UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

HONORS REPORT

FALL 2022

SALLY MCDONNELL BARKSDALE HONORS COLLEGE

25th ANNIVERSARY

Greetings from the DEAN

Ethel Young Scurlock (Photo by Tenola Plaxico)

I am honored to serve as dean of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College and join in the college's long legacy of excellent scholarship, sincere service and innovative approaches to leading and learning. We are one of the top programs in the country because of our amazing students, strong alumni ties, institutional support and the work of an exemplary leadership team. All of our staff members care deeply about the mission of our Honors College, and I have been blown away by their dedication and willingness to exceed the expectations of our constituents. We especially benefit from the strong support of Chancellor Glenn Boyce and Provost Noel Wilkin, who both are committed to ensuring that our Honors College has the resources we need to continue advancing our community of citizen scholars.

As the recently appointed dean, I understand the value of the work that has gone into creating our Honors College, and I honor the commitment of those who envisioned and created this stellar community. The SMBHC is reaping benefits from the strong leadership of our founding director, Dr. Elizabeth Payne, who set the bar for excellence and uncompromising standards in every area of our college. As Dr. Doug Sullivan-González assumed the role as the Honors College's first dean, he took the college to an even higher level: quadrupling the number of students served, developing signature student experiences like Freshman Ventures and Junior Quest, creating new staff positions and leading a large expansion of the Honors College building. More than anything, DSG was passionate about scholarship and always took time to remind our citizen scholars how much he sincerely cared about their personhood and pursuits.

As I step into the role of dean, I plan to continue the legacy of excellence that has been established by Drs. Payne and Sullivan-González. As we reach toward new heights, I plan to identify creative ways to recruit students from all 82 counties in Mississippi, attract students from different countries, develop stronger relationships with our University Scholars and Honors College alumni, attract major gifts that will help us fund student experiences and develop a pathway for controlled growth of our Honors College. I especially want to find ways to tell our stories to the world and shine a bright light on all that we have accomplished because of Jim Barksdale's transformative gift 25 years ago.

This year marks the 25th year of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. We will spend our academic year celebrating this milestone and working to reengage our alumni and friends. As part of a yearlong celebration, we will host a Silver Gala in the spring, where we will celebrate our past and reveal new visions for our future. We will also work to advance our development under the umbrella of the university's Now and Ever campaign; this will be the first strategic campaign for the Honors College. We will be reaching out to many of you in the upcoming year to discuss how you can help us reach our goals.

As you read the stories in this year's *Honors Report*, you will see the incredible achievements of our students, staff, faculty and donors. The brilliant people who are showcased in this report are some of the people who make our Honors College one of the nation's best. I also hope you will consider sharing your own honors stories with us in the upcoming months and connecting with our undergraduates. As we move forward together, let's continue making a large impact at the University of Mississippi, in our local communities, throughout our state and across the globe.

Ethel Young Scurlock

Ethel Young Scurlock

60 Sorority Circle
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677
662-915-7294

@UMHOCO
honors.olemiss.edu

EDITOR
Jennifer Parsons
Associate Dean, SMBHC

ART DIRECTOR
Stefanie Goodwiller
Manager of Design Services
University Marketing & Communications

COPY EDITOR
Benita Whitehorn
Assistant Director
University Marketing & Communications

CONTRIBUTORS
Mary Boyte
Megan Boyte
Brady Bramlett
Harry Briscoe
Change Maker Talent
Bill Dabney
Melody Dawkins
Leigh Ann Duck
Andy Flores
Ryan Fortenberry
Stefanie Goodwiller
Charlotte Hackney
Rachel Hammond
Ying Hao
Marjorie Holland
John Aaron Howell
Vivian Ibrahim
Lester W. (Bill) Jones Jr.
Robert Jordan
Logan Kirkland
Katherine Kreusel
Nathan Latil
Penny Leeton
Bruce Levingston
Kelly Li
Josh McCoy
Erica McGraw
Isabelle McLeod
Xenia Minton
Angel Morgan
Katie Morrison
Deborah Mower
Neely Mullen
Rose Ann Mullet
Mystic River Bellydancers
Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services: Kevin Bain, Thomas Graning
Jennifer Parsons
Tenola Plaxico
Olivia Reeves
Mackenzie Ross
John Samonds
Ethel Young Scurlock
Rasheed Shabazz
Ajah Singleton
Jodi Skipper
Matt Stine
Veronica Terres
Scott Thompson
Jordan Thweatt
Gabrielle Vogt
Kayla VonBurg-King
William Webb
Madison Portie Williamson
Jessica Wilson
Whitney Woods
Olivia Wymore

TABLE OF CONTENTS

7 **Featured Artists**

10 **Mississippi's Brain Gain** by Jennifer Parsons

14 **The Comeback Kids** by Angel Morgan

18 **HoCoMEC: Year in Review** by Kelly Li

30 **The Barksdale Award** by Jennifer Parsons

40 **Celebrating 25 Years** by Mary Boyte, Penny Leeton and John Samonds

52 **Puzzles**

56 **ONSA: Year in Review** by Vivian Ibrahim

64 **Citizen Scholars in the World**

72 **Pathways to Equity: The Lyceum Locker** by Kayla VonBurg-King

74 **First-Generation Student Network: Year in Review** by Andy Flores

80 **Development: Year in Review** by Brady Bramlett and Bill Dabney

85 **Thank You to Our Donors**

JOIN US!*

Honors Senate Game Day Tent Dates

Saturday, Sept. 3,
The Grove
Saturday, Oct. 15,
The Grove
Saturday, Nov. 12,
The Grove

SMBHC 25th Anniversary Events

Thursday, Oct. 13,
Honors Fall Convocation, Ford Center
Friday, Oct. 14,
John Winkle Room Dedication, Honors College
Saturday, March 4,
25th Silver Gala, The Inn at Ole Miss Ballroom

*Times and more details will be provided via social media, the SMBHC website and email.

A Glorious Year!

Above: Bruce Levingston with masterclass students

Left: Ian Pigg (Mr. Ole Miss) with Winston Levingston and professor Philip Jackson

(Submitted photos)

BRUCE LEVINGSTON

It was a glorious year at the Honors College! As we emerged from the doldrums of the pandemic, students and faculty were thrilled to begin meeting again in person. I had the opportunity to meet our amazing incoming Class of 2025 at my Welcome Concert last August. The enthusiasm, energy and lively comments from these wonderful students were inspiring, and I am looking forward to teaching many of them in the future!

In our fall semester, I was privileged to teach one of my most gifted classes. Even as the effects of COVID began to slowly wane, we continued meeting out-of-doors for our classes – a real joy. These incredibly talented and thoughtful students showed a wide range of interests and held quite diverse views on many complex subjects. Yet each consistently spoke and interacted with one another with the utmost respect and dignity. Their civilized, gracious attitude gave one hope for our future and made me so proud to know each one of them. During the semester, we were honored to have as our guest – in person – the renowned author Roxana Robinson whose writing often appears in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times* and other distinguished publications. She discussed her novels and art, and coming to terms with her own complex Southern ancestry. Roxana has traveled to many schools around the country, but told me that she was particularly impressed by her interactions with our extraordinary SMBHC students.

The following semester, I was joined by the acclaimed painter and UM art professor Philip Jackson for our spring class on “Art and Music.” More students than ever signed up for this popular seminar! It is clear our young people have a real passion and desire to learn more about the fine arts and make them an integral part of their

Bruce Levingston with his Art and the Republic honors class (and mascots)

education and life. Our final project for the class included outstanding works of writing, painting, poetry, music and film created and produced by these remarkable students.

To the delight of all, our honors student Angel Morgan brought back the Honors Showcase. In April, our SMBHC students – including many from my class – shared their artworks in our Great Room with a rapt audience of students and faculty. I was privileged to perform a piece sung by Emma Gregory, one of my outstanding students in my spring class and a gifted young artist. Her moving performance touched all who heard it.

This past summer, I was honored to be invited to give a masterclass and performance for UM's Summer Arts Tracking Program, which engages some our state's finest high school artists – many of whom are considering UM and the Honors College for their futures. They were an absolutely delightful group to meet and hear, and I look forward to seeing many of them on our campus again in the coming years!

I am also pleased to report that I will be appearing in the opening concert for the Ford Center for its 20th-anniversary season. I will be joined by special guests including Nancy Maria Balach, beloved Honors College professor, chair of the Department of Music, and a stellar singer and performing artist. We will be celebrating the anniversary of the Ford Center, as well as the establishment of the University of Mississippi Institute for the Arts. This new organization will promote and showcase UM's outstanding arts and artists. It was made possible by the vision and generosity of Honors College supporters Jan and Lawrence Farrington, grandparents of two of SMBHC's most outstanding students!

And speaking of anniversaries, 2023 will mark the Honors College's 25th anniversary! We will have a grand celebration in the spring and hope you'll be there to celebrate with us! Finally, I am excited to report that everyone here is thrilled to be working under the inspiring leadership of our extraordinary new dean, Dr. Ethel Scurlock. We all look forward to following her vision of setting the highest standards of excellence for the SMBHC and our university.

I hope you will visit our wonderful Honors College sometime soon. In the meantime, I am sending best wishes to everyone for a healthy, happy and fulfilling year filled with much peace and joy!

Bruce Levingston

Chancellor's Honors College Artist in Residence
Holder of the Lester Glenn Fant Chair

Bruce Levingston and Philip Jackson with their Art and Music honors students (and furry friends)

ABOUT THE COVER:

'Crying in Public II.' 2022,
24" x 36"
Acrylic, ink and
loose canvas on panel
by Neely Mullen

Meet our SMBHC *Featured* ARTISTS

Olivia Wymore (Photo by Isabelle McLeod)

Olivia Wymore (SMBHC 22) is a graduate of biology and art from the University of Mississippi. Being passionate about both the arts and sciences, she wants to pursue creative and educational projects that use artistic expression and design to explain and reimagine scientific concepts for many different audiences. Inspired by her previous work with Magnolia Montessori School and her last 10 years living in Oxford, she chose to create a field guide for north Mississippi in completion of her capstone project for the SMBHC. This field guide, titled *The North Mississippi Field Guide for Young Explorers*, is intended to be a free resource for beginner explorers to support both a growth of interest in the outdoors and the development of beneficial human-nature relationships. She is inspired by the natural world in her personal work as well, often focusing on the complex ways our identities and physical and mental health are affected by our relationships to our natural environment.

Artist website: oliviawymore.com
Book website: northmsfieldguide.com

Olivia

Neely

Neely Mullen is an artist and designer who lives and works in Jackson. A 2022 SMBHC graduate, Mullen holds a B.F.A. in art and B.A.J. in journalism from the University of Mississippi. Throughout her career at Ole Miss, Mullen discovered her passion for using graphic design for good, a passion that she continues to explore and deepen as a digital strategist at the American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi.

As an artist, Mullen's work is rooted in exploring vulnerability, identity and connection. Her thesis, "Crying in Public," used large-format painting and digital projections to explore moments of spontaneous vulnerability that collapse the space between who we are and who we have constructed ourselves to be. Going forward, she hopes to continue to explore these ideas in her work across a variety of media.

Instagram:
@neelymullenart
Website:
neelymullen.com

Neely Mullen (Photo by Isabelle McLeod)

In their sophomore year, Neely Mullen (right frog) and Olivia Wymore were roommates, and one evening, they sat on the sofa and considered making cobbler, which they did and enjoyed.

'Cobbler.' 2021
Digital drawing
by Neely Mullen

Mississippi's Brain Gain

BY JENNIFER PARSONS

With her bright smile and signature dimples, Ajah Singleton enters into spaces with intentionality and curiosity.

Ajah Singleton
(Photo by Bill Dabney)

Graduating from Raymond High School in 2018, Singleton decided to leave her small hometown of Edwards – population: 756 – to pursue higher education at the University of Mississippi. She aimed to push herself and step out of her comfort zone, and she "wanted to be close to home but experience a diverse environment."

The Annexstad scholar and member of the university's Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College received her bachelor's degree in management with a health care emphasis in May, and Singleton intends to use it to make health care "more equal and equitable for vulnerable, low-income populations in Mississippi."

Singleton's professional aspirations originate from personal experiences.

"Taking care of my mom and my stepfather motivated me into pursuing health care management," she explained. "Making medical decisions and interacting with entities such as hospitals, health insurance companies, Social Security and disability advocates was difficult and traumatizing for me as a teenager. I had no knowledge of how these systems operated, and I wanted to be able to help my family."

Coupled with her firsthand knowledge of navigating health care systems, Singleton has researched a facet of the state's health care system for her honors thesis, "Contributions Community Health Centers in the Delta Have Made During the Pandemic and Their Future."

Her thesis adviser, Paul Johnson, associate dean of the School of Business Administration, associate professor of management and the Thomas Colbert Lecturer in Entrepreneurship, is proud.

"Ajah has been a pleasure to advise," Johnson said. "Her work on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic by community health organizations in the Mississippi Delta has been inspired.

"Between the interviews with health care administrators at these organizations and the academic research on the challenges of rural health care, she's put together an insightful and interesting thesis about the state of health care in the Delta and potential paths toward improvement. I look forward to seeing what she does in health care management after graduation."

Indeed, one of Singleton's first goals is to secure full-time employment and health insurance for herself and her mom.

Before her first semester at Ole Miss, Singleton's stepfather died and her mother's health declined. Rather than dive into the social scene, Singleton submitted applications for part-time jobs, and over the past four years has worked as a barista at Starbucks, as a suite attendant for football games and in retail at Kohl's, Marshalls and the Dollar Tree. Between work shifts and studying, she has driven back and forth from Oxford to Edwards to help her mom.

Nevertheless, Singleton smiles.

Her hard work is paying off. To boot, she's managed to find a community of thoughtful peers and has advice for any student hesitant to reach out to others.

"To me, community is when you find a group of people that you are comfortable with and you can relate to one another without concern or judgment," Singleton said. "I found my pockets of

TO ME, COMMUNITY

IS WHEN YOU FIND A GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH AND YOU CAN RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT CONCERN OR JUDGMENT.

I found my pockets of community within the Honors College. HoCoMEC (Honors College Minority Engagement Council) was where I met many of my friends.

AJAH SINGLETON

Nakiyah Jordan (left), Jarvis Benson, Swetha Manivannan and Ajah Singleton participate in a panel at the fourth annual National Society for Minorities in Honors Conference at the University of Central Arkansas in October 2018. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

Singleton and her mom, Patricia Mayes (Photo courtesy Ajah Singleton)

community within the Honors College. HoCoMEC (Honors College Minority Engagement Council) was where I met many of my friends.

"If I could give any advice to an incoming freshman, I would say to become involved when you first arrive on campus. Just show up to events and see what happens. Imposter syndrome may be your biggest enemy while you're here, but you wouldn't have gotten this far if no one saw any potential in you."

The Annexstad Family Foundation and the Honors College saw potential in Singleton from the beginning. The Annexstad Family Foundation helps "exceptionally promising students from extraordinarily challenging backgrounds lay the foundation for careers of remarkable achievement and contribution to America."

And before they even met Singleton, the Honors College admissions committee knew Singleton was special, as she demonstrated in her application how she made the most out of a difficult environment. They sensed Singleton's determination and joy in enduring and overcoming obstacles.

Many firsts occurred for Singleton and the Honors College in the last four years.

She is the only honors student to have presented three times at the annual National Society for Minorities in Honors, or NSFMIH, conference, and she continued to provide leadership for HoCoMEC through challenges brought on by the pandemic.

It's no wonder the Honors College asked Singleton to welcome her peers at the 2022 Honors Commissioning Ceremony.

For Singleton, her firsts include trying Indian food – and loving it – along with having a roommate, Abigail Sipe, who also graduated from the Honors College this spring, whom Singleton said was a "really great" first roommate. Singleton also took her first airplane ride, traveling from Memphis to Indianapolis to present at the NSFMIH conference.

Even when the trip was derailed multiple times, Singleton took it all in stride, shrugged her shoulders and smiled. She was simply grateful for the opportunity.

When she reflects on how caring for family and working multiple jobs has affected her time at Ole Miss, Singleton considers it all worthy.

"I think that my UM experience has given me challenges and opportunities for growth," she said. "Sophomore year was really challenging, navigating COVID-19 and caring for my mom. I've had some tough decisions to make. But I do think I've become aware of my feelings and how to articulate them. I have learned to set boundaries and how to communicate effectively both at home and at work."

No one will hear Singleton comparing herself to anyone else, and despite challenges and setbacks, she never misses a daily dose of humble pie.

"I would like to thank my family for being patient with me," she said. "Now that I'm graduating, I'm feeling a bit relieved and optimistic about the future. I do not have it together still, but I'm working on it." HR

This story originally appeared in the University of Mississippi's 2022 Journey to Commencement series. Overall , more than 10 honors alumni and graduating seniors were featured, and you can read their stories by visiting journey.olemiss.edu. In July, Singleton began working as a claims adjustment specialist with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi.

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

09 21

Ian Pigg (SMBHC 22), public policy leadership major and Clifton, Tennessee, native, was named Mr. Ole Miss after running a successful campaign led by his friends **Kylie Cockrell** and **Harrison Grimes**, who are also 2022 SMBHC graduates. (Photo courtesy Ian Pigg)

10 21

For fall convocation, the SMBHC welcomed **Caylin Louis Moore** (standing with **Dean Ethel Young Scurlock**) to the Ford Center stage. Moore is a celebrated author who talked about his "against-all-odds journey from the cruel poverty of gang-ridden Los Angeles community to becoming a Rhodes Scholar" as he also covers in his book, *A Dream Too Big: The Story of an Improbable Journey from Compton to Oxford*. Before the keynote address, Moore dined with a few honors students along with SMBHC staff. (Photo by Thomas Graning)

Brigitte Lewis (SMBHC 21) was selected as one of only four Portz scholars from around the nation by the National Collegiate Honors Council. Lewis graduated summa cum laude and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and received her Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies and English with a focus in creative writing and a minor in French. She presented her honors thesis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts," at the 2021 NCHC Orlando, Florida, conference, where she was also awarded $350. Lewis began her thesis research in high school and worked with Shennette Garrett-Scott, now an associate professor at Texas A&M, as her thesis adviser beginning in her junior year at UM. She is pursuing a master's degree in history at the University of Chicago, where she is continuing her undergraduate research. She hopes to pursue this research while earning a Ph.D. and eventually develop it into a full-length historical research book.

