSCHKI

By **Valerio Cappozzo**, assistant professor of Italian

A dream dictionary in Latin and vernacular Italian from the 9th century to 1550.



### The Song of Reason: 19 Questions on Francesco De Sanctis

SOCIETA DANTE ALIGHIERI

By **Valerio Cappozzo**, assistant professor of Italian

An overview of the leading Italian literary critic and scholar of Italian language and literature during the 19th century.

### Forensic Analysis of Gunshot Residue, 3D-Printed Firearms, and Gunshot Injuries: Current Research and Future Perspectives

NOVA SCIENCE PUB INC

Coedited by **James Cizdziel**, associate professor of chemistry & biochemistry

An in-depth look at the current state of gunshot residue analysis and wound ballistics, and showcasing groundbreaking research in these crucial areas.

### Those Who Know Don't Say: The Nation of Islam, the Black Freedom Movement, and the Carceral State

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS

By **Garrett Felber**, assistant professor of history

"Richly researched and told with elegance and sophistication, this stunning book is the definitive account of the Nation of Islam's political activism."

—*Dan Berger, University of Washington Bothell*

### The Bones of Winter Birds

TERRAPIN BOOKS

By **Ann Fisher-Wirth**, professor of English and director of the environmental studies minor

"It's with attentiveness and emotional poise that these poems lay everything bare.... This is a beautiful book."

—*Shara Lessley, Acre Books assistant poetry editor*

### Hildegard von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum: A Musical and Metaphysical Analysis

ROUTLEDGE PRESS

By **Michael Gardiner**, assistant professor of music

How classical Neoplatonic hierarchies are established, mediated, and subverted in von Bingen's 12th-century music-drama.

### Banking on Freedom: Black Women in U.S. Finance Before the New Deal

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

By **Shennette Garrett-Scott**, associate professor of history and African American Studies

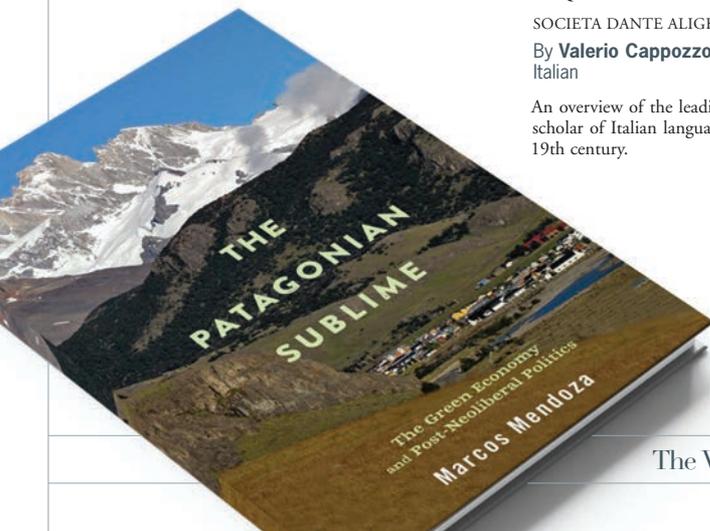
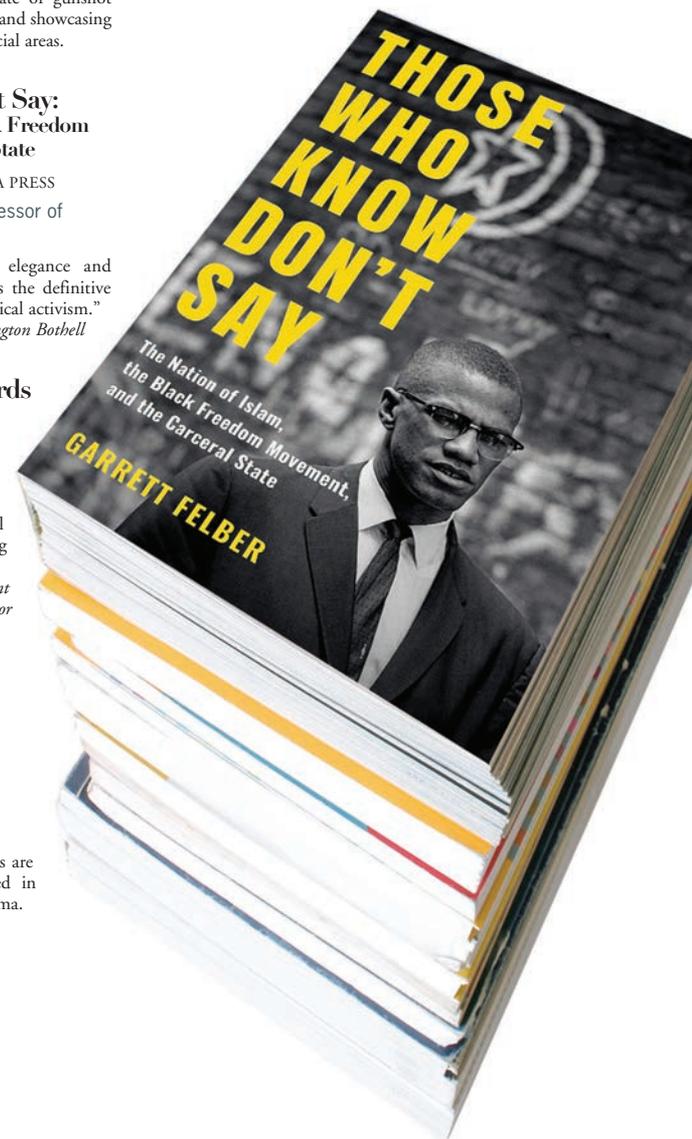
The first history of the insurance and banking industries that focuses on African American women, tracing how they saved, lent, and invested from Jim Crow to the civil rights era.