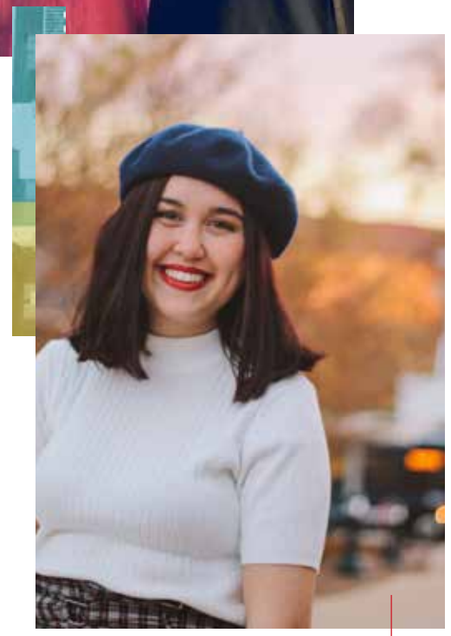
Jilkiah Bryant (left), **Taylor Thompson**, **Ethel Young Scurlock** and **Andy Flores** pose after dining out in Orlando, Florida, where they attended the 58th National Collegiate Honors Council conference. Associate dean Jennifer Parsons presented with a colleague from the University of South Carolina's Honors College, and senior Barksdale fellow Ashleen Williams invited Flores and Bryant to join her panel, where Flores shared about his UnidosUS Afro-Latinx Líderes Avanzando fellowship, and Bryant talked about her Columbia Public Health Scholars Program fellowship. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

BY ANGEL MORGAN
(SMBHC 24)

THE *Comeback* KIDS

Performers and attendees enjoy the Honors Art Showcase reception. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

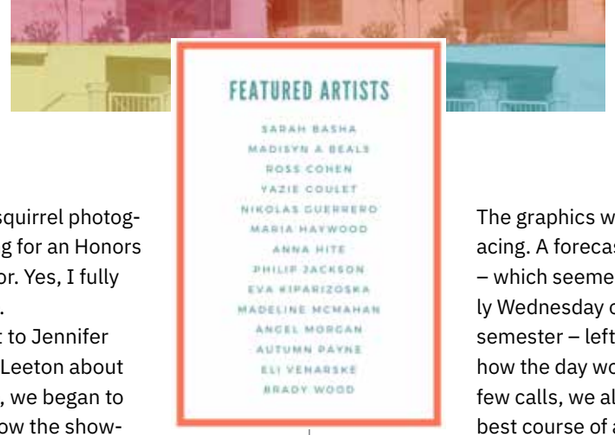
RECONNECTION RESILIENCE REVIVAL



Angel Morgan
(Photo by Melody Dawkins)

This year, they are what drive us. Especially as artists, we are all looking to come back to a place of limitless collaboration and expression. Coming into my sophomore year here at Ole Miss, that was my pursuit.

Last fall, I was sitting at the picnic table outside Meek Hall between classes, glancing through my emails, when I got to the SMBHC weekly newsletter. I scrolled through the different blocks of color, bopping from one info tidbit to the next. Yes, I am actually that person that scrolls through all of the sections and fine print. And yes, I highly suggest students do the same someday. You never know what opportunities you will find, whether it be one looking for a Janeite reader (aka Jane Austen fan) or one looking for a Grove squirrel photographer or one looking for an Honors Art Showcase curator. Yes, I fully considered all three.



After reaching out to Jennifer Parsons and Penny Leeton about the curator position, we began to meet and discuss how the showcase would make its comeback. The last showcase was organized by John Michael Walker in 2019 and proved to be an enriching and collaborative success. The Honors Art Showcase combines a pop-up art gallery with an evening of performances from musicians, singers and writers alike. One of the most important qualities I started to focus on when planning the showcase was for it to be open to all students, faculty and staff, regardless of their medium, genre or department. This focus on community and reconnection led us to display a myriad of talents and viewpoints, all connected under the theme: The Comeback Kids.

Throughout the past couple of years, we have all developed an inner Comeback Kid. Our collective perseverance in the face of adversity, setback after setback, is reflected in the way that we create. The way that we create artwork and music. The way that we create innovative solutions. The way that we create hope.

My excitement grew as we drew closer to the day of the showcase. The middle of April proved to be a busy, adrenaline-filled couple of weeks, but nonetheless everything was coming together. The artists were thrilled to drop off their pieces, and the performers were ready for their final rehearsals. I woke up early on the 13th to pack my car with supplies and went to open my weather app. The graphics were dark and menacing. A forecast of tornado activity – which seemed to be a weekly Wednesday occurrence that semester – left me anxious about how the day would unfold. After a few calls, we all decided that the best course of action would be to postpone the showcase to a later date.

What first felt like a daunting setback slowly started to feel like a blessing in disguise. During my conversations updating faculty, staff and students about the postponement, I received incredible support and reassurance. I was especially grateful for the support I had from Bruce Levingston and Philip R. Jackson, who co-taught Influences and Interactions in Art and Music last spring. The class taught me in endless ways about how art influences and drives us, and I was surrounded by talented, kind peers who were equally excited about putting on the Honors Art Showcase. These ingredients gave me the boost that I needed, and I was able to realize that the adjustment of plans allowed us to have more time to make the event even better.

The Great Room was packed. Art lined the walls. Prose. Piano. Vocals. Film. The scene I had been picturing in my head was finally before me. Everyone engaged with each other's works, celebrating the ability to gather again in such a vibrant environment. This form of connection shows us the need for creative community events. Fostering events like the Honors Art Showcase gives artists and students like me the space for limitless collaboration and expression, and I am grateful I can always come back to the Honors College to show me that. **HR**

Eva Kiparizoska (SMBHC 23) stands with her artwork. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

FACULTY SUMMER STIPEND COMPETITION WINNERS New courses

Congratulations to professors KoFan Lee and Jennie Lightweis-Goff for being granted 2022 summer stipend course development awards of $5,000 each. These two courses will be offered to honors students at some point over the next two years.

KoFan Lee
(Photo by Thomas Graning)

The Changing Landscape of Rock Climbing

KoFan Lee, associate professor of sport and recreation administration

Background: In this two-week summer intersession course, students will learn about the development of modern rock climbing and its evolution from a mountaineering-related technique to a specialized sport with participation by elite athletes and the general public. Among many factors, indoor/human-made climbing gyms have dramatically enhanced the popularity of rock climbing. Some attributes of climbing gyms that attract and sustain participation include their capacity to control risks and to design creative climbing routes. Both encourage participants to have better focus on body movement and techniques. Due to their proximity to all urban and suburban areas, climbing gyms enable residents to access climbing easily. As a result, rock climbing has now become not only a remote expedition but a lifestyle sport (Wheaton, 2013). With the growth of climbing facilities, those places also become assets for sports participation, public health and community well-being. This background, therefore, enables us to discuss a series of topics, including:

1. How climbing gyms have reshaped rock climbing culture, formats and practices
2. The role of climbing gyms in conservation of outdoor climbing destinations
3. The role of climbing gyms in attracting and sustaining consumers from diverse backgrounds and abilities
4. The role of climbing gyms in providing actions to enhance community well-being

Learning Methods: This class focuses on discussion and experiential learning experiences. I will establish a reading list to prepare students' ability to explore questions such as (a) how modern rock climbing and climbing gyms have redefined this sport and climbing experience and (b) how climbing gyms promote sustainability and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) outcomes, or vice versa.

I will deliver an *experiential* learning experience through three main activities:

1. Direct participation in rock climbing: We will meet at South Campus Recreation Center and use its climbing and bouldering walls to learn climbing techniques and safety skills. We will use this experience as a medium to discuss the body, mental (e.g., perceived risk) and social experiences during climbing. We will also discuss how the climbing experience can be constructed to accommodate users with various needs and abilities.

2. Visiting Memphis Rox: We will visit this nonprofit climbing facility at Soulsville, Memphis. During this visit, we will learn from its staff how they use it to promote climbing to ethnically diverse communities in the Memphis metro area and some other initiatives to bring a healthy lifestyle to the neighborhood.

3. Climbing Together: Students will work together to invite others not from this class to climb, in the second week of this class. Students will use the skills and knowledge learned from this class to create an enjoyable yet challenging experience for their invitees.

'Common Eastern Bumblebee and Rosinweed Sunflower.' 2021, ink on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

Jennie Lightweis-Goff, pictured at the American Art Museum in Baltimore (Submitted photo)

The Third Coast

Jennie Lightweis-Goff, instructor in English

In 2012, May Joseph – partisan of New York City and native of Dar es Salaam – survived the disruption of Hurricane Sandy, during which the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, as well as of the East and Hudson rivers, roared into all of the city's five boroughs. The waters brought to the island a specter of the past in the present: The dredged swamps and former slums of Lower Manhattan became fluid containers once again. The experience complicated Joseph's sense of immigration: What did it mean for the native of one former Dutch colony (in the putatively "Third" World) to make her life in another Dutch colony, a global superpower that stands as the capital of capital? The book that emerged from Joseph's experience, *Fluid New York: Cosmopolitan Urbanism and the Green Imagination* (2013), offers a challenge to American conceptions of nationhood. Why is it that our Constitution codifies citizenship as tied to birth on this particular *land*mass, rather than in the peripheral waters that have produced national and regional identities? Though Joseph's concerns are primarily located in New York City – a kind of oppositional space to Mississippi – our class takes up her challenge in the waters of the Mississippi River. We consider how the waters of the Mississippi River (and its junior partners, like the Sunflower and Yazoo rivers) make and unmake the region, giving it shape and eroding it to formlessness. Readings for our class include Herman Melville's *The Confidence Man* (1857), which imagines a riverboat as a ruthless democracy, flush with card sharks and con artists. We consider films like *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Benh Zeitlin, 2012), an allegory for the climatological end of the region when freshwater mixes with the salt of the Gulf. Assignments for the course will include a collaboratively written travelogue of proximate waterways (a *periplus*, named after the ancient atlases that mapped only the coastline), and a research paper that demonstrates attention to the ideas of the class.

This semesterlong class will take students to a pumping station in New Orleans, the bluffs of Memphis and Helena, the sleepy spots between the Yazoo and Sunflower rivers, and the parts of St. Louis where, Mark Twain joked, the water of the Mississippi River can be moved with a shovel. Students will also engage with a slate of scholars – drawn especially from the sciences, in water management and flood control – to expand the disciplinary boundaries of the class. HR

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

11
21

On Nov. 19, the SMBHC welcomed its Honors Leadership Council to campus. Professors **Timothy Yenter** and **Nancy Maria Balach** led mock HON 101 classes for our council members, and honors students **Hannah Dear**, **Cat Romaine**, **Nick Mitchell**, **Sofia Euyoque**, **Camille Newman** and **Meghan Curry** joined in on the fun. **Andy Flores** and **Taylor Thompson** spoke on behalf of the First-Gen Network, Honors Senate and HoCoMEC. **Brady Bramlett**, **Penny Leeton**, **Kunal Shah**, **Taylor Thompson** and **Mac Dulaney** ensured a successful event. Our Honors Leadership Council members are critical stakeholders of the Honors College community, and their time, financial support and wisdom are invaluable. (Photo by Bill Dabney)

Members of HoCoMEC (Photo by Logan Kirkland)

Honors College Minority Engagement Council

Year in Review

BY KELLY LI (SMBHC 23)

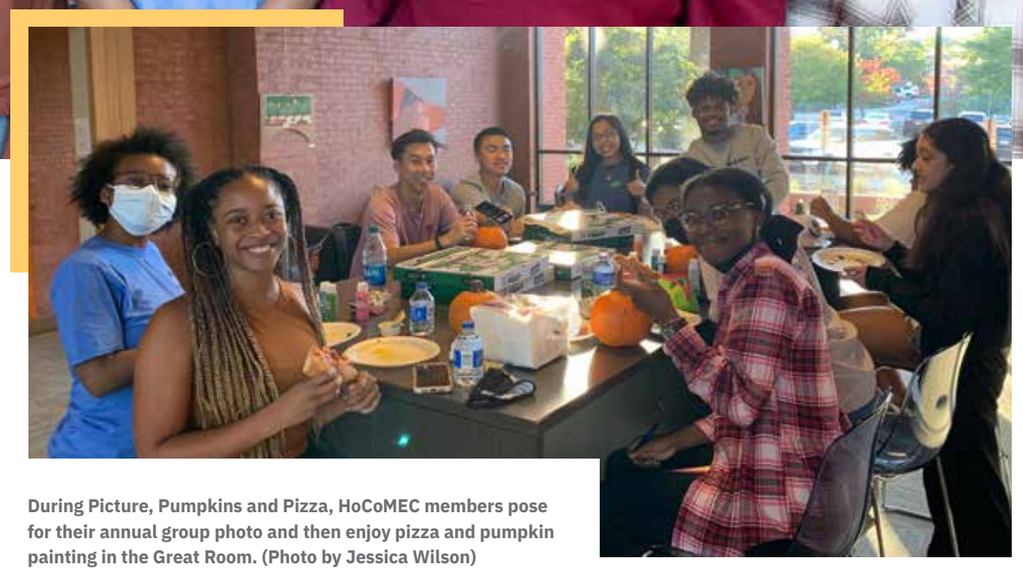
If you told me three years ago that I would be serving as the president of HoCoMEC my junior year, I would have never believed you, but this past year, that's exactly what happened. One year ago, I humbly accepted this honor and inherited an organization that had just faced one of its most trying years of membership and participation due to the pandemic and its restrictions.

This year, we had an opportunity to do things differently. My work focused on finding every possible way to host in-person meetings, events and activities for members to enjoy and bring back the physical feel of community that we had been missing for so long.

The fall semester began with an interest meeting in the Honors College, where we introduced this year's student leaders and played the game "Spectrum." Getting to host this activity in person again was just what we needed to tell new students about who we are. Seeing a room full of new faces (even behind masks) was so exciting and gave me newfound inspiration to advocate for each individual I met.

After the first meeting, the rest of the fall semester was filled with events to allow our members to bond and have fun. We hosted Picture, Pumpkins and Pizza in October, co-hosted Five Dollar Feast with the Honors Senate in November with proceeds benefiting a local charity, and held Hot Chocolate and Postcards in December, when we wrote postcards to prospective students.

Before finals, our community service chairs were able to put together a community service event with the Salvation Army of Oxford to ring the bell for donations outside local grocery stores. These events focused on building community, recruiting future Honors College students and HoCoMEC members, as well as providing a service aspect to opportunities we provided our members.



During Picture, Pumpkins and Pizza, HoCoMEC members pose for their annual group photo and then enjoy pizza and pumpkin painting in the Great Room. (Photo by Jessica Wilson)

Additionally, for the fourth consecutive year, HoCoMEC presented at the annual National Society for Minorities in Honors Conference at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, this past October. The group presented a panel discussion offering a unique perspective of honors in the state of Mississippi, more specifically, at our university.

On a micro level, the panel members shared their experiences within the honors classroom and among their honors peers such as what kinds of conversations they are having across the table and across racial lines and among shared racial identities. On a macro level, the panel discussed intentionality related to recruiting practices and inclusivity. The panel featured **Brandon Ashmore,** external outreach chair; **Ajah Singleton**, 2020-21 HoCoMEC president; and me.

In the spring, students were able to enjoy game night in January to kick off the semester; share a dinner with HoCoMEC and Honors Scholars members before the honors spring convocation; participate in the University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group's tour led by doctoral student **Don Guillory**; and dine and talk with **Dr. Ethel Scurlock** for Dinner with the Dean.

HoCoMEC members also attended the Center for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Engagement and Black Student Union's Black History Month keynote event as a group, getting to hear eye-opening testimony from trailblazers such as **Dr. Donald Cole** and **Mrs. Peggie Gillom-Granderson**.

The spring semester focused on interconnectivity with existing entities such as other students and organizations on campus, our junior-entry Honors Scholars students, as well as all Honors College students. Not only that, HoCoMEC continued the tradition of passing out snacks and other treats throughout the school year to meet and interact with all students coming in and out of the Honors College during Welcome Week, Dead Week and Finals Week.

I greatly appreciated the efforts of our social media chairs (**Hetal Shingrani** and **Jessica Wilson**), who were committed to posting beautiful graphics each month to celebrate various heritages and cultures accordingly.

This past year, HoCoMEC has grown. We had over 100 students in our organization receiving correspondence this year compared with less than 50 in past years. Being only its fourth president, I can truly say that I am in awe of the buy-in from the honors community for students like me. Because of the work of HoCoMEC's past presidents, **Swetha Manivannan**, **Nakiyah Jordan** and **Ajah Singleton**, and their teams, I was able to lead the organization this year despite the challenges we continued to face with COVID-19. Yes, it was challenging, but the people I was a voice for every day are invaluable.

I am extremely proud of the work we have done, the opportunities we have provided, and the environment we have cultivated for minoritized students and their place here at the university. As I enter my senior year, I am thrilled to continue for another year the work of the world changers who paved the way before me: leaders who also saw and believed in the importance and significance of this incredible organization. HR

Kelly Li is a Stamps scholar and public policy leadership and integrated marketing communications double major from Hattiesburg. She strives to continually advocate for minority communities and will be attending law school.

HoCoMEC members invited all SMBHC students to join them for a tour led by Ph.D. candidate Don Guillory, who is a guide on behalf of the University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group. Tours are available to students, visiting scholars and by request. They typically last one hour and include information about "the centrality of enslaved laborers in the construction and daily operation of the antebellum campus; the conditions under which enslaved people worked on campus; the slaveholdings of early UM students, faculty and trustees; slavery's role as the central cause of the Civil War; and slavery's relationship to Confederate iconography and memorialization" (slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu/campus-tours). (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

Follow the Honors College Minority Engagement Council on Instagram @umhoco_mec.

2022-23 HoCoMEC Executive Board

Co-Presidents: **Edrei Pena** & **Deshauna Lee Vaughn**
Vice President: **Brandon Ashmore**
Chief of Staff: **Kelly Li**
Secretary: **Azurrea Curry**
Treasurer: **Joy Faith Jennings**
Social Media & Marketing Chairs: **Shiven Patel** & **Riddhi Patel**
External Outreach Chair: **Aabha Mantrii**
Internal Outreach Chair: **Micaela Shields**
Events & Programming Chairs: **Khadeejah Franklin** & **Elsi Gabriela Muñoz Ramos**
Community Service Chairs: **Emily Lin** & **Keyona Sutton**
Faculty Adviser: **Jennifer Parsons**

Ajah Singleton (left), Brandon Ashmore and Kelly Li present at the sixth annual National Society for Minorities in Honors Conference at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

Above: **Kayla VonBurg-King** (front row), coordinator of recruitment and admissions, hosted an Ambassador Appreciation holiday party in the Great Room, where honors ambassadors enjoyed camaraderie and treats. Honors ambassadors are honors students who serve as hosts and hostesses of the SMBHC. They also help recruit, inform and engage future honors students. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

Below: A few honors students were recognized for going above and beyond as honors ambassadors. (Back row, from left) **Amyaha Graham**, **Elaine Morrow**, **Zuri Dixon Omere** and **Nya Thompson**, and (front row) **Ally Watrous**, **Maggie Walker** and **Morgan Whited** all received awards. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

'Seep II.' 2021, 11" x 17"
Lithograph and cyanotype print
by Neely Mullen

HONORS FELLOWSHIP *Recipients*

BY JOHN SAMONDS, ASSOCIATE DEAN

Through the generosity of several benefactors, particularly the Barksdale family; Lynda Mead Shea and her husband, Dr. John Shea; and the Dorothy Lowe Cole Endowment begun by Christy Cole, the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College proudly supports the endeavors of citizen scholars. From spring 2021 through summer 2022, the Honors College awarded $56,000 in fellowships to the 34 students listed below. Since 2000, the Honors College has awarded over $1.5 million in fellowships to 732 students!