### Agencia, historia y el empoderamiento femenino

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S WOMAN'S MINISTRY

Coedited by **Diane Marting**, associate professor of Spanish

A collection of essays on female empowerment in literature and culture of the Spanish-speaking world.



### The Patagonian Sublime: The Green Economy and Post-Neoliberal Politics

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS

By **Marcos Mendoza**, assistant professor of anthropology

"Mendoza's book is one of the most important contributions to political ecology in years..."

—*Laura Ogden, author of Swamplife*

### Plantation Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate: A Historical and Comparative Study

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER PRESS

By **Mohammed Bashir Salau**, associate professor of history

"Mohammed Bashir Salau's work blazes a new trail for the field."

—*Moses Ochonu, Vanderbilt University*

### Faulkner and Money

UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI

Coedited by **Jay Watson**, Howry Professor of Faulkner Studies and professor of English, and **James G. Thomas Jr.**, associate director of publications for the Center for the Study of Southern Culture

A thorough essay of the Nobel Laureate through the lens of lucre.

### Faulkner and the Native South

UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI

Coedited by **Jay Watson**, Howry Professor of Faulkner Studies and professor of English; **Annette Trefzer**, associate professor of English; and **James G. Thomas Jr.**, associate director of publications for the Center for the Study of Southern Culture

An exploration of Faulkner's engagement with Native Americans and the ways in which Native American writing illuminates Faulkner.

### Registres du Consistoire de Genève au temps de Calvin, 1557 (Volume 12)

DROZ

Coedited by **Jeffrey R. Watt**, Kelly Gene Cook Jr. Chair and professor of history

Like the two previous tomes, volume 12 of the registers of the Consistory of Geneva, which covers 1557, provides ample evidence of the growing power of Calvin and the Consistory.

### Dimensions of Blackness Racial Identity and Political Beliefs

SUNY PRESS

Cowritten by **Jonathan Winburn**, associate professor of political science and director of the Social Science Research Lab

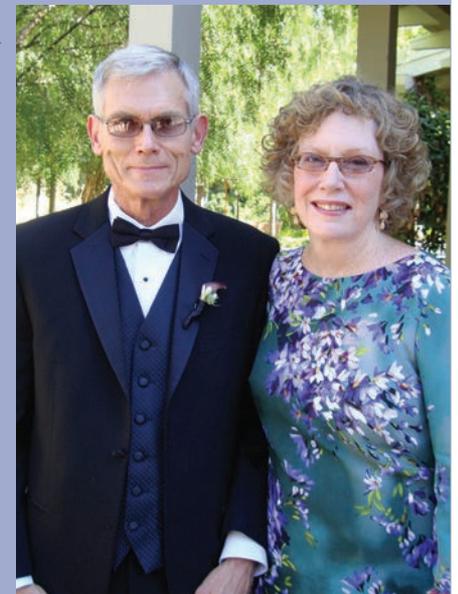
A multidimensional perspective captures the complexities of African American racial identity.