Dana Arneal, Arabic, psychology, study abroad at the Modern Arabic Language International Center, or MALIC, in Amman, Jordan

Alexa Aschenbeck, marketing, study abroad in Osnabrück, Germany

Jaden Autey, multidisciplinary studies, study abroad at London Metropolitan University

Augustus Boyd, computer science, Spanish, study abroad at Universidad Católica del Uruguay

Hannah Bradford, mechanical engineering, Spanish, study abroad in Alicante, Spain

Emillie Burgess, public policy leadership, internship in U.S. Rep. Steve Womack's office

Gracie Bush, international studies, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Tessa Willow Crosby, accountancy, study abroad at Aarhus University, Denmark

Jonathan Dotson, chemistry, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Brooklyn George, nutrition and dietetics, study abroad at Florence University of the Arts, Italy

Yaniv Goulet, mechanical engineering, study abroad at Maynooth University, Ireland

Stephanie Handford, mechanical engineering, DAAD RISE (German Academic Exchange Service Research Internships in Science and Engineering) in Dresden, Germany

Ashlyn Hinton, public policy leadership, integrated marketing communications, Fund for American Studies Leadership and Internship

Noah Hubbard, international studies, Spanish, study abroad in Bilbao, Spain

Emma Johnson, theatre arts, music, participation in the Opera in the Ozarks program in Arkansas

Daneel Konnar, public policy leadership, internship in U.S. Rep. Trent Kelly's office

Caroline Leonard, international studies, chemical engineering, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Robyn Medeiros, theatre arts, Stella Adler Studio of Acting Summer Conservatory in New York City

Rabria Moore, journalism, political science, internship in Washington through the Fund for American Studies Academic Internships

Benjamin Newton, international studies, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Lila Osman, public policy leadership, study abroad in Amsterdam

Catherine Page, criminal justice, internship with Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics

Sullivan (Briley) Rakow, integrated marketing communications, study abroad at Florence University of the Arts, Italy

Sydney Rehm, international studies, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Anna Grace Robinson, English education, public policy leadership, Global Experiences Internship in Edinburgh, Scotland

Hannah Scardino, international studies, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Emily Stewart, international studies, Arabic, study abroad at MALIC in Amman, Jordan

Harrison Stewart, international studies, public policy leadership, Spanish, internship with U.S. Rep. David Kustoff's office

Sierra Thomas, classics, psychology, travel abroad in Italy and Greece

Logan Michael Thornton, sport and recreation management, study abroad in Dublin City University through the Council on International Educational Exchange

Akshaya Vijaysankar, international studies, study abroad in Costa Rica through Cultural Experiences Abroad

Kelly Wetherton, international studies, Spanish, study abroad at the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain

Sydney Woodward, Chinese, international studies, study abroad in Taiwan with Chinese Flagship

Johnny Yang, chemistry, biology, internship at Harvard in bio-optics

On Feb. 7, the Honors College hosted its first poster symposium, featuring 18 honors students. The symposium took place in the Ford Center lobby before the honors spring convocation. We experienced a great turnout, and we applaud the students for participating and engaging with attendees. We also appreciate the ways in which our faculty supports honors students' academic goals and research interests. We look forward to many more poster symposiums.

Eighteen honors students presented their undergraduate research at the inaugural Honors Poster Symposium. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

Inaugural Honors Poster Symposium

Grace Dragna

Public Policy Leadership and Economics

Thesis Adviser: Melissa Bass, associate professor of public policy leadership

Barriers to Breastfeeding for Mississippi Mothers in the Women, Infants and Children Program: Insights of Peer Counselors

Madelyn Griffin

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Thesis Adviser: Carolyn Higdon, professor of communication sciences and disorders

Speech-Language Pathologists' Skills and Knowledge in Dysphagia Management in Long-Term Care Facilities

Photos by Thomas Graning

Nora Halama

Nutrition and Dietetics

Thesis Adviser: Laurel Lambert, associate professor of nutrition and hospitality management

An Investigation into Food Insecurity's Impact on Coping Strategies among Students from Home to College

Rachel Hammond

Chemistry

Thesis Adviser: John Rimoldi, professor of medicinal chemistry and environmental toxicology in biomolecular sciences

Design and Synthesis of Novel Triton X-405 Adenosine Conjugate for Micelle-Tethered Hydroxyl Radical Dosimeter

Lakynn Hillhouse

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Thesis Adviser: Carolyn Higdon

Patients' Perspective of Patient-Centered Approach Versus Biomedical Approach

Victoria Jackson

Biochemistry

Thesis Adviser: Kristie Willett, professor of pharmacology and environmental toxicology

Early Developmental Exposure to Δ9-Tetrahydrocannabinol Causes Hyperactivity in Larval Zebrafish That Persists into Adulthood

Katherine Kreusel

Pharmaceutical Sciences

Thesis Adviser: David A. Colby, associate professor of medicinal chemistry

Drug Discovery and Pain Research through Studies at the GABA-B Receptor

Francesca Myerski

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Thesis Adviser: Carolyn Higdon

The Role of Folic Acid and Surgeries in Children with Craniofacial Anomalies

Dev Patel
Chemistry

Thesis Adviser: Ryan Fortenberry, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry

Fundamental Vibrational Frequencies and Spectroscopic Constants of Cyano-Cyclopropenylidene (c-C3HCN)

Charlotte Powers
Chemistry

Thesis Adviser: Randy Wadkins, professor of chemistry and biochemistry

Effects of Group 2 Metals on the Thermal Stability of I-motif Structure

Emma Schrotenboer
Interdisciplinary Studies
(Spanish, neuroscience, society and health)

Thesis Adviser: Melinda Valliant, professor of nutrition and hospitality management

Parental Perception of Interprofessional Therapy Models

Caroline Sturgis
Pharmaceutical Sciences

Thesis Adviser: Kristie Willett

BaP-Induced Multigenerational Gene Expression and DNA Methylation Changes Are Primarily Influenced by Paternal Genotype

Mitchell Tharp
Biology

Thesis Adviser: Marjorie M. Holland, professor emerita of biology

Forest Succession Following a Pine Bark Beetle Infestation

Michael Valencia
Chemistry

Thesis Adviser: Ryan Fortenberry

Genetic Algorithms for Inorganic Oxides

Austin Wallace
Chemistry

Thesis Adviser: Ryan Fortenberry

Automated Generation and Theoretical Predictions for Potential Near-Infrared (NIR) Dye Sensitized Solar Cells: Generating Theoretical Dyes

Alexandria Watrous
Chemistry and Physics

Thesis Adviser: Ryan Fortenberry

F12-cCR: A New Methodology for Highly Accurate Quartic Force Fields

Hanna Watson
Exercise Science

Thesis Adviser: Paul Loprinzi, associate professor of health, exercise science and recreation management

Effects of Acute Exercise on True and False Memory

MyKayla Williamson
Anthropology

Thesis Adviser: Jodi Skipper, associate professor of anthropology

By Her Hands: An Analysis of the Hidden Labor of Black Women at the Hugh Craft House from 1850 to 1900

Photos by Thomas Graning

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

02
22

Olivia Maurer, **Kaden Grace** and **MyKayla Williamson** presented their honors thesis research at the Mississippi Honors Undergraduate Conference, which was held virtually and hosted by Mississippi University for Women.

Dean Scurlock and Professor Buskes
(Photo by Thomas Graning)

Mireya Mayor
(Photo courtesy Change Maker Talent)

Mireya Mayor, National Science Foundation fellow, Fulbright scholar and Emmy Award-nominated wildlife correspondent for National Geographic Channel, delivered the honors spring convocation keynote. Before her talk, **Dean Ethel Young Scurlock** presented professor of mathematics **Gerard Buskes** the Honors Faculty of the Year award. Buskes has taught honors students for over 30 years.

'Lady Fern 2.' 2021, ink on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

THE Barksdale Award

BY JENNIFER PARSONS

Each year, the SMBHC hopes to give two $5,000 awards to support creative, courageous projects proposed by highly talented students who are willing to take some risks with their time and efforts. To date, 28 citizen scholars have received the Barksdale Award, and they represent a diverse group of critical thinkers and explorers.

In our first *Honors Report* in 2015, we featured six Barksdale Award winners, including **Douglas Ray**, a 2005 SMBHC graduate who earned a degree in classics and English followed by an M.F.A. in creative writing from UM and a Doctor of Education degree in curriculum, teaching, learning and leadership from Northeastern University. At the time of the 2015 publication, Ray shared the following:

"There's a lot of talk in educational circles about what skills/competencies are necessary for students to be competitive in a world where the only guarantee is flux and continuous change. I think that encouraging students to think entrepreneurially is of the utmost importance – seeing the globe as their campus, engaging in product-based learning, and capitalizing on the uniqueness of their own interests and place. That's exactly what the Barksdale Award demands: thinking creatively, articulating the idea and following through no matter what."

We congratulate our Barksdale Award winners, and we hope to support many more unique projects for years to come.

Matt Knerr (Photo by Bill Dabney)

Matt Knerr

2022 BARKSDALE AWARD WINNER

Knerr (SMBHC 23) is an alumnus of Kentucky's Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science. Majoring in biochemistry with minors in neuroscience, biological science, environmental studies and psychology, this Stamps scholar is a 2021 UM Green Fund Award recipient and has completed research and internships with UM's Office of Sustainability, the Black Earth Institute in Wisconsin and the Air Force Research Lab in San Antonio, Texas, just to name a few.

Knerr's proposal, "Investigating Italian Food Systems with Mississippi in Mind," won over the selection committee for the evident intentional and careful planning and passion for the project.

Knerr will examine the process in which food is grown, processed and sent to tables in Mississippi by observing, interviewing and interacting with entities such as the Oxford Community Market, the Quitman County food processor and Home Place Pastures.

During summer 2022, Knerr lived and worked on farms in Southern Italy through the Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms and then spent time in Naples and the Amalfi Coast – a cluster of cities largely fed by local farms. Knerr wrote:

"My ultimate aim is to use Italy's best practices, in combination with my knowledge of Mississippi food systems, to generate geographically sensitive recommendations for local food production, processing and distribution here in Mississippi, with the ultimate goal of improving rural health outcomes, like diabetes and hypertension."

Anne Cafer, assistant professor of sociology and director of UM's Center for Population Studies, recommended Knerr for the Barksdale Award and wrote, "Matt's motivation is his desire to prevent what will certainly be his future patients from requiring amputations," and "I think this motivation is a strong driver and will help him make meaningful, actionable recommendations from his research on this particular project."

Professor of English **Ann Fisher-Wirth** said she believes "this project makes perfect sense, given his knowledge and concern about food issues in Mississippi, for in many ways Southern Italy is similar to Mississippi, and yet, its residents experience significantly lower rates of diabetes, obesity and hypertension."

Knerr was accepted at every Ivy League college he applied to, and when asked why he chose the University of Mississippi, he replied that he was won over by the Honors College's emphasis on community involvement and service.

Artichokes, local market and hillside farming near Pontassieve, Italy (Photos by Stefanie Goodwiller)

Rabria Moore

2022 BARKSDALE AWARD WINNER

Moore (SMBHC 23) is seeking a dual degree in political science and journalism with an emphasis in news-editorial. She has worked as a marketing intern with UM's School of Business and with Washington, D.C.'s National Press Club as a policy research analyst, where she wrote op-ed pieces about current political issues. A volunteer for the Mississippi College Access Project and secretary for UM's chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, this 4.0 student also spent several months as an assistant news editor for *The Daily Mississippian*.

Rabria Moore (Submitted photo)

One of her recommenders, instructional assistant professor of journalism **Ellen Meacham**, wrote, "I was so impressed with Rabria and her work that I asked her to work on a special project with me last spring about Black families in Lafayette County seeking access to clean water.

"Even though it wasn't for any class credit, she jumped at the chance and, working as a team with a photographer, produced a thorough and moving piece about a local woman's ongoing struggle to get treated water to her neighborhood. The School of Journalism has entered the piece in several national contests, and she has already won an honorable mention from the Associated Collegiate Press."

For the Barksdale Award, Moore proposed a timely and simultaneously past-due project: "An Exploration of Black Joy and How Its Practice Benefits the Black Community."

She will conduct interviews via Zoom or on location with members of the Black Joy Parade in Oakland, California; Upset Homegirls in Fullerton, California; Black Village Foundation in Chicago; the "Soul Bowl" or "Capital City Classic" in Jackson; the National Council of Negro Women in Washington, D.C.; the annual Bayou Classic in New Orleans; the Museum of Black Joy in Philadelphia and a few others.

In addition to covering various events, Moore's end goal is to create a series of stories and a short documentary that explores the unapologetic joy of the Black community.

The Barksdale Award selection committee found the proposal compelling and was further convinced by the recommendation letters.

"One of the best things about selecting Rabria for this award is that I'm 100% confident that you will get high-quality and high-impact work from her," wrote **Debora Wenger**, professor of journalism and assistant dean for partnerships and innovations. "In my experience, she honors her commitments, is dedicated to her craft and strives for excellence in everything she does."

Moore wrote the following in her proposal:

"As a Black student at the University of Mississippi, I've been able to learn about and discuss the dark history that African Americans have suffered. I have learned about slavery and racism and oppression. I truly appreciate these courses because they further educate my fellow citizen scholars and me on the struggles that we have and continue to face. However, the courses I have taken tend to overlook the joy that comes from being Black. They seem to operate on the belief that the Black experience is one-dimensional – and that pain and trauma is all there is to experience. But that is far from the truth.

"There is an undeniable pain that comes with being Black, but there is also a pure, unfiltered joy. This project is not to say that other people don't deserve joy – because they absolutely do – but rather to say that Black people deserve joy, too. Black people exist beyond pain, struggle and trauma. The most powerful thing we can do is to experience joy because it helps heal us, too." HR

Black Joy Parade, 2020
(Photos by Rasheed Shabazz, OaklandVoices.us)

25th ANNIVERSARY

BARKSDALE AWARD RECIPIENTS OVER THE YEARS

Mimi Abadie
Joe Bell
Vince Chamblee
John Chappell
Jess Cooley
Martina Cotelo
Jillian Cowart
Tyler Craft
Bethany Fitts
Billy Forrest
Matt Knerr
Kate Lindsay
Mary Maher
Maureen Maher
Taylor McGraw
Neal McMillin
Rabria Moore
Hunter Nicholson
Mary Margaret Peterson
Samuel Douglas Ray
Gabrielle Schust
Audrey Seal
Megan Smith
Elizabeth Taylor
Cara Thorne
Ena Wei
Robert Thomas Wicks
Patrick Woodyard

meaningful mentorship

Editor's Note: Since the *Honors Report*'s inception in 2015, each issue has celebrated the work and dedication of one or two honors faculty members in a feature called "Professor Appreciation." This year, honors alumni received an email inviting them to submit a short testimony about an honors professor who had a profound impact on their undergraduate tenure. In lieu of celebrating one or two professors in depth, we hope you will enjoy reading snapshots of many professors' marks. Thanks to the alumni who took time to share their gratitude for these remarkable professors.

Denise Soares
(Photo by Robert Jordan)

Denise Soares

assistant dean, director of graduate studies and associate professor of special education

"Dr. Soares greatly impacted my success as an undergraduate student in her role as my SMBHC thesis adviser. The research and writing skills I gained from working with her allowed me to be a successful graduate student. I have been able to present and publish several pieces of research because of what I learned from Dr. Soares. Since entering the secondary classroom, Dr. Soares has continued to be one of my greatest supporters. I can go to her for ideas, advice and collaboration. She has even made the time to visit my own students. I am grateful for Dr. Soares and her mentorship that began many years ago thanks to the SMBHC!"

BY GABRIELLE VOGT (SMBHC 18)
B.A.Ed., M.Ed. in secondary English education, Ed.S. in special education; English language arts and English learner teacher at Oxford Middle School

Russell Stokes* *(Photo unavailable)*

"Dr. Stokes had a very special style of teaching. He used a Socratic method attributed to R.L. Moore from the University of Texas. It was stressful but brought out the best in me. My Ph.D. work was a breeze after his mentoring. I modified this style to teach 45 years at Xavier University of Louisiana to mentor many African American mathematics students. Several of these went on to earn Ph.D.s."

BY LESTER W. (BILL) JONES JR. (UNIVERSITY SCHOLARS 67)
B.S., M.S. in mathematics; Jones retired from Xavier University in 2020.

**Russell Aubrey Stokes died on Sept. 6, 2014 in Oxford. Stokes was professor emeritus of mathematics at the University of Mississippi. He served in the U.S. Navy as a lieutenant junior grade during World War II. He received his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Texas, his Master of Arts from the University of Mississippi, his Bachelor of Science from Mississippi State College and his Associate of Arts from East Mississippi Junior College.*

Lainy Day
(Submitted photo)

Lainy Day

associate professor of biology and neuroscience minor director

"Dr. Day was my undergraduate thesis adviser, and she had a profound impact on my life and development as a scientist. Prior to joining Dr. Day's lab, I knew I enjoyed science, but I wasn't entirely aware that careers in research existed. My experience studying the sexual differentiation of the zebra finch song system with Dr. Day, and attending the 2016 Society for Neuroscience conference (thanks to funds from the SMBHC), changed my perspective on science and shifted my goals towards a career in academia and scientific research. Now, I'm pursuing a Ph.D. in neuroscience at the University of Mississippi Medical Center working with Dr. Gene 'Lee' Bidwell (SMBHC alumnus). I still stay in touch with Dr. Day, and I always express to her how grateful I am for the training I received. She really opened my eyes to the process of scientific discovery and impacted my life far more than I ever expected."

BY JOHN AARON HOWELL (SMBHC 17)
B.A. in biochemistry
Neuroscience Ph.D. candidate at the University of Mississippi Medical Center

Dawn Wilkins
(Photo by Kevin Bain)

Dawn Wilkins*

chair and professor of computer and information science

"In honor of her retirement in June 2022, I'd like to remember Dawn's incredible impact on me. She catalyzed my interest in what has now become known as 'data science.' She also connected me to my internship at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (to complete my junior research project), which ultimately turned into the first 11 1/2 years of my career."

BY MATT STINE (SMBHC 01)
B.S. in computer science
Executive director of software engineering at JPMorgan Chase

**Wilkins retired from the University of Mississippi in June 2022 after serving and teaching UM students since 1995. We wish her a happy and restful retirement!*

Ann Fisher-Wirth
(Photo by Kevin Bain)

Ann Fisher-Wirth

professor of English

"During my undergraduate coursework, I took Dr. Fisher-Wirth's Environmental Literature course as a 'nice breather' to what I thought was destined to be my focus on contemporary Southern literature. In fact, Dr. Fisher-Wirth opened my eyes to the intersection of environmental writing – fiction, poetry and nonfiction – and the deeply ingrained importance of place and natural terrain to almost all writing, but especially that of Southern fiction. Her assignment of daily journaling in a space outdoors that 'calls to you as a writer' was one that I initially dreaded. Ultimately, it became a practice that I returned to for many years any time I began to feel lost or drowning. I will always be grateful for Dr. Fisher-Wirth's approach to bringing students together and encouraging them to lean into their relationship with nature, with themselves, and with one another as a community."

BY KATIE MORRISON (SMBHC 01)
B.A. in English
Director of foundation relations & strategic partnerships, University of Mississippi

Benjamin Jones
(Photo by Thomas Graning)

Benjamin Jones

associate professor of international relations, political science

"Dr. Jones' passion for the subjects he taught made me, as his student, excited to go to his classes. I took three courses with Dr. Jones during my four years at Ole Miss, purely because his attitude made me want to learn. Not only was Dr. Jones an amazing professor, he was also my honors/Croft thesis adviser in 2016. He dedicated an incredible amount of time to guiding me through the year's long project that is still one of the things I am most proud of. When I received the 2016 award for Croft's Best Thesis on a European Topic (a thesis on international terrorism), I remember Dr. Jones said it made him feel like he won too; he really did deserve an award for the mentorship he provided me. I have now been working in the FBI's Counterterrorism Division for six years, and I still find myself using things I learned from Dr. Jones, whether I'm working here at home in D.C. or far from home in places like Iraq or Jordan. I could never thank him enough for the impact he had on me as a college student to how his lessons and his kindness still impact me today. I am forever grateful."