*The planned UM science, technology, engineering, and mathematics building will be an important tool to bolster science literacy in Mississippi by providing active learning classrooms and state-of-the-art labs to prepare STEM majors and K-12 teachers of those subjects. The 200,000-plus-square-foot facility will be the crown jewel of the university's Science District.*

## From Higher Education, Success Stems

A UM graduate's major gift honors two of his favorite professors while also supporting instruction in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).



**W**ith a gift of \$1.5 million, Dr. Rhett Atkinson and his wife, Elaine, established the Doctors Andrew Stefani and Eldon Miller Memorial Chair for STEM Teaching and Research Endowment.

"My wife and I strongly believe in education and academics, and we want to give back to the institution that gave me the background and the tools I needed to be successful," said Atkinson (BA mathematics '70; MA '72; MD '79) of Sedona, Arizona.

The Atkinsons' gift provides income to the College of Liberal Arts to support the recruitment and retention of a top-tier scholar who demonstrates outstanding teaching in STEM and is also a productive researcher.

"Lifelong learning and education are the keys to success," Atkinson said.

"We want to see Ole Miss continue to recruit outstanding teachers who can motivate and stimulate students to be interested in learning and encourage them to do their best."

The endowment honors two such teachers: the late Eldon Miller, a professor of mathematics for over 35 years, who was Humanities Professor of the Year in 1990 and department chair on three occasions. The late Andrew Stefani retired in 1997 as chair and professor emeritus of chemistry and biochemistry.

Both professors "demonstrated the flexibility and caring that is so typical of our university," Atkinson said. "It's for this reason I wanted to honor them and promote education at the university by providing a STEM chair in their names."

In college, the Oxford native was a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, president of Sigma Nu fraternity, and National Sigma Nu Scholar of the Year in 1970. He was an Air Force

ROTC Cadet Commander and a Distinguished Cadet.

Atkinson served the US Air Force until 1975 when he earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of Santa Clara. While in the Air Force, he met his wife, who at the time was a satellite programming engineer.

After medical school, Atkinson interned at St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center in San Francisco, where he was named Intern of the Year. He then did his residency at Stanford University Hospital and Medical Center in Palo Alto, California.

"Without Elaine, I'd be absolutely nothing; she is the love of my life. My biggest achievements are helping her raise three incredible children and practicing safe, high-quality anesthesia for 38 years at Stanford University Medical Center and in the Palo Alto area."

Now, the Atkinsons enjoy outdoor activities in Sedona, including hiking and biking, both on- and off-road. 

**MAKE A GIFT: Denson Hollis, [dhollis@olemiss.edu](mailto:dhollis@olemiss.edu), 662.915.5092**



UM band members and administrators gather to thank alumnus and former band member Sumner Spradling for his lead gift to construct a new director's tower. Pictured are (from left) Matt Louis, Ole Miss band director David Willson, Matt Smith, donors Rita and Sumner Spradling, Wil Stacy, Francena Sekul, UM development officer Ron Wilson, Richard Springer, and Max Warren.

## Constructing a New Band Tower

Sumner Spradling is taking the band program to a new level—literally. His gift of \$100,000 establishes the Band Director's Tower Fund, an account designed to support the construction of a new stand overlooking the practice field of the Pride of the South, UM's acclaimed marching band.

"The tower enables the band director and staff to observe the marching band in a safe environment while moving Ole Miss practice facilities into a competitive position," said Spradling (BM music education '75), a Clarksdale native who earned a master's degree in music education from the University of South Carolina.

"Sumner stood beside me in jazz band decades ago and is a great musician and composer," said band director David Willson. "He asked what he could do to help the band, wanting nothing in return but to serve the band that served him. He heads our field renovation and we are thankful for his generosity and leadership."

Spradling chose to attend UM after meeting the-then band director Luther Snavely. "I loved the idea of becoming an Ole Miss Rebel and when I visited the campus, Dr. Snavely welcomed me and offered a scholarship," said Spradling, who played trumpet for the band. "Plus, Ole Miss has a reputation for academic excellence and is the best in-state school."

At UM, he focused on earning top grades, often taking 20+ hours a semester while practicing, attending rehearsal, working in the music library, and being active on campus.