BY ERICA MCGRAW (SMBHC 16)
B.A. in international studies and French
Counterterrorism analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation

David A. Colby
(Photo by Nathan Latil)

David A. Colby

associate professor of medicinal chemistry, research associate professor in the Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences and director of academic affairs for biomolecular sciences

"Dr. Colby has been my research adviser in the Department of BioMolecular Sciences since fall of 2019. Over the past few years, he has pushed me to be the best version of myself as a student and individual. Despite a very busy schedule, Dr. Colby always put time aside to help me optimize scholarship and internship applications as well as prepare for interviews, research presentations and my honors thesis defense. His support, through the UM Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (STEMS REU) Program, allowed me to conduct additional research in the Department of Pharmacodynamics at the University of Florida College of Pharmacy. This was a unique experience that would not have been possible without Dr. Colby's support. His mentorship has opened so many doors for me, and I am so thankful for the meaningful research experience I have gained during my time in his lab."

BY KATHERINE KREUSEL (SMBHC 22)
B.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences
Second professional year (P2) at the University of Mississippi

Sheila Skemp
(Photo by Harry Briscoe)

Sheila Skemp

professor emeritus of history

"I had the pleasure of having Dr. Sheila Skemp as the instructor of my Honors 102 course in the second semester of my freshman year. I enjoyed her class so much that I later took a course in colonial American history from her, too. I was excited to see her as one of the historians featured on the recent PBS documentary 'Benjamin Franklin: A Film by Ken Burns' (2022). She has written a book [*William Franklin: Son of a Patriot, Servant of a King,* 1990] about William Franklin, Benjamin Franklin's son, and she was mostly featured in the second episode, which dealt with Franklin's life during and after the Revolution. William Franklin supported the British, and his father never forgave him for it."

BY WILLIAM WEBB (UNIVERSITY SCHOLARS 90)
B.A. in English
Benefits analyst at International Paper

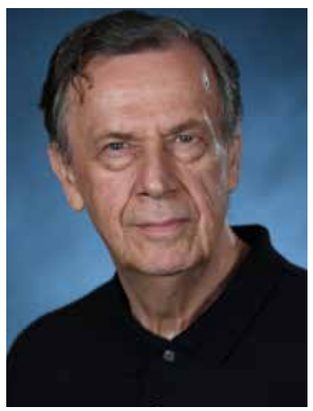
Neil Manson
(Photo by Kevin Bain)

Neil Manson

professor of philosophy

"Dr. Manson was dedicated to my growth as a person and as a writer. I took his class for both Honors 101 and 102, and the discussions he facilitated challenged me to think about my views on the world. He allowed us to submit papers early and provided feedback, and I would say he challenged me as a writer in a way no other professor has before or since. I am a better writer for working with him. I consider him instrumental in my development as a thinker, writer and, of course, as a person."

BY ROSE ANN MULLET (SMBHC 14)
B.A. in English



Milorad Novicevic
(Photo by Kevin Bain)

Milorad Novicevic

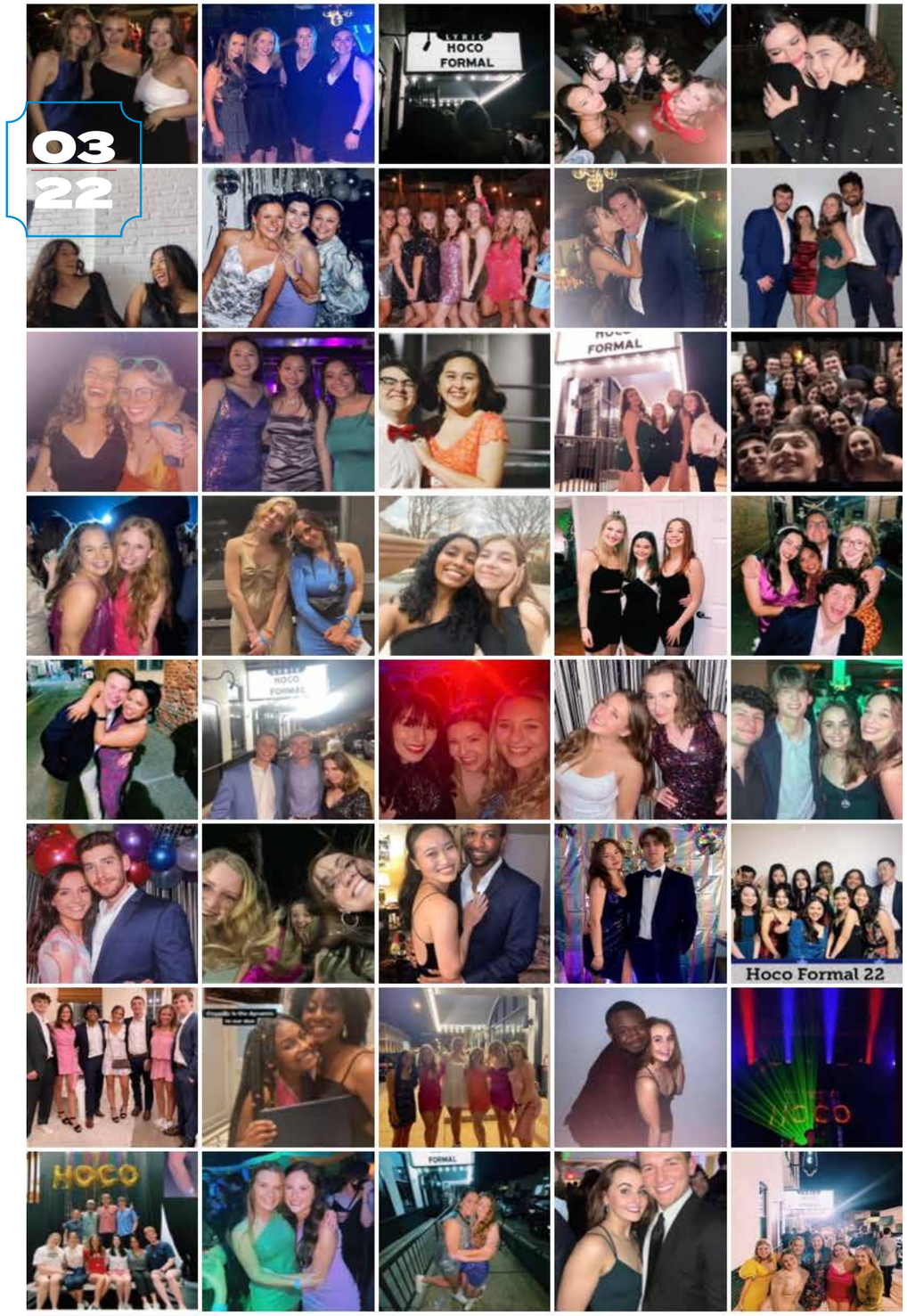
associate professor of management

"Dr. Novi has been a tireless advocate for my honors thesis. He was integral along with his grad students with getting it published almost six years after its completion in a recognized trade publication [*Journal of Management Review*]. Without his knowledge, commitment and ingenuity, I have no doubt my thesis would have only been published via the university library, but I am extremely proud to have it available to the academic community for research and review."

BY MADISON PORTIE WILLIAMSON (SMBHC 16)
B.A. in Chinese, B.B.A. in managerial finance
Product manager, cyber & technology E&O, At-Bay

'Raccoon.' 2022,
ink on Bristol board
by Olivia Wymore

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS



After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, the Honors College Formal returned to The Lyric with a disco theme and over 900 attendees hosted by the Honors Senate. (Photo collage by Jennifer Parsons)

1998
2004
2006
2008
2011
2013
2014
2017
2018
2019
2021
2022
25th ANNIVERSARY

The SMBHC Saga

BY MARY BOYTE (SMBHC 23)

What follows is an excerpt from Boyte's upcoming honors thesis, "The Story of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College":

Whenever I pass by the kitchen in the SMBHC, I think about my brother, Matthew. My sister-in-law Katie was an honors student, and in April of 2008, she baked Matthew a birthday cake in that kitchen. Now, 14 years later, they have four kids. That story plays in my mind often and always leads me to wonder what other moments have happened in that room. Sitting on those counter stools, I've played many roles: Honors 101 student, study group member, *Daily Mississippian* reporter. All of these memories bring me back to the people in them. All of these people have a collection of memories just like mine. They have played countless roles in just that one spot. This thesis aims to seek out the people who have memories of the Honors College, ask them about their experiences and tell their stories.

As I piece together the story of the Honors College, I'm conducting my research in a conference room on the third floor of the SMBHC. Every time I walk in, every time I leave, I pass by a portrait of Sally McDonnell Barksdale hung on the opposite wall of the conference room doors. The words "Grace. Wisdom. Substance." are engraved into the little golden plaque under Sally's picture. These are the values I've tried to embrace while working on this project. Memories won't be found in the green and yellow file folders of letters, emails and reports I'm sifting through for this thesis. The story of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College doesn't come from that data. It comes from those who have walked through its kitchen.

I have a unique opportunity in my approach as a journalism student. I see this opportunity as twofold. The first comes from the former part of my title: journalism. The framework of my thesis will be the information I gather. A thesis only made up of historical facts would be excellent, but it is not what I am pursuing. I want to create a narrative. I will use my journalism skills to conduct interviews and extract stories from those interviews. These stories will be the heart of my thesis, and I will weave them into my gathered facts to create a cohesive narrative of the SMBHC. The end product will be something past, present and future students and faculty can not only read and learn from but also feel connected to.

The second angle of my unique opportunity comes from the latter half of my title: student. Countless higher education histories have been composed by professional historians. There is something remarkable about the concept of an Honors College history written by one of its students. I feel I am equipped to provide a student voice as the basis for the narrative. This voice will serve as a distinctive perspective that I believe others will find just as valuable as I do. HR

Original Honors Curriculum: 29 Honors Hours Minimum

The History SMBHC

1953-1974 University Scholars Program, College of Liberal Arts

1974-1982 University Honors Program

1982 University Honors Program gets update and becomes separate academic unit

1982-1996 University Honors Program (updated)

APRIL 1996 Chancellor Robert Khayat and Associate Provost Carolyn Staton present honors college proposal to James Love Barksdale and Sally McDonnell Barksdale

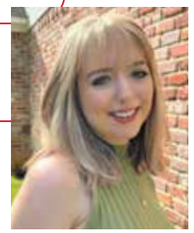
MAY 11, 1996 Chancellor Khayat announces new McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College at Commencement

MAY 23, 1996 First meeting of the Honors College Curriculum Planning Committee put together by Associate Provost Staton

FALL 1997 First freshman class of the McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College

DECEMBER 2003 Sally McDonnell Barksdale dies in Jackson

FEB. 9, 2004 Name officially changed to Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College



Mary Boyte is a senior from Madison. She is majoring in philosophy with an emphasis in religious studies and minoring in journalism. She works as assistant news editor for The Daily Mississippian *and teaching assistant for the religious studies department. She is working on her honors thesis titled "The Story of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College" under the direction of Mark Dolan, associate professor of journalism and new media. Her thesis will combine historical research with interviews to create an expansive narrative of the Honors College. (Photo by Megan Boyte)*

Stacking UP and Staying Funky

BY JOHN SAMONDS
SMBHC ASSOCIATE DEAN

When I meet with prospects and their families, I often joke that we on the staff live vicariously through the accomplishments of the honors students. Considering what they have done, it's not that much of a stretch. Just a few examples prove how honors students at the University of Mississippi can stack up against anyone:

The Honors College staff in 2003. Back row, from left: Penny Leeton, Stephanie Wortham and Costa Osadov. Front row, from left: John Samonds, Debra Young and Douglass Sullivan-González. (Photo by Robert Jordan)

- Biology major **Keyana (Mitchell) Washington** (SMBHC 02) participated in a medical program at Yale; when she described the Honors College requirements to the director of admissions at Yale's med school, the woman said something to the effect of "That's what Yale students should do, but don't."
- **Matt Sleep** (SMBHC 05), who majored in geological engineering, told me he had his choice of graduate schools because of scholarship packages, all because he was able to describe his honors thesis during visits with them.
- **Stephanie Jabaley** (SMBHC 12), who majored in insurance and risk management, was hired by an insurance firm in New Orleans because her thesis was "An Analysis of Hurricane Insurance Markets in the Southeastern United States."
- Biology and philosophy double major **Marc Walker** (SMBHC 06) not only was elected president of his medical school class at Harvard, but he also earned an MBA from Harvard Business School while earning his M.D.
- Pharmaceutical sciences major **Omayma Kishk** (SMBHC 10) interned at MIT the summer after her third year because the professor was so impressed with her when she visited during Junior Quest (an Honors College program for third-year students that ran during the winters from 2008 to 2018).
- Political science major **Hardy DeLaughter** (SMBHC 13) emailed me to say his fellow first-year law students at Emory were freaking out about the material in their classes, but he was helping them because he already knew the subjects from Hon 350: Introduction to American Law and Reasoning.

And too many honors students to count have published peer-reviewed articles based on their thesis work and/or have presented at national or international conferences.

The Funky Side

Another attribute of the Honors College is we have always been less formal than other academic institutions. Some of that comes from our building, which is orangey brick and has no white columns or red roof like many other buildings on campus.

The building has always been different, with a main floor that is two levels and with a basement study space the students named the Dungeon. When we expanded the space, the committee of students, staff and faculty was adamant that we had to "keep it funky." The addition may never be as funky as the original building, but let's hope the students, staff and the faculty who engage with honors students keep being funky. HR

John Samonds joined the Honors College in 1999 as assistant director and has served as associate dean since 2004.

Honors students gather to study and create stories and memories in the SMBHC's funky kitchen. (Photo by Kevin Bain)

My Extended FAMILY

"Mom"

BY PENNY LEETON
HONORS PROGRAM MANAGER

(Photo by Tenola Plaxico)

In August of 2003, I applied for the position of administrative coordinator of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. After interviewing for the position, I decided it wasn't the best move for me. I received a call from the dean, Douglass Sullivan-González, offering me the position. I was surprised and scared to even consider accepting, so I basically told him, "No, thanks." He said, "Give me five minutes to change your mind. Meet me in the coffee shop in the Union."

We met, and he gave his best sales pitch about why I should come to work at the Honors College. I went home that night and thought about it and decided that the dean was so convincing that I had to take him up on his offer. Nineteen years later, and I'm still here, loving (almost!) every minute. I've been promoted several times throughout the years and now hold the title of program manager and designated "Mom of the HoCo."

When I started, there were about 400 students in the SMBHC. I knew them all by name, and they knew me. Now the SMBHC has over 1,600 students. The growth has been bittersweet for me as I only know possibly a hundred or so current students now. Although it is a wonderful challenge to have so many students, we are bursting at the seams, and I miss knowing all of their names along with their personal backgrounds. I have dear friends from those first years ... and hundreds are my friends on social media.

When I started working here, my son, Garrett, was 18 months old. Now he is a junior at UM majoring in computer engineering. While she was a student here, **Rebecca Morrison Kaufman** (SMBHC 07) babysat Garrett, and now she is married with beautiful twin daughters. I've attended honors alumni weddings and received baby announcements in the mail. These students have become such a special part of my life.

I have such fond memories of **Marc Walker** (SMBHC 06), who walked into my office as a junior, excited about a plan to travel with a group of honors students to Bolivia for a medical mission trip. Now Marc is a plastic and cosmetic surgeon at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, where he teaches medical students, surgery residents and clinical fellows, and specializes in children's hand surgery, among many other areas.

His passion is still to travel to other countries and provide surgical treatment for children with hand issues, and he serves as secretary and treasurer for Hand Help (handhelp.org). I'm happy I still get to see him regularly as he is a member of the Honors Leadership Council.

Thinking back through the years of students passing through the SMBHC, memories flood my mind – like **Chris Peters** as Superman! **Martina** and **Maia [Cotelo], Christin Gates Calloway**, **Leah Davis**, the **Wicks siblings**! Celebrating **Lara Oyetunji's** 21st birthday in New York City. Finding out **Laura Rigby** is a roller derby queen. **Wood Dale** serving his country while continuing his studies. Hanging out with **Jessica Tran** and **Alexis Miller**.

The fun summer with student workers **Kimberly Allen** and **Rachel Cramer** (learning to never ever wear khaki, no matter what). Praying for **Elizabeth Rainey Dabney**. Having students come through the Honors College that I babysat when they were little – like **Elizabeth Harrington Reep**. Getting to work with alumni **Andrus Ashoo**, **Mimi Rankin**, **Connor Holeman Phillips** and **Kayla VonBurg-King**. Sweet **Logan Wilson**, **Martha Grace Mize**,

From left: Annabella Sills (SMBHC 20), Ainsley Ash (SMBHC 21), Jessica Tran (SMBHC 19), Dottie Reid (SMBHC 20), Penny Leeton, Christin Gates Calloway (SMBHC 11) and Nakiyah Jordan (SMBHC 21) are all smiles. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

> I'VE NEVER TRAVELED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES EXCEPT THROUGH THE STORIES AND EYES OF SO MANY **HONORS COLLEGE STUDENTS.**
>
> PENNY LEETON

NYC Cab Ride

DSG and Leeton in a cab ride from LaGuardia Airport. (Submitted photo)

Hunter Upchurch, **Caleb Herod**, **Maggie** and **Savannah Day**, **Adam Stanford**, **Katie Laird Maxwell** and **Matthew Sleep**.

The optimistic go-getters – "let's make this happen" – **Claire Graves**, **Shane Richardson Prada**, **Joshua Horton**, **Austin Jones**, **Dustin Markle** and **Douglas Ray**. Meaningful, everyday interactions with our student workers like **Wayne Knox**, **John Michael Walker**, **Taylor Thompson**, **Maggie Hall Fugate**, **Katie Jo Wright**, **Dottie Reid**, **Julia James** and **Gabi Toppin**, to name a few. I could go on and on about my love for these alumni. I know I can't name everyone who means so much to me. They are my chosen extended family.

I've never traveled outside the United States except through the stories and eyes of so many Honors College students. I always ask them to come see me when they return from studying abroad. Listening to them talk about their experiences makes me feel like I am right there with them in Belize walking around the Mayan ruins, getting lost in Madrid or climbing the mountains in Peru. They tell me vivid stories from their travels, and I feel transported to the places they experience.

In 2009, I was in Alabama for my father's cancer surgery. During that week, my brother passed away unexpectedly. Losing my only sibling devastated me, but the outpouring of love and compassion from the students and alumni was warm and enveloping. I received numerous cards, emails and calls. The students came by my office and offered their heartfelt condolences. Alumni messaged me on Facebook. I felt seen, loved and appreciated. I felt the same love in 2013, when my dad passed away from cancer, and half of the honors staff along with **Dr. Susan Pedigo** drove to Alabama for the funeral.

As part of my position, I coordinate the speakers for our fall and spring convocations. Who can say that they helped **Elie Wiesel** put on his winter coat and gave him a bar of his favorite treat, dark chocolate? Who can say that they received a phone call from **Oliver Sacks** asking for a ride to Square Books to look around and share a cup of coffee? I can! I've been so blessed to work at the SMBHC.

Throughout 19 years of working for DSG and the Honors College, I have seen co-workers come and go. I've enjoyed getting to know them and watching their families grow up. When DSG decided to step down as dean to focus full time on his research and teaching in the history department, his leaving made me wonder if I was ready to pursue a new avenue, too. But now I'm starting a new chapter at the Honors College with **Dr. Ethel Young Scurlock** as my dean, and I can't help but be excited for what's next. HR

FACTS & STATS

73 CORE TEXTS

SELECTED FOR **HON 101 & 102** OVER THE PAST **25 YEARS**

A Sand County Almanac, Aldo Leopold
Abel Sanchez and Other Stories, Miguel de Unamuno
All the Light We Cannot See, Anthony Doerr
Beloved, Toni Morrison
Black Like Me, John Howard Grifith
Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation, Bruce Metzger
Ceremony, Leslie Silko
Civilization and Its Discontents, Sigmund Freud
Confessions of St. Augustine, St. Augustine
Copenhagen, Michael Frayn
Creation Myths packet, curated by Honors College faculty
Deliverance, James Dickey
Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
Ghosts of Mississippi, Wright Thompson
Go Down Moses, William Faulkner
Hamlet, William Shakespeare
How They Do in Oxford, Kiese Laymon
In the Lake of the Woods, Tim O'Brien
Into the Wild, Jon Krakauer
Just Mercy, Bryan Stevenson
Life of Pi, Yann Martel
Light in August, William Faulkner
Longitude, Dava Sobel
Man's Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
Notes from Underground, Fyodor Dostoevsky
Parable of the Sower, Octavia Butler
Recollected Essays 1965-1980, Wendell Berry
Religion and Science, Bertrand Russell
San Manuel Bueno, Martyr, Miguel de Unamuno
Second Treatise of Government, John Locke
Six Easy Pieces, Richard Feynman
Six Not-So-Easy Pieces, Richard Feynman
Snow Leopard, Peter Matthiessen
Song of Myself, Walt Whitman
Sophie's World, Jostein Gaarder
The Analects, Confucius
The Awakening, Kate Chopin
The Bhagavad Gita, Vyasa
The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison
The Book of Job
The Bookseller of Kabul, Åsne Seierstad
The Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
The Control of Nature, John McPhee
The Empathy Exams, Leslie Jamison
The Essential Koran, Thomas Clearly
The Fall, Albert Camus
The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief, Francis Collins
The Language of Instinct, Steven Pinker
The Letter to the Romans; The Letter to the Galatians
The Omnivore's Dilemma, Michael Pollan
The Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River, Richard White
The Power of the Myth, Joseph Campbell
The Promise, Chaim Potok
The Road, Cormac McCarthy
The Sacred and the Profane, Mircea Eliade
The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis
The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir
The Selfish Gene, Richard Dawkins
The Sixth Extinction, Elizabeth Kolbert
The Social Contract, Jean Jacques Rousseau
The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Thomas Kuhn
The Tempest, William Shakespeare
The Tibetan Book of the Dead
The Trial, Franz Kafka
The Trial and Death of Socrates, Plato
The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming, David Wallace-Wells
The Way of Life (Tao Te Ching), Lao Tzu
Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe
Thoughts on the East, Thomas Morton
Through the Language Glass, Guy Deutscher
Victory Over Japan, Ellen Gilchrist
Year of Wonders, Geraldine Brooks
Zhuangzi Speaks: The Music of Nature, Tsai Chih Chung

FACTS & STATS

121

Students selected for the first
HONORS COLLEGE
FRESHMAN CLASS

1997-98

FALL 1997
8
SECTIONS OF
HONORS 101
FALL 2022
31

1997 **2** **Staff** **14** 2022

(Elizabeth Payne, director; Ginger Patterson, administrative assistant)

(including ONSA)

HONORS COLLEGE GRADUATES OF COLOR

ONE
OUT OF
32
.03 %
CLASS OF 2001

FIFTY-FIVE
OUT OF
335
16 %
CLASS OF 2022

SINCE 2000
732
STUDENTS RECEIVED
HONORS FELLOWSHIPS
TOTALING MORE THAN
$1.5 MILLION

FEB. 12, 2016

THE HONORS SENATE HOSTED THE FIRST
HONORS COLLEGE FORMAL
AT THE LYRIC

HONORS COLLEGE BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE **39,290**

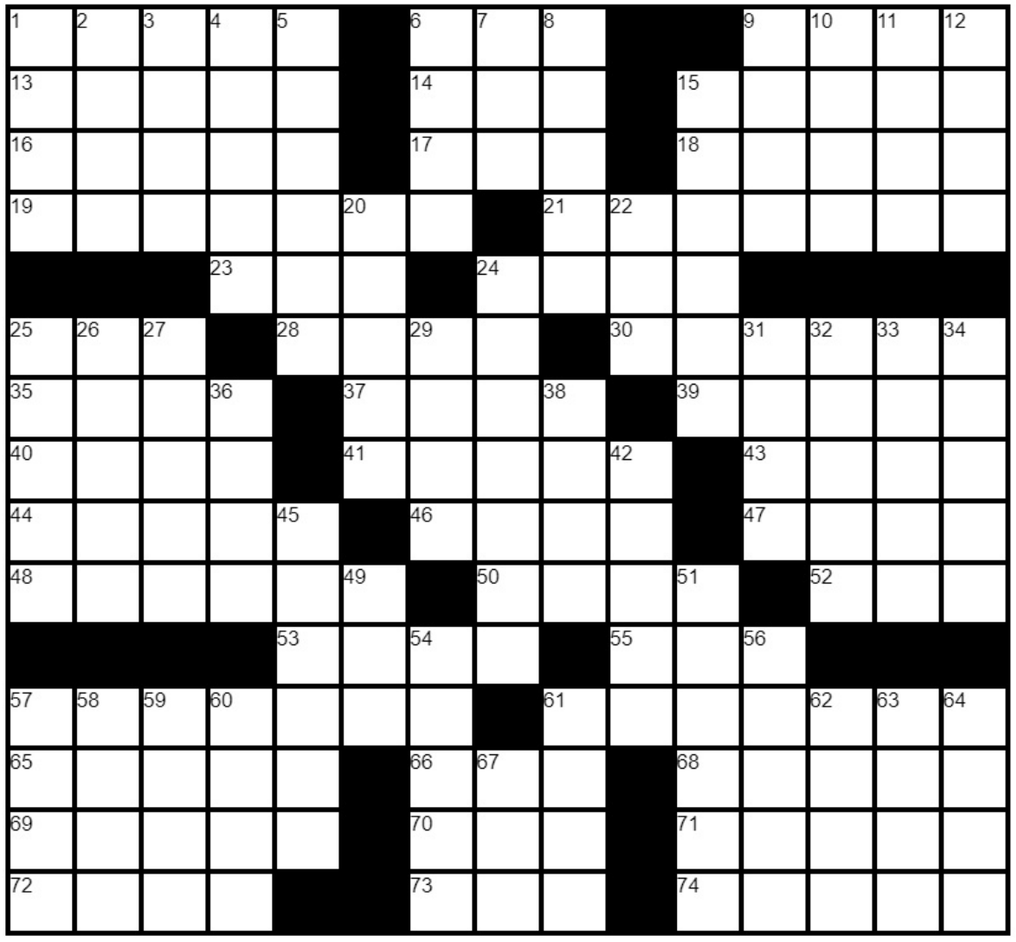
one million
COMMUNITY ACTION CHALLENGE HOURS
EARNED THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Honors College.
Digital drawing
by Jordan Thweatt

THE CROSSWORD

A lightly challenging puzzle.

By Jennifer Parsons



ACROSS

1. Redo, to a carpenter
6. Sandra Oh's "_____ Chair"
9. Leave out
13. "Dig Dug" maker
14. "_____ House" ('80s hit)
15. Origami bird
16. *Dear William* author David _____
17. For each
18. Snitch
19. Tickles pink
21. They're served at Big Bad Breakfast
23. Before a spike in volleyball
24. Drug-related infectious disease (abbr.)
25. Record label Birdman co-founded, for short
28. Party with poke
30. Genus of garden plants ... and everything else
35. NBA player's target
37. Herbert's sci-fi classic
39. Wilbur was one
40. Skin concern
41. Author Madeleine L'_____
43. Van Gogh's "Bank of the _____ at Auvers," 1890
44. A piece of broken metal or glass
46. Little duck
47. Songbird
48. Unamuno's *San _____ Bueno, mártir*
50. "Wilco!"
52. Clock setting in Puerto Rico and Nova Scotia
53. Né
55. Aunt, in Uruguay
57. More hollow
61. Begins "124 was spiteful."
65. Deceitful folks
66. Liberty Mutual's mascot
68. Like some at weddings and funerals
69. Navel unit?
70. Word with pet or seat
71. Actor Redmayne or Murphy
72. U2's lead guitarist, The _____
73. Feeling shy?
74. Figures in academia

DOWN

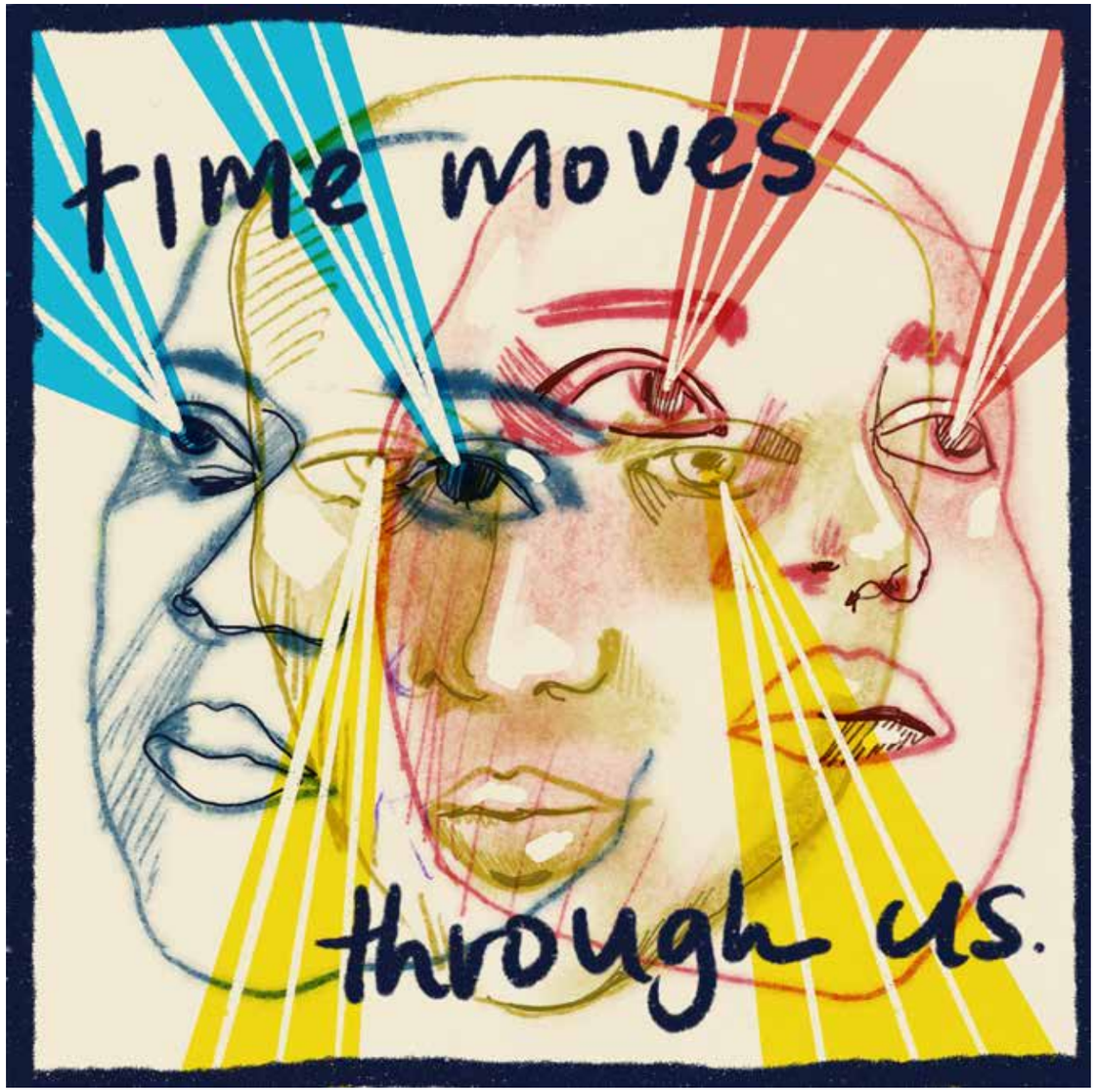
1. Skateboarder's elevator?
2. And others
3. "Scarborough Fair" herb
4. Some geometric findings
5. Holocaust survivor and 2010 honors spring convocation speaker
6. The best
7. A pure pigment
8. Answer that is incorrect
9. Kind of tradition
10. A pal in the UK or Australia
11. How some games end, briefly
12. Ashara, diez and zehn
15. Tenets
20. Bruce Levingston's "Dreaming Awake" features _____ No. 7
22. Beastie Boys keep passing it
24. In *The Count of Monte Cristo*... and the Honors College
25. Deep depression?
26. Coffee named after a port in Yemen
27. "Lady Bird" star, Saoirse _____
29. See 55 across, in the States
31. Reveal
32. She says, "David, stop acting like a disgruntled pelican!"
33. Desert respites
34. Vessel insert
36. Humboldt penguins live off its coast
38. Pizzazz
42. The crème de la crème?
45. Dev's friend on "Master of None"
49. "Brokeback Mountain" director, Ang ___
51. At an angle
54. Dyson rival
56. Sister to Melete and Mneme
57. See 5 down
58. "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless _____" or fired by the life of it
59. Sign of hunger or guilt
60. Also called digital tree
61. Matured leaf used in placemats, hats and braids
62. Savory donut eaten as a snack in south Asia
63. Mrs. Brockovich
64. Indigo and turmeric, e.g.
67. Monoamine oxidase (abbr.)

SMBHC WORD SEARCH

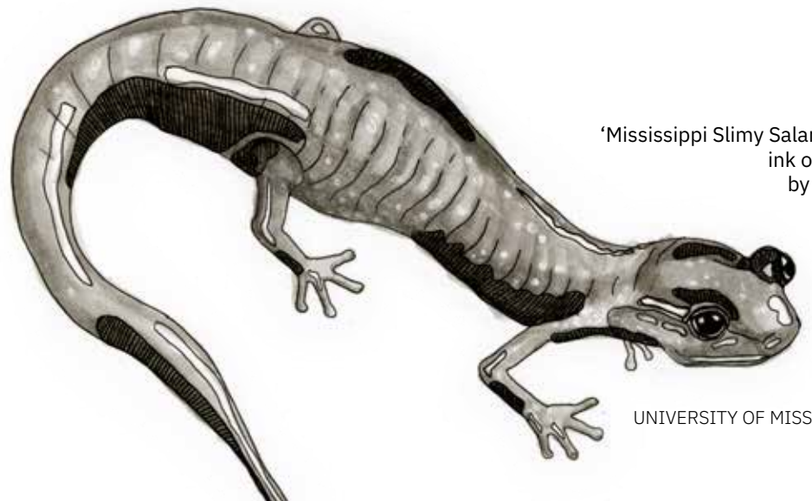
We asked current honors students for one or two words they associate with the Honors College, and these were the most popular responses. Have fun!

F	S	R	I	A	T	S	R	E	T	T	O	P	Y	R	R	A	H	N	D
R	R	T	J	W	A	Z	D	F	E	N	O	R	O	N	E	C	E	O	T
E	A	S	G	N	N	N	T	A	L	L	L	Z	C	G	A	G	O	Z	F
E	L	R	T	T	E	P	O	M	C	H	B	H	G	P	I	G	R	U	M
P	O	I	K	Z	O	C	T	I	D	T	A	A	S	A	N	I	V	Z	W
R	H	F	I	P	Y	Y	B	L	T	L	I	T	D	O	H	S	B	Y	K
I	C	G	R	O	W	T	H	Y	L	A	O	O	M	N	A	I	X	O	H
N	S	E	C	K	V	R	W	E	P	N	C	M	N	N	E	N	I	F	O
T	N	I	F	E	D	W	N	L	E	K	O	O	C	I	S	P	E	Y	N
I	E	X	J	V	G	G	Y	E	A	C	K	T	V	X	O	O	E	T	O
N	Z	K	A	N	E	Y	T	N	Y	U	U	D	D	N	C	J	B	D	R
G	I	H	B	C	K	W	I	K	O	A	G	V	D	S	O	W	Y	F	S
R	T	Y	O	G	K	I	N	F	R	O	B	H	B	B	I	C	T	V	S
C	I	T	N	C	R	V	U	Y	L	T	H	E	S	I	S	W	I	E	E
V	C	D	L	N	O	E	M	C	C	N	O	E	G	N	U	D	R	C	N
Y	L	L	A	S	E	F	M	H	O	C	O	M	E	C	X	U	G	A	A
L	H	X	B	A	L	P	O	S	C	N	H	C	D	X	T	Y	E	C	T
Z	A	W	U	D	I	L	C	E	S	S	R	K	Z	N	K	M	T	G	E
T	Q	T	N	E	M	E	G	A	G	N	E	E	E	W	A	D	N	O	S
S	M	A	L	L	C	L	A	S	S	E	S	V	M	I	E	N	I	B	D

KOI POND
DUNGEON
PENNY
COMMUNITY
VENTURES
THESIS SEASON
HOCOFO
FREE PRINTING
SANCTUARY
HARRY POTTER STAIRS
DEPENDABLE
CITIZEN SCHOLAR
COMMON GOOD
GROWTH
LAUGHS
FAMILY
CHALLENGE
SALLY
CONVOCATION
FIRST GEN
HOCOMEC
HONORS SENATE
ONSA
ENGAGEMENT
INTEGRITY
SMALL CLASSES
ACTION
CAC
CAPSTONE



'Time Moves Through Us.' 2021
Digital drawing
by Neely Mullen



'Mississippi Slimy Salamander.' 2021,
ink on Bristol board
by Olivia Wymore

OFFICE OF NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP ADVISEMENT

Year in Review

VIVIAN IBRAHIM, ONSA DIRECTOR (Photos courtesy of students pictured)

What a record-breaking year!

Let me start with what's most important. **More University of Mississippi students than ever put the time, effort and self-reflection that goes into completing nationally and globally competitive applications.**

This is not something you wing, or you put together overnight. As much as it pains me to say it, this is essentially a class. There is work that goes into each of the awards. You write drafts and drafts, and perhaps you win the award, and perhaps you don't. You may ask yourself, "Well, what's the point?"

Our aim at ONSA is to promote a process focused on self-development. As we work with you to craft your applications, you hopefully gain clarity on your goals, reflect on your priorities and find a path to achieve them.

This year we ran workshops, a virtual Fulbright writing boot camp and did lots of one-on-one sessions. We organized small roundtables with former award recipients, promoted networks and strengthened cohort building. These measures paid off. It has indeed been a record-breaking award year, but I want to celebrate those completed applications too.

More applicants than ever told us that their Fulbright or other "unsuccessful" application was the basis of their *real* first-choice graduate school application. Somewhere amid the angst of editing and reflecting, they worked out another path to their passion. See, I told you there was value in the process!

Congratulations to all our completions, finalists and winners!

FULBRIGHT AWARDS

In a record-breaking year, we have six Fulbright recipients and one alternate this year. This is more than we've ever had at UM.