After years as a band director, Spradling returned to work with the family business, Infolab, Inc., one of the nation's largest regional medical-supply distribution centers. Upon his father's death, Spradling became president until Infolab merged with a larger company. He is principal trumpet in a local symphony and plays in a swing band in Danville, Virginia.

Lights, fence, access, building, and observation area are additional funding needs for the practice field.

**MAKE A GIFT:** Ron Wilson, [jrwilso3@olemiss.edu](mailto:jrwilso3@olemiss.edu), 662.915.1755

## Creating Public Policy Leadership Scholars

Alumnus Dean Copeland (BA history '61), a former Rhodes Scholar, has made a \$100,000 gift to establish a scholarship endowment for rising juniors in the Department of Public Policy Leadership.

"My dream is for the scholarship to grow, whether that is to benefit more than one student or to provide a student with the opportunity to have an experience abroad," Copeland said, noting the importance of students gaining global experiences in today's increasingly interconnected society.

For Copeland, the ideal scholarship candidate is a student displaying exemplary leadership abilities, risk-taking tendencies, and interest in issues that affect the future, such as technology, science, globalization, the environment, and forms of government—matters covered in the course that inspired his gift. Copeland taught geopolitics at UM and at the University of North Carolina and currently teaches at the University of Virginia.

He served in the US Army as adjutant of the Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville, Virginia, before going into private law practice with an Atlanta-based firm and then working as general counsel of a public insurance company until his retirement in 2005.

**MAKE A GIFT:** William Kneip, [kneip@olemiss.edu](mailto:kneip@olemiss.edu), 662.915.2254



Dean Copeland (in dark blue shirt) and family

## Planned Gift Benefits Pride of the South

The late Cora Mitchell (BA business '46) was part of student-led efforts to bring the Pride of the South Marching Band back to UM during World War II.

Her gift of \$100,000 establishing the Cora T. Mitchell Fund benefits the new Pride of the South practice field, where her name will be featured on the sideline.

"She never left a game at halftime," said Pat Thomasson, Mitchell's niece. "She wanted to watch the band."

A devoted sports fan, Mitchell was known to attend high school games on Friday and Ole Miss games on Saturday and then make it to New Orleans for a Saints game on Sunday.

"We greatly appreciate Cora's gift," said David Willson, director of bands. "Her contribution will have a remarkable impact on the marching band practice field renovation."

Following in her mother's footsteps, Mitchell worked two decades as a math teacher in Kemper County schools before teaching business at East Mississippi Community College for another 20 years.

Thomasson recalls: "Cora was happiest when celebrating her Ole Miss Rebels with family."

**MAKE A GIFT:** Ron Wilson, [jrwilso3@olemiss.edu](mailto:jrwilso3@olemiss.edu), 662.915.1755



The late Cora Mitchell (second from left) at an Ole Miss football game with son Lance Mitchell, sister-in-law Helen Thomasson, friend Marion Brown, and niece Pat Thomasson.



## A Welcome Table

The Southern Foodways Alliance sets a welcome table where all may gather to consider the history and future of the South with respect and reconciliation.

The work pursued by the SFA in the Center for the Study of Southern Culture inspired longtime supporter and SFA advisory board president Jay Oglesby (BA English and journalism '91) to establish the Jacqueline and Jay Oglesby SFA Graduate Fellowship Fund with a gift of \$50,000.

"The opportunity to be in a university environment where one can devote time to explore history and issues is a luxury; there is a cost to it but it shouldn't be reserved only for people with wealth," said Oglesby, who lives with his wife Jackie in Birmingham, Alabama.

"By bringing in new and diverse voices to the discipline, it becomes more powerful. Jackie and I thought this fund was a way to do that."

Born in Columbus, Oglesby spent his childhood in Florida, Kentucky, Montana, and Texas. He returned to Mississippi after high school to attend UM.

While Oglesby's childhood revolved around traditional European meals, with his family ancestry in Scotland, his wife Jackie had Sunday dinners of dishes from the northeastern region of Mexico, her father's homeland.

"When we eat the food central to another culture, we can begin to understand more of that culture. At the table, there's a trust involved that allows you to talk about things comfortably.

"It's a place where you are challenged to explore what you value and why, and you are reminded that those who value other things have arrived there sincerely," he said.