Established in 1946, the Fulbright is the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program, designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those of other countries.

Two of the UM students will teach English abroad, two will obtain a master's degree, and two will conduct research toward their doctoral dissertations. Fulbrighters meet, work, live with and learn from people from other countries, sharing daily experiences and acting as cultural ambassadors for the United States.

Fulbright – English Teaching Assistants

JARAMILLO

READ

Olivia Jaramillo and **Kaitlyn Read** are set to teach abroad next year as part of the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship program. The ETA places Fulbrighters in classrooms to provide assistance to local English teachers. ETAs also serve as cultural ambassadors for the U.S.

Jaramillo, from Murfreesboro, Tennessee, graduated in May with a joint degree in Spanish and from the Croft Institute for International Studies. She is also a member of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Only weeks after graduation, Jaramillo married her university sweetheart, Reed Peets, and they immediately set off together to Colombia to start a year of adventure.

Read, from Mobile, Alabama, is also a graduate of the Croft Institute and member of the Honors College. In January, she will head to South Korea to undertake an ETA at an elementary school. In her spare time, Read will indulge in her K-pop passion as well as dive into the traditional art of pansori, going to local and national performances.

Fulbright – Study

CAPLE

GRIGGS

Tyler Caple and **Neely Griggs** were awarded a Fulbright Study scholarship, which fully funds a master's degree abroad.

Caple, from Huntsville, Alabama, was a Boren Scholar and is a 2020 graduate of the Croft Institute for International Studies and Chinese Flagship. She is the sole recipient of the Fulbright International Master's Program in International Studies, or IMPIS, at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. She plans to continue her undergraduate research on social movements in authoritarian countries, specifically China, while at IMPIS.

Griggs, from West Point, is a 2021 joint-degree graduate in public policy leadership and German. Over the last year, she has served as an AmeriCorps VISTA with Wingate University in North Carolina, creating solutions to food insecurity and building infrastructure within the local food systems. Her passion for sustainable food led her to apply and become the inaugural recipient of the University of Reading's Fulbright award dedicated to food security.

In addition, **Kaitlyn Sisco** from Brandon is a 2022 graduate in international studies and Spanish. She was selected as an alternate for the Fulbright Global and International Studies Master's at the University of Salamanca in Spain.

Fulbright – Research

Charles Savage and **Ashleen Williams**, both doctoral students in the history department, were awarded Fulbright Research awards.

SAVAGE

WILLIAMS

As a Fulbright researcher, **Savage** will spend the year in Brazil. His work is tentatively titled "Navigating neocolonialism and neoliberalism: Brazil, IFIs and the Global South 1970-2000." He will be conducting research at the National Archives in Brasilia and Rio while he is affiliated with the Programa de Pós-Gradução em História Social at the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

Williams was awarded the research Fulbright to Kuwait.

GOLDWATER AWARDS

The Goldwater is one of the oldest and most prestigious national scholarships in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It supports exceptional sophomores and juniors who show promise in becoming the next generation of research leaders in these fields. ONSA was able to nominate four students from UM, and we have three winners.

Ethan Lambert, **Reinhard (Matt) Knerr** and **Alexandria (Ally) Watrous** have been awarded the prestigious scholarship. **This is the highest annual number of recipients for UM. It is also UM's first-ever sophomore win.**

Lambert, Knerr and Watrous follow in the footsteps of UM Goldwater scholars Ivy Li and Austin Wallace (2021), William Meador and Jax Dallas (2020) and Addison Roush (2019).

LAMBERT

Lambert is a junior from Corinth. He is set to graduate in 2023 with a B.S. in chemistry with an emphasis in chemical physics and a minor in mathematics. He has three first author papers and co-authorship on a book, all using Raman spectroscopy and quantum computational chemistry as part of his work under the advice of Nathan Hammer, professor of chemistry and biochemistry.

After graduating next year, he will pursue a Ph.D. in chemistry with a focus on the study of inter- and intramolecular photo-induced charge transfer events in artificial photosynthetic systems via ultrafast transient absorption spectroscopy and anisotropy. Long term, he would like to conduct research at a national lab. Lambert is thrilled to be selected as a Goldwater scholar, but he credits much of his accomplishments to the incredible people around him.

KNERR

Knerr is a junior from Paducah, Kentucky. He is pursuing a degree in biochemistry, with minors in neuroscience, biological sciences, environmental studies and psychology. Knerr is interested in how biochemistry can be used to explain the physiological changes to our organ system and cell functionality.

After graduation from UM, he hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in biochemistry to investigate the underlying biochemical pathways of aging. "I am delighted to be recognized for my work and to be honored among past UM Goldwater scholars," Knerr said. "I'm thankful for my mom's support (even though she has no idea what the Goldwater actually is!)."

WATROUS

Watrous is our only sophomore to be awarded the scholarship, which will partially fund her junior and senior year at UM. She is from Lexington, Kentucky, and is pursuing a B.S. in chemistry with a chemical physics emphasis and a B.A. in physics and German with minors in French and math.

Watrous has enjoyed her research as a member of associate professor of chemistry Ryan Fortenberry's Computational Astrochemistry Group and participation in the Ole Miss Physical Chemistry Research Experience for Undergraduates summer program. She has three publications to date and hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in physical chemistry. Long term, Watrous is interested in collaborating internationally while conducting research in computational chemistry.

Lambert, Knerr and Watrous have all presented an incredible commitment to a career in research, a display of intellectual curiosity and contributions in their fields.

TRUMAN AWARDS

In another first for UM, two Truman scholarships went to students representing the state of Mississippi. This year, we nominated four exceptionally service-minded students for the Truman and had **three outstanding semifinalists**: **Alex Bush** (Colorado), **Jilkiah Bryant** (Mississippi) and **Andy Flores** (Mississippi). All three met with panels and interviewed for their state. **Bryant** and **Flores** were awarded the Truman in April 2022.

Usually, one Truman is awarded per state. For the first time since 2013, the Truman Foundation awarded two scholarships to the state of Mississippi. This is the first time that both Mississippi awards went to students at UM.

Truman Scholarship awardees demonstrate outstanding leadership potential, a commitment to a career in public service and academic excellence. Each Truman scholar receives up to $30,000 for graduate studies, leadership training, career counseling, and special internship and fellowship opportunities within public service organizations.

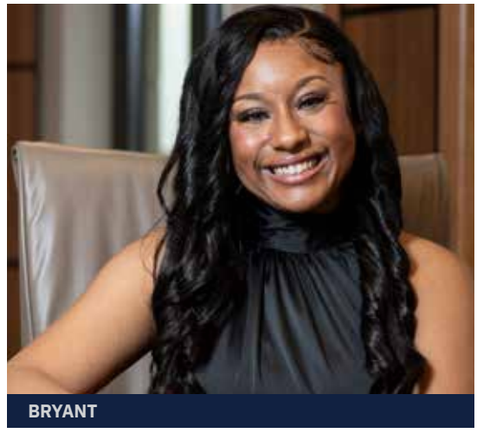
Bryant and Flores are two of 58 new Truman scholars who were selected from 705 candidates nominated by 275 colleges and universities. They were recommended by 17 independent selection panels based on the finalists' academic success and leadership accomplishments, as well as their likelihood of becoming public service leaders. This year, regional selection panels met virtually and included distinguished civic leaders, elected officials, university presidents, federal judges and past Truman Scholarship winners.

Bryant is a public health and health sciences major and a mathematics minor. She aims to spend her career fighting for affordable and accessible health care in rural Mississippi. Bryant is already working toward this goal as a Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Initiative Innovation Scholar with the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement.

She organized the Pontotoc Bilingual Community Health Fair, demonstrating her commitment to public health in underserved Mississippi communities. Bryant has participated in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Undergraduate Public Health Scholars Program, which solidified her passion for breaking down barriers to access to health care in underserved parts of Mississippi and beyond.

As a Truman scholar, Bryant plans to pursue a Master of Science degree in public health in health systems at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Through this program, she will gain the academic and hands-on experience needed to improve rural health care conditions and address the core causes of health inequalities.

Flores is a public policy leadership and philosophy major. Flores has consistently fought to eliminate barriers to education for his fellow students, ensuring that all students receive equal educational opportunities in public schools and institutions of higher learning. As co-founder and president of UM's First Generation Network, he has worked tirelessly to create networks and provide resources for first-generation students on campus. He has also been instrumental in uniting students across campus behind HelpSaveHELP to lobby against the overhaul of the Mississippi "One Grant." With the help of the Truman Scholarship, Flores plans to attend law school.


BRYANT

FLORES

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION'S GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, or NSF GRFP, recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in NSF-supported STEM disciplines who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees. The five-year fellowship includes three years of financial support including an annual stipend of $34,000 and a cost of education allowance of $12,000 to the institution.

We are thrilled to have **three NSF GRFP** recipients this year: **Benjamin Savino**, **Austin Wallace** and **MyKayla Williamson**. In addition, **Athena Flint**, a UM graduate student in chemistry, received an honorable mention.

SAVINO

WALLACE

WILLIAMSON

Savino is from Cary, North Carolina, and graduated from UM with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2021. He is a first-year graduate student and plans to use the GRFP to fund his doctoral research in mechanical engineering at UM. Long term, he hopes to be a leader in the aerospace industry. He is also a member of the track and field and cross-country teams at UM. He was a finalist for the NCAA's Walter Byers Postgraduate Scholarship and is one of two students from UM who received the Brad Davis Southeastern Conference Community Service Award for 2021-22.

Wallace is from Southaven and graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in chemistry with a biochemistry emphasis. He was one of two UM Goldwater scholars in 2021. His research in computational chemistry has been flourishing since his first semester at UM when he approached associate professor of chemistry Ryan Fortenberry. Wallace has already published his research in peer-reviewed journals and will use his fellowship to pursue a doctorate in computational chemistry at Georgia Institute of Technology.

Williamson, from Waynesboro, graduated in May with a B.A. in anthropology and minors in journalism and classics. She participated in the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program. She also presented her research at the inaugural SMBHC undergraduate research symposium during the 2022 spring convocation.

Williamson's research examined the lived experiences of enslaved people, often overlooked and omitted in the historical record. She plans to use the fellowship to pursue a master's in archaeology at Cornell University, examining historical and African diaspora archaeology. Williamson is believed to be the first Black female student from UM to win the fellowship.

'Ruby-Throated Hummingbird and American Trumpet Creeper.' 2022, 9" x 12" Gouache on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

BOREN FELLOWSHIP

KEITH

Sarah Keith has been awarded a Boren Fellowship. She is a third-year law student originally from Texas. The Boren Fellowship enables recipients to study a wide array of critical languages while immersing themselves in the culture.

Keith will spend a year learning Turkish as part of the Turkish Flagship Language Initiative, or TURFLI, program. From June to August, she undertook the domestic summer portion of TURFLI, which was hosted by the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Thereafter, Keith will fly out to Baku for the overseas fall and spring portion of TURFLI at the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Boren alumni are committed to public service and are given preferential opportunities to work in positions critical to U.S. national security throughout the federal government. Upon return to the U.S., Keith hopes to enjoy a career at the Department of Justice.

NEWMAN

RANGEL FELLOWSHIP

The Rangel Graduate Fellowship prepares outstanding young people for careers in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Department of State. The Rangel Fellowship funds two years of graduate study, internships, mentoring and professional development activities.

Lauren Newman is a St. Martin native who graduated from UM in 2020 with majors in international studies and Arabic. As a Rangel fellow, Newman will help formulate, represent and implement U.S. foreign policy. She is a 2020 Boren scholar and studied abroad in Jordan in addition to Morocco. She co-founded Mississippi Votes and has also interned with the Carter Center's Democracy Program. She speaks Moroccan Darija Arabic, Levantine Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic. Newman plans to obtain a Master of Science in Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

ONSA celebration, 2022. (Photo courtesy ONSA)

DAAD RISE

HANDFORD

Stephanie Handford, from Waukesha, Wisconsin, is a sophomore majoring in mechanical engineering and minoring in art.

Handford is UM's only DAAD RISE (German Academic Exchange Service Research Internships in Science and Engineering) 2022 recipient. This summer, she undertook a paid STEM internship in Germany alongside other undergraduate students from the U.S., Britain and Ireland. RISE recipients are matched with a host university according to their area of interest. She will be assisting with a project that uses machine learning methods for data-driven material modeling of carbon fiber composites. She will be based at the Technische Universität Dresden in Germany. HR

Photo by Tenola Plaxico

IBRAHIM

Photo by Kevin Bain

WOODS

Vivian Ibrahim *is director of the Office of National Scholarship Advisement. Ibrahim is a historian of the Modern Middle East and joined UM in 2011. She specializes in the history and politics of Egypt in the 19th and 20th centuries. A Croft associate professor of history and international studies, Ibrahim began serving as ONSA interim director in January 2020. Among her many accolades, Ibrahim was awarded the College of Liberal Arts' Howell Family Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award for 2019-20.*

Whitney Woods *is assistant director of ONSA. Woods joined UM in 2015 and is a native of Brandon. She holds a bachelor's degree in secondary English education and a master's in counselor education: student affairs from Mississippi State University. She earned her doctorate in higher education from UM in 2020.*

Woods presented "Intersections of Law and Campus Policy Related to Emotional Support Animals," based on her dissertation research at the annual Education Law Association Conference. She has also presented "Out and Accessible, Self-Efficacy in Career Decisions for LBGTQ+ Populations and for Students with Disabilities" with colleagues at a regional conference. Lastly, in 2021, Woods and two of her colleagues published an article, "Intersections of Law and Higher Education Campus Policy: Requests for Emotional Support Animals in Student Housing," based on her dissertation research.

To learn more about national scholarships, visit onsa.olemiss.edu.
Interested in applying? Email ONSA@olemiss.edu.

'Southern Flatcoil Snail.' 2021, ink on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

The University of Mississippi hosted its first Mississippi Day on April 9. Staff and students from the Honors College and the Croft Institute for International Studies shared space by the Croft porch and visited with dozens of prospective students and their families. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

04
22

Bailey Bass (left), **Caroline Loeb, William Meyers** and **Mary Collins West** celebrate successfully defending their honors thesis, "Effects of Acute Exercise Intensity on Memory: Considerations of Timing and Aerobic Endurance," written under the direction of **Paul Loprinzi**, associate professor of health, exercise science and recreation management. In April alone, over 260 students defended their theses, and that's why April is known as "thesis season" by honors students! (Photo courtesy of pictured students)

On April 8, four honors students were inducted into the university's Hall of Fame: **Grace Dragna**, **Ella Endorf**, **Matt Knerr** and **Ian Pigg**.

CITIZEN SCHOLARS IN THE WORLD

1990

Barrett Green has been named treasurer of Entergy Wholesale Commodities. In this role, Green will lead the company's treasury function, including financing, risk and investments. Green has held various positions at Entergy since joining the company in 1997. After graduating from UM, Green completed a master's degree in engineering from Virginia Tech and a master's degree in business administration from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University. Entergy Corp. is an integrated energy company engaged in electric power production, transmission and retail distribution operations and delivers electricity to three million customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

William Webb has been admitted into the Quarter Century Society in observance of 25 years of service at International Paper. Webb works in International Paper's global headquarters in Memphis and is a benefits analyst in the Global Compensation and Benefits department.

2001

On June 1, **Andy James** became the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Matt Stine married Jillian Cantor on June 25 in Hoboken, New Jersey. They reside in Olive Branch. Stine's daughter, Abby, graduated summa cum laude from Northpoint Christian School in Southaven on May 14, and she is now a member of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College! Abby's mother is **Wendy Dunn Stine** (SMBHC 01).

2007

Patrice Jones Harmon (BA 07, DMD 11) completed an endodontics residency at LSU in September 2021 and acquired the Southside Endodontics practice in Colonial Heights, Virginia, in March. Harmon, her husband and their son welcomed baby Elliott Louise Harmon to their family this past May.

2009

Lee Taylor-Penn started as policy director for the Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, which promotes federal policy to improve mental health outcomes for birthing people.

2011

Meaghan M. Gandy was elected to partner with the law firm Kutak Rock LLP, effective Jan. 1 of this year. Gandy represents employers in all stages of employment litigation by defending them in matters involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, the Equal Pay Act, and wrongful discharge claims under state and federal law. She also receives employers on day-to-day issues such as employee discipline, paid time off, pregnancy accommodation issues, and application of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Family Medical Leave Act. Additionally, she focuses her practice on drafting employment handbooks and policies for employers.

Stacey Holmes accepted a new role as associate director of the Honors College at Arkansas State University.

Marie Wicks (SMBHC 11, UM 12, JD 16), who graduated with B.A. degrees in international studies and French with a minor in chemistry, joined the U.S. Department of Justice through the Attorney General's Honors Program after serving as a law clerk for Judge E. Grady Jolly on the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals. She recently began a new position as an attorney in the Appellate Section of the Department of Justice Tax Division.

2013

Jess Waltman (BAccy 13, JD 16) is an attorney with Davis & Crump P.C. in Gulfport. He primarily works on complex pharmaceutical and medical device cases and is licensed to practice law in Alabama, Arizona, Louisiana and Mississippi, as well as before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit. Waltman recently completed his term as chair of the New Lawyers Division of the Mississippi Association for Justice, and he serves as president of the Young Lawyers Division of the Mississippi Bar.

2014

Neal McMillin became director of federal affairs for the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities under Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards. In this role, he helps Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority receive additional federal funding, navigate the permitting process, advance legislation, and build relationships with Congress and the presidential administration. CPRA's mission is to protect coastal communities from storm damage and to restore the diminished coastal wetland ecosystem.

Rose Ann (Foster) Mullet and **Ross Mullet** welcomed their son, Ian, in 2021. Rose Ann also graduated with a Master of Education in teacher leadership.

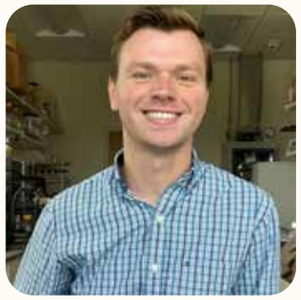
2016

Christal Davis accepted a clinical psychology predoctoral internship at the Medical University of South Carolina and Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston, where she'll be completing a yearlong residency with an emphasis in substance use to fulfill the final requirement for obtaining her Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

Joseph R. Latham has joined the law firm of Capell & Howard P.C. in Montgomery, Alabama, as a litigation associate.

2017

Bess Nichols Fisher graduated magna cum laude from the University of Mississippi School of Law in May and served as class marshal for the Class of 2022. In August, she joined the creditor's rights practice of Mitchell, McNutt & Sams in the Oxford office.



John Aaron Howell is in a neuroscience Ph.D. program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. This year, he received the Trainee Professional Development Award from the Society for Neuroscience and has also been named a Neuroscience Scholars Program associate. From the American Physiological Society, Howell has been a recipient of the Central Nervous System Research Recognition Award and been selected to be a graduate student ambassador for the society. Howell will defend his dissertation and graduate in May 2023. As a happy side note, Howell works in the lab of professor **Gene "Lee" Bidwell III** (SMBHC 02), and this year, **Jamarius Waller** (UM 15) graduated with his M.D./Ph.D. Bidwell's lab has been full of SMBHC biochemistry graduates for years, and they've enjoyed sharing their experiences at UM and in the SMBHC with one another. Howell writes, "It's wild to me how much the campus and Honors College has grown and changed in the last five years, and I cannot wait to see the changes that are to come!"

Yujing Steenwyk (BSPS 17, PharmD 20) completed a two-year postgraduate health-system pharmacy administration and leadership residency at Cone Health in Greensboro, North Carolina, during which she earned the credential of a board-certified pharmacotherapy specialist from the Board of Pharmacy Specialties. She also successfully completed a Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences with a specialization in health-system pharmacy administration at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Eshelman School of Pharmacy. This summer, she moved to sunny Gainesville, Florida, with her husband, **Timothy Steenwyk** (UM 18), and their dog, Tofu, to start a new job as the acute care surgery pharmacist coordinator at the University of Florida Health Shands Hospital. She thanks her honors thesis adviser, professor **Erin Holmes**, for preparing her for round two of thesis writing during her master's program, and she looks forward to returning to SEC football land!

2019

On July 1, **Levi Bevis** earned a master's degree in emerging media studies from Boston University, and this fall, he began law school at the Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law.

This past May, **Catherine Reese Neely** (BBA 19, JD 22) graduated law school, received the highest GPA award and was selected as Moot Court Board Member of the Year. This fall, she began her legal career with the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals as a federal judicial clerk to Judge Leslie H. Southwick.

Bradley Mason Smith (BA 19, MA 22) continued his graduate education at the University of Kentucky this fall, where he is pursuing a Master of Science degree in radiological medical physics to become a clinical therapeutic medical physicist.

In recent months, **Grey Young** (BA 19, JD 22) has had two academic articles published: "Seizing the Wheel: The Need for Uniformity in State Driving Bans for People with Epilepsy" (Vol. 90 of the *Mississippi Law Journal*) and "How Much Is Too Much: The Difficulties of Social Media Content Moderation" (Vol. 31 of the *Information & Communications Technology Law Journal*).

2020

Ysabella "Bella" St. Amant has been awarded a Rotary Foundation global grant scholarship for academic study at the University of Sussex in Brighton, England, for the 2022-23 school year. At Sussex, she will be pursuing a master's degree in the anthropology of development and social transformation and will be pursuing research and professional projects that relate to community and economic development, one of Rotary International's seven areas of focus.

2021

Kelly Bates and **Scott Chumley** are engaged!

'Reflection.' 2020, 13" x 13"
Oil on Bristol board
by Olivia Wymore

Students IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In May, we asked honors faculty members to let us know about any honors student who presented research, won an award, was a part of a fun Community Action Challenge project, or simply someone who impressed them. We are happy to share these small snapshots of extraordinary students, and we thank these professors for taking the time to pen their admiration.

EMMA SCHROTENBOER (SMBHC 22)

by Deborah Mower, associate professor of philosophy and Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Hume Bryant Associate Professor of Ethics

Emma Schrotenboer (Photo by Mackenzie Ross)

"An exemplary, community-minded honors student, Emma Schrotenboer had originally been enrolled in my Honors Care Ethics course. Because she didn't need the credits and because of her workload and conflicting writing assignments, she dropped her enrollment in the course. However, because she loved the material and the class, she continued to attend EVERY SINGLE DAY, complete all the readings and participate in all the discussions.

"As part of the work for our course, students needed to complete a policy proposal that made use of the theories we were studying and apply them to a real-world issue. Because of the focus of our course, I made one of the class days a virtual attendance via Zoom to a conference the Center for Practical Ethics hosted on campus (centerforpracticalethics.org). Emma was interested in the topic and volunteered to help, so I asked her to provide conference support the day of the conference. She helped set up the conference room and the reception area, worked the registration table, helped set up the Zoom and managed comments for the Zoom during all the presentations.

"She was an amazing help throughout the day, and I am so impressed that she volunteered to take on so many responsibilities, simply because she was interested in the topic growing out of the course she was merely auditing! This is the kind of thing that likely doesn't garner flashy news, yet is the kind of activity that best demonstrates the community and citizen-minded student the SMBHC most wants to foster."

In May, Schrotenboer graduated with a degree in interdisciplinary studies after completing her honors thesis under the direction of professor Melinda Valliant. This past summer, she began the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio and hopes to someday be a traveling occupational therapist and work in pediatrics.

MITCHELL THARP (SMBHC 22)

by Marjorie Holland, professor emerita of biology

"Mitchell presented a poster entitled, 'Forest succession following a pine bark beetle infestation' at the inaugural Honors College Poster Symposium in the Ford Center on Monday, Feb. 7, 2022. This poster was co-authored with fellow biology major Fatima Laraib and me.

"At the end of the semester, Mitchell presented an oral talk entitled, 'Species diversity and growth rates of overstory vegetation over 25 years in response to physical and chemical properties in long-term monitoring plots at the University of Mississippi Field Station' at the University of Mississippi Field Station's Science Conference on Saturday, April 30, 2022. Mitchell worked with me at the UM Field Station for two years on tree sampling and analyzing data to produce his honors thesis for the SMBHC."

Tharp is now attending dental school at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

E. MICHAEL VALENCIA (SMBHC 22) AND AUSTIN M. WALLACE (SMBHC 22)

by Ryan Fortenberry, associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry

Michael Valencia (Submitted photo)

Austin Wallace (Photo by Rachel Hammond)

Fortenberry submitted a spotlight on Valencia and Wallace for their incredible academic records and achievements. He specifically called attention to the many conferences at which they have presented, including the Southeastern Theoretical Chemistry Association meeting, the National American Chemical Society meeting and the Southern Undergraduate Research Conference.

They have not slowed down. Valencia is performing biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, and Wallace is pursuing a Ph.D. in computational chemistry at Georgia Tech as a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow and GT Presidential Fellow.

AMY-KATE WINTER (SMBHC 23) AND ERIN BOWENS (SMBHC 22)

by Ying Hao, assistant professor of communication sciences and disorders

Amy-Kate Winter (Submitted photo)

Erin Bowens (Submitted photo)

Hao praises Winter and Bowens for their separate and compelling achievements, which were covered by the University of Mississippi Marketing and Communications team through Ole Miss News and the Journey to Commencement series.

Before graduating in May, Bowens pursued her degree in communication sciences and disorders while working as a research assistant in the School of Applied Sciences. She wrote her honors thesis, "Effects of Parent Intervention via Tele-Practice on Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Rural Mississippi" under the direction of Hao. Bowens is now pursuing her master's degree in communication sciences and disorders at the University of Memphis.

Winter, a communication sciences and disorders major, was selected as a 2022 undergraduate scholarship recipient by the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association. A native of French Camp, Winter is one of four selected from universities across the country for this highly competitive award.

'Green Tree Frog.' 2021, ink on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

WILL JONES (SMBHC 25)

by Leigh Anne Duck, associate professor of English, director of the interdisciplinary minor in cinema and editor of The Global South

Will Jones (Submitted photo)

"Will won the undergraduate division of the University of Mississippi's Cinema Studies Essay Contest with his work 'Visions of the Self & Society through the Silver Screen.' Judges praised his robust and informative understanding of the history of cinema and his creative style – both in his witty turns of phrase and his ability to combine analysis with narrative momentum.

"Will is an aspiring writer/director of feature films and is earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in film production. From Alpharetta, Georgia, Will loves spreading his passion for cinema, whether through the UM Film Club that he co-founded or through writing film criticism on @film_fanatic44 on Instagram. Among his favorite filmmakers and influences are Paul Thomas Anderson, Martin Scorsese and Greta Gerwig, and his favorite films include 'The Last Picture Show' (1971), 'The Graduate' (1967) and 'There Will Be Blood' (2007)."

WYOMIA MYKAYLA WILLIAMSON (SMBHC 22)

by Jodi Skipper, associate professor of anthropology

MyKayla Williamson (Submitted photo)

Skipper is proud of Williamson for being awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to conduct research in historical and African diaspora archaeology. Williamson wrote her honors thesis, "By Her Hands: An Analysis of the Hidden Labor of Black Women at the Hugh Craft House Site in Holly Springs 1850-1900," under the direction of Skipper. This fall, Williamson is pursuing a master's degree in archaeology at Cornell University.

'Eastern Box Turtle.' 2021, ink on Bristol board by Olivia Wymore

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

05 22

The Honors Commissioning Ceremony took place at the Sandy and John Black Pavilion at Ole Miss on May 4. **Ajah Singleton** welcomed everyone, **Rachel Hammond** served as class marshal, **Taylor Thompson** gave the charge, and **Ian Pigg** delivered the address to the SMBHC Class of 2022. Read their speeches by visiting our Reflections page on the SMBHC website, honors.olemiss.edu. **Jesse Paxton** received the Dean's Prize (a gift card to Square Books) for earning the most honors hours – 60! Over 80 photos from the ceremony are available to view on our Facebook and Instagram accounts. Pictured at the ceremony are **Carly Huguley** (left), **Adam Smith** (SMBHC 02), chair and associate professor of chemical engineering and associate professor of biomedical engineering, **Alexis Kimpel** and **Jabria Thompson**. (Photo by Jennifer Parsons)

06 22

On June 11, **Ethel Young Scurlock** (far left), SMBHC dean, and **Vivian Ibrahim** (far right), Office of National Scholarship Advisement director and associate professor of history, brunched with honors alumni and students at The Hamilton in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Scott Thompson)

Pathways to Equity: THE LYCEUM LOCKER

BY KAYLA VONBURG-KING (SMBHC 19)
SMBHC COORDINATOR OF RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Before I started my position in the Honors College last year, I worked for Academic Support Programs, a University of Mississippi department that supports students on academic probation and suspension. As part of my position with Academic Support Programs, I taught EDHE 202: Fundamentals of Active Learning, a class reserved for students on academic suspension who are at risk of being dismissed from the university if they do not meet a certain GPA marker.

I first thought that I would simply be showing up, teaching lessons on SMART goals and concept maps, and going home, but after one semester, I learned that would not be the case.

My first semester of teaching fell during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic devastation on the shoulders of college students that has always existed was blown wide open. The end-of-semester reflection essays I read still stick with me in a profound way. Many of my students were failing, but not for reasons anyone might think.

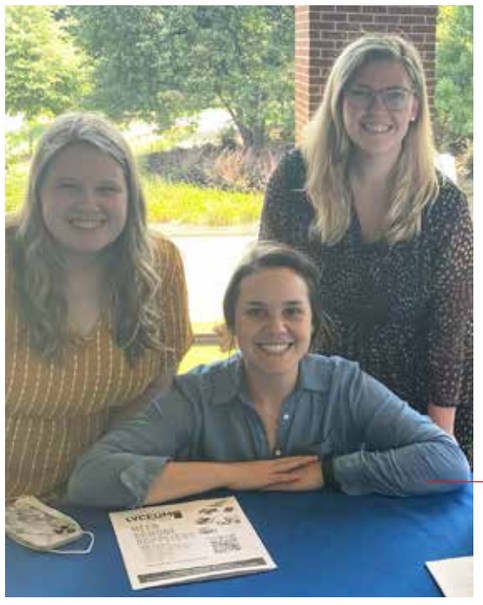
One student could not access a computer because the library was closed, so they resorted to submitting their homework assignments on their phone. Another was laid off from their job and was having trouble making rent – the worry of losing shelter was overwhelming them and made it nearly impossible to focus on school.

A number of these students couldn't even afford the access codes necessary to access software to complete homework in a course. Many of these students were placed on academic dismissal, never to return. This group of students and their experiences changed the way I see academic success and the way that it is measured. They changed my perception of student experience and the wide variety of struggles students might go through on a daily basis that go overlooked.

For the next two years, I taught nearly 200 students on academic suspension. The primary reason for students finding themselves on academic suspension was not partying; it was not a lack of intelligence or desire to succeed. The biggest reason that students ended up in my class was financial hardship.

Some students hold three jobs to pay for school and basic amenities. Some are working toward a degree with children at home, saddled with the responsibilities of being a college student and single parent. Some students are caretakers to their own parents, whose medical bills might fall back on them. For many of the students, it was simply not possible to focus on school when there were other, more pressing needs at home.

At a certain point I realized: enough is enough. The obstacles in many students' lives were unavoidable, but lack of resources and support were not. Success in education should not be based on access. How could we expect students to succeed if they don't have the basic resources to complete coursework?



Kayla VonBurg-King (left), Mandi Bloodworth and Kimbrlei McCain spend time in summer 2021 tabling to promote the Lyceum Locker. (Photo courtesy Kayla VonBurg-King)

The Lyceum Locker fills with donations from different campus departments in late summer 2021. (Photo by Kayla VonBurg-King)

This question drove me. I went to my then-supervisor, Jeremy Roberts, with an idea. If students could not afford supplies, what if we provided them? What if we created a resource on campus where students could come and take what they needed, no questions asked, free of charge?

"I'll make your first donation," Jeremy said as he handed me a pack of No. 2 pencils.

Mandi Bloodworth, case manager with UMatter, and I cleared out a set of cabinets within the Johnson Commons and put out a call for donations from UM departments to help us fill the school supply closet. Jeremy's pack of pencils quickly grew into boxes and boxes of donations from campus departments; pens, binders and sticky notes began to fill the shelves.

Within three months, the school supply closet accumulated almost $4,000 in physical and monetary donations. I was overwhelmed and moved by the outpouring of love and support for the project – the supply closet was proof of the importance of meeting students' basic needs and represents a community dedicated to uplifting its members and surrounding them with support.

We decided to name the closet the Lyceum Locker, in honor of the very first classroom at the University of Mississippi.

The Lyceum Locker does not abolish access codes or lower tuition costs. It does not remove all of the obstacles students face as they work toward their degree; however, it is just the beginning of an effort to make higher education more accessible and endurable for every student.

The Lyceum Locker is not charity, but solidarity. The Lyceum Locker seeks to bridge a gap and helps to ease financial disparities while also working to advocate for the change of systems, systems that continually harm already marginalized students.

Just as the university started with one classroom, the Lyceum Locker started with one pack of pencils. One pack of pencils sparked a movement and led to a community coming together under the common goal of achieving equity and ensuring that all students have what they need to succeed at the University of Mississippi. **HR**

First-Generation Student Network

Year in Review

BY ANDY FLORES (SMBHC 23)

Members of the First-Generation Student Network pose for a picture by the SMBHC koi pond. Over 130 active members comprise the First-Gen Network. (Photo by Thomas Graning)

The **First-Generation Student Network** (or simply, "First-Gen") is dedicated to supporting, empowering and providing a community for first-generation college students on our campus (i.e., those who are the first or among the first generation in their family to be on track to complete a four-year degree).

Today, First-Gen is my home. However, when I first got to the University of Mississippi, I was frankly unaware of any term or label that could capture my relationship to college, empathize with my pursuit of it, and fully appreciate the life circumstances that led to my narrow arrival through the front door. I certainly wasn't aware of how diverse or intersectional the community was that I was about to enter. By the time I was on campus, though, hearing the words "first-gen" in the halls of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College completely changed my life. Since then, every opportunity I have had the honor of seizing has been a testament to the communal love, strength and inspiration that defines our community.

Throughout the past year, we have doubled in size to over 130 members, and we have opened the doors of our potential membership to *any and all* first-generation college students across our campus. Still, we are proud to be housed in the SMBHC, the place where our founder, **Ainsley Ash** (SMBHC 21), dedicated herself to cultivating a community that could honor the limitless potential, resilience and brilliance of the first-gen community on campus.

In the fall, we held our second annual First-Gen Celebration Week, in collaboration with the Student Activities Association. The week was full of programming that featured first-gen advocacy, storytelling and outdoor fun. In the middle of the week, **Racheal Embry**, **Emily Lin**, **Amaya Gray** and **Zoe Keyes** led a public forum focused on the state of campus programming, support systems and student life as a first-gen college student.

The spring semester brought innovation. We kick-started the First-Gen Forum, a speaker series through which first-gen professionals, staff, faculty and alumni can chat with our members, provide life and career advice, and speak with transparency about their respective career journeys.

Overall, our goal was to construct a space that could empower first-gen students as they plan for internships, volunteer service, scholarship applications and their future career paths. This spring, we hosted **Dr. Annette Kluck**, dean of the UM Graduate School; **J. Nathan Bland**, Foreign Service Officer and Diplomat-in-Residence at Tulane University; and **Dr. Melissa Jones**, associate director of the Trent Lott Leadership Institute. We cannot wait to bring in more wonderful speakers and organizations in the upcoming year!

Throughout the year, we also continued to host professional development workshops, and we even got the opportunity to be visited by representatives from **Amazon**. We look forward to partnering with more organizations to create engaging programming around career building.

To close out the year, **Racheal Embry** hosted Evening of First-Gen Excellence, which looked back on first-gen accomplishments throughout the year and honored our graduating seniors. "Evening" was a multidepartmental effort, and we are so thankful to the Center for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Engagement, StudentsFIRST, the UM Graduate School and SMBHC for helping us bring it to life.

Executive Board

President: **Andy Flores**
Vice President: **Racheal Embry**
Student Success Adviser: **Jonathan Dabel**
Community Involvement Chair: **Noah Watts**
Treasurer: **Jessica Krukar**
Secretary: **Axel Soto Lopez**
Communications Chair: **Emily Lin**
Member-at-Large: **Lily Martin**
Faculty Adviser: **Ashleen Williams**

First-Gen Member Highlights

Jilkiah Bryant and **Andy Flores** were awarded the Truman Scholarship, the premier graduate scholarship for aspiring public service leaders in the United States. They are the University of Mississippi's 16th and 17th Truman scholars, and this year's selection marks the first time that two scholars from Mississippi have come from the same undergraduate institution within a given year. Flores and Bryant will receive $30,000 in funding for graduate studies, as well as leadership training, career counseling, and special internship and fellowship opportunities within the federal government.

Jonathan Dabel completed a project titled "Professional Development Approaches on Digital Learning" with Tyton Partners, a global firm dedicated to equity in education. He was also named president of UNICEF at the University of Mississippi and conducted an interview with Richard Rothstein, renowned economist and author of *The Color of Law*.

Lily Martin was initiated into Women in Business.

Ashleen Williams, who serves as First Gen's faculty adviser, received a prestigious Fulbright Research Award to Kuwait; her research focuses on the 20th-century political petitions in the Persian Gulf. In February, Williams also received the IHL Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award for serving as a role model and strong advocate of the advancement of diversity on our campus. During the University of Montana's Week of Excellence, she was also recognized as a Friend of the Davidson Honors College, of which she is an alumna.

Edrei Peña and **Flores** were selected as Public Policy and International Affairs Junior Summer Institute fellows. The Junior Summer

Mr. and Miss Ole Miss, Ian Pigg (SMBHC 22) and Madison Gordon (UM 22), stand on the football field during the Ole Miss vs. Arkansas homecoming game. Pigg and Gordon created a scholarship fund for first-generation college students. (Photo by Thomas Graning)

Institute program through PPIA is a fully funded opportunity that allows students to study at a graduate level at one of six universities across the country. **Peña** attended the Junior Summer Institute at the University of Washington, and **Flores** attended the University of California, Berkeley. The program was started to address the lack of diversity across the spectrum of professional public service, including government, nonprofits, public policy institutions and international organizations.

Ian Pigg and **Madison Gordon** (Mr. and Miss Ole Miss 2021) created a scholarship fund for first-generation college students to ensure that all students have the resources to attend our beloved university. Ultimately, the First-Gen Fund met its donation goal, and the proceeds will make a life-changing impact for future first-generation college students who wish to be a part of our community.