*Jacqueline and Jay Oglesby*

The first two Southern Studies graduate students to benefit from the Jacqueline and Jay Oglesby SFA Graduate Fellowship Fund are Carlynn Crosby and Olivia Terenzio. ▣

**MAKE A GIFT: Nikki Neely Davis,**  
[nneely@olemiss.edu](mailto:nneely@olemiss.edu), 662.915.6678



## Remembering Mike Overstreet

Helen Graeber Overstreet knew how her late husband felt about the university. When she was ready to expand his legacy, she turned to their alma mater to establish six endowments that will impact the university for generations to come.

"I knew where his heart was, and I knew where mine was, too," said Helen. "And I love to think that I'm continuing our story."

Two endowments that Helen created speak to the late businessman and health care administrator's love of music: the Mike Overstreet Memorial Band Scholarship and Jazz Scholarship endowments.

**MAKE A GIFT: Ron Wilson, [jrwilso3@olemiss.edu](mailto:jrwilso3@olemiss.edu), 662.915.1755**

Thanks to a band scholarship, Mike (BA accountancy '70) was able to attend UM and play the trumpet in the Pride of the South marching band and in the Jazz Ensemble throughout his undergraduate years.

The gifts speak to his well-rounded life.

"Mike was full on all the time," Helen said. "He was high energy and embraced a strong work ethic. He was a visionary in his professional career and was very adventurous in his personal life. He had more fun than anyone. But most of all, he cared about taking care of people." ▣

## Supporting STEM

With a \$250,000 gift to UM's Science Building Fund, the FedEx Corp. honors UM alumnus Jim Barksdale upon his retirement as a longtime member of the global shipping company's leadership team.

"Jim was an innovative leader during his tenure at FedEx and served as an outstanding board member for almost two decades," said Frederick W. Smith, chair and CEO.

"FedEx was and is a part of my life. I am excited to be appreciated in this way," said Barksdale, a 1965 graduate of the UM School of Business Administration whose 13 years in senior management positions at FedEx Express include serving as executive vice president and chief operating officer.

"The STEM building will be significant to the university. The future of the economic world depends upon having more graduates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics."

Barksdale's career included CEO of AT&T Wireless Services, and president/CEO of Netscape Communications Corp. from 1995 until the company merged with America Online in 1999. He then joined Time Warner's board of directors. At FedEx, Barksdale led the development of package

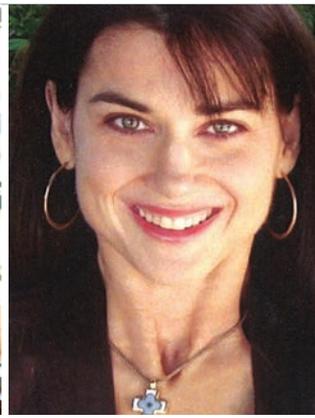


*Jim Barksdale (left) chats with Douglass Sullivan-González, director of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, and Honors College alumna Sierra Mannie (BA classics '16).*

tracking computer systems and chaired the Information Technology Oversight Committee.

"With this investment to the UM Science Building, FedEx is investing in the next generation of leaders and innovators in STEM by providing competitive facilities and a commitment to advancing the industry research and innovation," said UM alumna Rose Jackson Flenorl, manager of FedEx Global Citizenship.

Site work has been completed on the new building. Among factors driving plans is the crucial need on the state, regional, and national level to increase graduates in STEM fields. The 204,000-square-foot facility has an estimated price tag of \$160 million. ▣



The late Lori Sneed's family—(from left) brother, Johnny; mother, Patti; and father, Shorty Sneed—with Dr. Kullman.

Lori Sneed

## Scholarship Honors Favorite Teacher

As a student, the late Lori Sneed formed a special bond with English Professor Colby Kullman. Now, the two friends are linked in perpetuity by an Ole Miss Women's Council scholarship.

The \$250,000 Lori Sneed Council Scholarship Endowment in Honor of Colby H. Kullman, professor emeritus of English, was established by Sneed's parents, John B. "Shorty" and Patti Sneed of Gulfport.

Scholarship recipients will be entering freshmen majoring in English, chosen on the basis of financial need, academic ability, and leadership potential. They will participate in leadership development and mentoring by the OMWC.

"We are deeply honored Colby allowed us to honor him along with Lori because he was her favorite teacher," said Shorty, adding that Kullman agreed to mentor the first scholar.

**MAKE A GIFT: Suzanne Helveston, [shelveston@olemiss.edu](mailto:shelveston@olemiss.edu), 662.915.2956**

Lori, who died of liver cancer in 2017 at age 44, suffered a paralyzing spinal cord injury in a 1991 car accident during her freshman year. After rehabilitation, she returned to UM and completed her bachelor's degree in English.

After graduation, Sneed moved to Atlanta, where she worked in public information for CNN and performed self-deprecating humor in comedy clubs, telling audiences they should request their money back if they were expecting a stand-up comedian. She returned to Gulfport in 2015 and worked as an artist.

"This scholarship honors Dr. Kullman and an extraordinary, vivacious young woman who tragically lost her life while living it to the fullest," said OMWC Chair Mary Susan Gallien Clinton. "Our hope is the life Lori lived will inspire her scholarship recipients to strive to achieve the best version of themselves, despite the circumstances." ▣

## An Appetite for Excellence

Restaurateur Steve Palmer, owner of Indigo Road Hospitality Group, provided a \$100,000 gift to the John T Edge Director of the Southern Foodways Alliance Endowment.

"I grew up in the South and felt like I knew what it means to be from the South, but the SFA has taught me what it really means: It's about the history, heritage, and reconciliation," said Palmer of Charleston, SC. "I love the thought-provoking conversations the SFA inspires. Sometimes they're uncomfortable; sometimes they're conversations that challenge me to revisit old ideas. That's what I really love."



Restaurateur Steve Palmer leads a presentation at the Southern Foodways Alliance 2019 Winter Symposium.

Palmer's gift will enable the SFA to continue bringing people together over meals for generations to come.

"We still feel like a gangly teenager," said Edge, the center's

founding director. "With this gift, Steve helps to ensure that one day when I depart my job, the SFA will have a smooth transition of leadership. He offers us stability and he offers us belief." ▣

**MAKE A GIFT: Nikki Neely Davis, [nneely@olemiss.edu](mailto:nneely@olemiss.edu), 662.915.6678**



These days, Will St. Amand volunteers in the genealogy room of the Lafayette County and Oxford Public Library, helping patrons discover their roots.

## Emphasizing Teaching in Lab Instruction

A gift from Will St. Amand, professor emeritus of biology, supports instruction in introductory-level biology. Additionally, the Georgia St. Amand Laboratory Teaching Assistant Award in Biology Endowment pays tribute to the donor's late wife.

"I am emphasizing teaching, and I think Georgia Ann would agree. If something is done well, that individual deserves recognition," said St. Amand, who received UM's outstanding teacher award in 1970. "The most important part in any endeavor is the foundation that you have to build from. Where is the foundation in biology? To me, the foundation is in the laboratory."

As a first-year graduate student at the University of Tennessee, St. Amand met his future wife and colleague. "I say we taught for 50 years: 25 for me and 25 for her. That adds up."

The St. Amands doted on their students. "Our students were our children, and we had many."

One former student is Sarah Lacy, who taught biology at Oxford High School for 39 years.

"Dr. St. Amand is one of my heroes, and so is Mrs. St. Amand. They taught you how to think and how to study a situation. He wouldn't tell you the answer; he would make you evaluate what you knew to determine the answer for yourself. They were great professors and great mentors." ▣

**MAKE A GIFT: William Kneip, [kneip@olemiss.edu](mailto:kneip@olemiss.edu), 662.915.2254**



The College of Liberal Arts is grateful to the following donors of gifts made between July 1, 2018—June 30, 2019:

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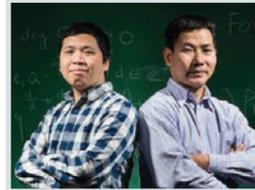
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Alumnus Oscar Pope  
(BA art '10) handles  
consumer-facing creative  
messaging/branding for  
Turner Sports' NBA on  
TNT and NBA TV.



**World Champions**  
Professors Dao Nguyen  
and Thái Hoàng Lê both  
won gold medals at  
the International  
Mathematical Olympiad.



**TEDxUM Video**  
Watch student speaker  
Jakob Anseman, a  
political science major  
with Asperger's syndrome,  
discuss advancing autism  
acceptance.



**Dissertation  
Completion**  
English doctoral student  
Allison Serraes received  
a \$38,000 Mellon  
Foundation/American  
Council of Learned  
Societies Fellowship.



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