Adam Soltani, **Ethan Robertson** and **Sara Cantu** all won their campuswide elections to become senators in the Associated Student Body Senate. Their missions as public servants on our campus include promoting awareness around first-gen student life, empowering cultural organizations on campus, and fortifying healthy and inclusive student relations. HR

Chancellor Glenn Boyce, a first-generation college graduate, talks with a student at the First-Generation Student Meet and Greet event at the Student Union Plaza. (Photo by Logan Kirkland)

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

Ethel Young Scurlock and **Lila Osman** (SMBHC 23), 2022-23 Associated Student Body president, in Washington, D.C. (Photo courtesy Ethel Scurlock)

06
22

After a nationwide search and from a competitive applicant pool, **Ethel Young Scurlock** was named dean of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. She served as interim dean for one year before being appointed to the deanship by **Provost Noel Wilkin** and Mississippi's Institutions of Higher Learning. Scurlock is an associate professor of English and African American studies, and for a few more months, she will continue serving as the senior fellow of the Luckyday Residential College. Scurlock became a faculty member at the University of Mississippi in 1996 and has taught honors courses for over 16 years. Before being named interim dean, Scurlock was also director of African American studies. She is a native of Memphis and earned her B.A. in English from the University of Tennessee and M.A. and Ph.D. from Bowling Green State University of Ohio. Scurlock has published numerous articles and reviews of African American literature in signal publications. Her excellence in teaching is notable. She was named the College of Liberal Arts Teacher of the Year in 2003, and UM Humanities Teacher of the Year and Elsie M. Hood Outstanding Teacher Award winner in 2011. A 2013-14 SEC Academic Leadership Development Program fellow, Scurlock has also been recognized by the Mississippi House of Representatives for her work to promote diversity. You may reach out to Dean Scurlock at eyoungmi@olemiss.edu. (Photo by Kevin Bain)

Honors academic counselor and records coordinator **Rachel Coleman** received a Staff Creative Residency, an initiative conceived by the Mississippi Lab and funded by the Office of the Provost. During her weeklong residency, Coleman will create a belly dance class specifically for pre- and postnatal women. Coleman seeks to provide a low-impact and body-positive means of moving that can adapt to a pregnant woman's constantly changing body, as well as provide a community of support, healing and acceptance as new moms transition through the postpartum phase and learn to accept and adapt to their new postpartum bodies. Coleman first joined the Honors College in 2007. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Mississippi University for Women and her master's degree in counselor education from the University of Mississippi. For several years, Coleman has led belly dancing sessions during the annual Honors College Welcome Week, and her sessions are always the first to fill up. (Photo by Mystic River Bellydancers)

Dealing an Artful Hand

BY VERONICA TERRES

University of Mississippi alumnae and mother-daughter pair Kim Hackney (UM 90) and Frances Hackney (SMBHC 20) co-founded a company called FOSTER in June 2020, in which they create and sell small artistic products with "Texas-sized appeal."

Residents of Tyler, Texas, their most popular products to date are playing cards with acrylic paintings of various places, communities, universities and events. Other products include napkin sets, cup sets, place cards and a small selection of interior pieces.

The first product they released was a deck of playing cards that captured their own college town, Oxford. Following the reception of the deck, FOSTER created officially licensed playing cards and products for other top universities: Auburn, Clemson, Southern Methodist University, Texas Christian University, Texas Tech, University of Alabama and University of Oklahoma, and more are in the works.

"It is quite a feeling to collaborate with fans, students and alumni in bringing 16 different images of artwork to life on a deck of cards," said Kim Hackney, head of sales and design. "What's most important to us is that these pieces express the primary purpose of why we created FOSTER – to build those relationships, promote conversations and provide an outlet that allows others to share memories together."

FOSTER launched a Texas Collection featuring all things for which the state is known, and these kinds of painted images are generating the cards' and coordinating products' appeal, said Stacy Evans, the company's chief financial officer.

"The product is unrivaled in the marketplace," Evans said. "Customers simply love the tiny pieces of handheld art. More than that, though, they love the story of how this art really does foster friendships and relationships by simply creating, just time together."

Most recently, FOSTER launched its spring line, which features a catalog of pieces highlighting vibrant florals and whimsical wildlife such as fluttering butterfly playing cards, and rabbits and birds on cocktail napkins, place cards and cups. Beach and sea designs, Fourth of July fireworks, and ornamental pink and blue pagodas are also some custom-painted pieces. The mother and daughter believe their newest collaboration exudes fun, vibrance and happiness.

"Our previous collections have featured a more subtle and subdued color scheme, but with this collection, I played with more vibrant colors and more playful art as seen in the bathing suits and swim trunks, the 'Summer Loving' designs – and a bit of everyday whimsy with the bright florals painted," said Frances Hackney, head of art and marketing. "Even a 'Birthday Wishes' birthday cake print shows how innately celebratory this line is."

> WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO US IS THAT THESE PIECES EXPRESS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF WHY WE CREATED FOSTER –
> **TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS, PROMOTE CONVERSATIONS AND PROVIDE AN OUTLET THAT ALLOWS OTHERS TO SHARE MEMORIES TOGETHER.**
>
> **KIM HACKNEY**

Kim and Frances Hackney (Photo by Charlotte Hackney)

Decks of Ole Miss playing cards are among many items available at SolelyFoster.com. (Submitted photo)

In their hometown, local companies and groups have commissioned playing cards for clubs, events and fundraisers. Last year, the Texas Rose Festival, along with the Rose Festival queen's family, commissioned FOSTER to create a deck featuring 52 custom paintings with each card representing a unique festival costume that highlighted the festival's theme: Secrets of the Garden.

For Kim Hackney, building this company and working with her daughter is more than she could have ever envisioned.

"I count it as a blessing. Although Frances' college career was finished up at home (during COVID), she is my partner in a successfully growing business nationally known – and thriving. It's a divine gift that she is using her education, learning life experiences and putting them to work. Fostering relationships with people all over has really made the long hours worthwhile!"

FOSTER products can be found at SolelyFoster.com or with retailers across Mississippi, Alabama and the South including Olive Juice Gifts (Oxford), Blue Willow (Oxford), Vineyard's Gifts (Jackson, Tennessee), Sweet Gourmet (Tyler, Texas), Pen & Company (Longview, Texas), St. Michael's Woman's Exchange (Dallas, Texas) and Swoozie's (Dallas, Texas), to name a few. **HR**

Editor's Note: In spring 2020, Frances Hackney successfully defended her thesis, "How has art refocused consumers' attention within a visual world through the exploration of package design?" She worked under the direction of Emily Bowen-Moore, instructional associate professor of integrated marketing communication. The SMBHC welcomes stories from any honors students or alumni starting or running their own businesses.

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT *Highlights*

Support for Business and STEM Majors

BY BILL DABNEY

To say Bill Roper is driven is an understatement.

The Jackson native has continued to work ever since he started selling tomatoes door to door at age 8. Back then, he used some of the money to buy model cars. Today, he collects the real thing – the kind he enjoys driving on the lush and winding Coast Boulevard overlooking the Pacific Ocean's sapphire waves near his La Jolla, California, home.

Hard work, Roper said, is the foundation for his success and the reason he and his wife, Melanie, are able to make a $2 million gift to the University of Mississippi, establishing an endowment that will provide four-year scholarships in the amount of $10,000 annually to two entering freshmen each year.

To be eligible for the Bill and Melanie Roper Scholarship, students must be enrolled in the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College majoring in business, science, technology, engineering or math.

"Melanie and I would like to assist in producing more business or technology leaders for the future, and that starts with a STEM-related education. Those are the areas that have served me well," said Roper, president of Roper Capital Co., a private investment firm that provides growth capital and management services to help small-to-midsize businesses create value and improve owner liquidity.

The Roper Scholarship will also benefit the Honors College, which incidentally was founded by Roper's Sigma Chi fraternity brother Jim Barksdale.

"This family's generous gift will help us continue to attract some of the brightest students in STEM and business to the University of Mississippi," said Ethel Young Scurlock, dean of the Honors College.

Full story by Bill Dabney umfoundation.com/2022/04/08/funding-the-future

Bill and Melanie Roper (Photo by Bill Dabney)

Physicians' Gift Provides Scholarships for Honors Students

BY BILL DABNEY

Drs. Marc E. and Caroline A. Walker with their daughter, Catherine. (Photo by Bill Dabney)

Dr. Marc E. Walker, a plastic surgeon and Mississippi's only pediatric and congenital hand surgeon, is founder and clinical director of the Congenital Hand Clinic at Children's of Mississippi – the pediatric hospital at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

Walker's road to success is impressive: After graduating summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa in 2006 with a bachelor's degree in biological science from Ole Miss, he earned MBA and M.D. degrees from Harvard University. He then completed his residency in plastic and reconstructive surgery as well as fellowship training in hand and microsurgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

"If it weren't for the generosity of donors before us, my college experience would have been very different," said Walker, who was a Carrier scholar and student in the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. "Without the additional worry of navigating financial hardship, I was able to focus on my education and pursue my dreams of becoming a surgeon."

Now, he and his wife, Dr. Caroline Aldridge Walker, cardiac anesthesiologist and director of structural heart anesthesiology at UMMC, want to support his alma mater by establishing the Walker Family Endowment with a $150,000 gift to the university.

The couple's gift, established to provide scholarships for Honors College students, also honors former dean Douglass Sullivan-González.

"I am extremely honored by the Walkers' gift, and I'm equally proud of Marc, who was one of our most exceptional students," Sullivan-González said. "His extraordinary success stands as a tribute to the quality of education we strive to give our citizen scholars every day."

Full story by Bill Dabney umfoundation.com/2022/04/04/supporting-scholars

Honors Leadership Council Members

Susanna Allen
Louis Benton
Elizabeth Blades
Mary Brinson
Martina Cotelo
Tyler Craft
Patrick Dogan
Jan Farrington
Milton Fletcher
Kent Ford
Erin Guyton
Mamie Hollingsworth
Chelsea Lewis
Lauren Milligan
Alysson Mills
Josh Norris
Kevin Patterson
Dennis Pickens Jr.
Janet and George Pilko
Eddie Rester
Daniel Roberts
Jeremy Roy
Ken Soh
Jess Waltman
Stephanie Williams
Zebulon Winstead
Amanda Zarrow

Honors College Campaign Steering Committee

Janet and George Pilko
Adrian Cartier
Leah Davis
Bruce Levingston
Daniel Roberts
Bill Roper
Marc E. Walker
Keyana and Cedrick Washington

Thank You

Leah Davis (SMBHC 20) helped spread the word about Giving Day through her social media platforms. Alumni like Davis are instrumental in garnering monetary donations that support SMBHC students. Davis is director of development for Red Mountain Park in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member of the Honors College Campaign Steering Committee. (Photo by Logan Kirkland)

Giving Day Success

In April, numerous schools and departments across the university participated in UM's annual Giving Day. Thank you to our 69 donors and 70 gifts totaling $12,283 for the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Every penny supports our citizen scholars.

Janet Pilko (Photo by Logan Kirkland)

Pilko Boosts Donation to Honors College

Janet Pilko (University Scholars 75) established the Excellence in STEM Scholarship Endowment, which supports honors students by advancing women in STEM fields, and this year, she increased her donation to the endowment. In addition to serving on the SMBHC Leadership Council, she is also campaign chair of the Honors College Campaign Steering Committee, established to support the Honors College during Now & Ever: The Campaign for Ole Miss. We appreciate her and her husband, George, who both have vast and invaluable campaign experience.

SMBHC Leadership Council member Dennis Pickens Jr. (SMBHC 10) and his wife, Kiana Pickens. (Photo by Bill Dabney)

SMBHC Leadership Council members enjoy a double-decker bus ride on campus. (Photo by Bill Dabney)

SMBHC Leadership Council member Alysson Mills (SMBHC 02) and Dean Ethel Young Scurlock (Photo by Bill Dabney)

Brady Bramlett (Photo by Tenola Plaxico)

Dear SMBHC Alumni and Friends,

Hard to believe we are starting a new year already. I love when students make their way back to Oxford and the synergy overtakes every part of campus. You can't help but smile in the traffic!

As we move into a bright, new era at the University of Mississippi, we have taken on an ambitious $1.5 billion fundraising initiative, the largest in the history of our state. Now & Ever, the campaign for Ole Miss, is a testament to our belief in the attentive teaching, the pioneering research and the high-quality health care, service and innovation we bring to the world.

The Honors College is at the forefront of all these initiatives. Thanks to the leadership and generosity of our alumni and supporters, we've had an incredible year of fundraising that directly benefits our students. From scholarships, student research and study abroad, YOU champion the high-impact learning opportunities we provide to our honors students.

Our Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College prepares citizen scholars who are fired by the life of the mind, committed to the public good and driven to find solutions. We must carry that fire with us in all aspects of life and leadership. I look forward to being on the road and visiting with our inspiring alumni! Help me continue to make the University of Mississippi and the Honors College an extraordinary experience for the best and brightest.

Brady Bramlett
Associate Director of Development

Thank You

SALLY MCDONNELL BARKSDALE HONORS COLLEGE DONORS

JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 15, 2022

Kaylen R. Addison
Air Products and Chemicals Inc.
James W. Allen II
Phillip J. Allen
Susanna R. and William A. Allen
Blair B. and William H. Anderson
Pontus V. Andersson
Doreen H. Anding
Michael F. Angel
Cathy and Al Annexstad
Sherrie P. Jenkins and Glenn A. Aquino
Christina W. and Andrus G. Ashoo
Donna and James L. Barksdale
Brigitte and Michael A. Barnett
Pamela K. Barnett
Bryce M. Barrett
Stephanie G. and Richard R. Barrett
Alison W. and Bradford P. Barry
Virginia S. Beale
Joseph M. Bell
Damea B. and Louis W. Benton
Bill and Kay Jones Charitable Giving Account
F. Watt Bishop
Boeing Aerospace Co.
Boeing c/o YourCause LLC
Ann Bowden and Robert C. Galloway
R. Brady Bramlett
Benjamin C. Branson
Pam Breland
Mary M. and Edward B. Brinson
Laura E. Diven-Brown and Robert D. Brown
Cynthia M. and William F. Brown
Butler Snow LLP
Rebecca T. and Paul D. Cade
Jeannie M. and Allan Campbell
Joy and Don B. Cannada
Fred Caraway
Kathleen I. and Paul Castellanos
Charities Aid Foundation of America
c/o Cybergrants LLC
Mary and Michael Cline
Nannette H. and Carl C. Comer
E. Lee Corban
Camille C. Couey
Susan M. and Tyler D. Craft
Rachel A. Cramer
Stacie S. and William L. Crim Jr.
Jennifer and James M. Cross
Betsy A. Crosswhite
Kathryn S. and John S. Crumrine
Shelly Dahl
Charlotte G. Dailey
Leah A. Davis
Savannah S. Day
Lindsay DeHaas
Brian J. Delburn
Toni and Malin Edwards
Eli Lilly & Co.
Eli Lilly & Co. Foundation
Jenzy K. Wunder and Michael B. Eppes
Rebecca Farrell
Caroline G. and E. Lance Felker
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Catherine C. and Lester L. Field Jr.
Reilly Fitzpatrick
Milton O. Fletcher
Terri and Ramie W. Ford
Friends & Family of Benson Reed Ingram
Suzanne and Jason Gardiner
Eileen and L.B. Gatewood
Peggy E. and Rowland H. Geddie III
Stephen E. Gent
Gabe Gentry
Eugene B. Gifford Jr.
Tiffany S. and R. Todd Gililland
Michalee E. and James B. Gore
Cheryl and Michael Grant
Claire E. Graves
Rebecca Hodges and J. Lane Greenlee
Janice M. and Chellis O. Gregory
Shannon M. and Scott S. Haltom
Laura S. and Mark A. Hamm
Kelley J. and Paul D. Hankins
Rubye D. Harden

Diane D. and George T. Hardin
David Hardy
Dorothy S. and Charles B. Hargrove
Patrice J. and Mark E. Harmon
Harriet Bryan and J. DeWain Harris
Dena L. Harrison
Marietta and Jim Haywood
Janelle H. Hederman
Susan L. and Daniel J. Hedglin
Sara H. Henderson
Mamie and Jet Hollingsworth
Stacey M. Holmes
Hope Mountain Counseling
Claire E. Hubacek
Sandra and Brian Hughes
Vivian Ibrahim and Oliver J. Dinius
Reed B. Ingram
Julia R. James
Abby O. Jennings
Rebecca K. and Bret D. Johns
Beverly B. and Arthur Johnston III
Katharine M. Jones
Nakiyah T. Jordan
Whitney Karber
Gloria Kellum
Marty H. and James M. Kelly
Richard E. Kennedy
Deanna N. and Christopher E. Kieffer
Nelson S. and Martin A. Kilpatrick Jr.
Steven B. King
Carolyn S. and Gabriel J. LaBonia
Melissa K. and John P. LaCour
Maura W. and Alexander B. Langhart
Robert C. Lewis
R. Ashford Little II
Marcia Logan and C.D. Goodgame
Malerie V. Lovejoy
Suzanne Lovejoy
Karen W. and Eugene O. Lukienko
Wendy Miller-Lynch and Jeffrey Lynch
Lauren Magee
Mary L. and Dustin L. Markle
Jennifer A. and Joaquin E. Martinez
Juliette F. Marting
Velia A. Mayer
McCarty Architects PA
Robyn McFadden
Christine B. and Billy A. McLeod Jr.
Bradley D. McPeak
Natalia L. and John P. McWilliams
Laura H. and Andrew W. Means
Alexis B. Miller

Lauren F. Milligan
Alysson L. Mills
Mississippi Common Fund Trust
Abigail Moeller
Katherine C. Moody
Laurie and Timothy O. Mooney
Rabria M. Moore
Sharon F. and Rodney R. Moore
Angeline M. Morgan
Shaquinta and Markeeva A. Morgan
Judith H. Morrel
Katherine S. and John C. Morrison
Lynda H. and Eugene R. Morse
Alexandra R. and Christopher M. Mossing
Kathleen Mroczka
Nicole M. and Bryan J. Murphy
Joshua L. Norris
Kent Oliver
Helen G. Overstreet
Ted M. Ownby
Mariel A. Parman
Jennifer L. and Jonathan M. Parsons
J. Michael Parsons
Terri Parsons
Libbie K. and Kevin M. Patterson
Reagan E. Paulus
Samantha M. and Will Pepper
Emily T. and Christopher L. Peters
Linda O. and Louis S. Peters
Kiana and Dennis Pickens Jr.
Janet J. and George Pilko
Elizabeth A. Pitts
Julianne and Daniel Popple
Henry W. Potter
J. Todd Potter
Mary M. and Robert E. Powers
Audrey E. and Thomas J. Pritchard III
Peyton D. Prospere
Mary-Eileen Rankin
Adhithya Ravishankar
Lyncyn Louise R. Reliquias
Ann C. Rester
Audra S. and Thomas E. Rester Jr.
William L. Rice
Nina L. Rifkind and Marc H. Lerner
Megan S. and Joseph M. Roan
Melanie A. and William A. Roper Jr.
Brandon S. Russell
Kaylan Russell
Claire and Ronald J. Rychlak
Cheryl L. and David Rydeen
John P. Samonds

Amy G. and William R. Sanderson
Claire E. Sanderson
Jennifer S. and Archie L. Schrotenboer
Schwab Charitable Fund
Ethel Young Scurlock and Carlo Scurlock
Lika and Kelly Shafer
Susan E. and Jon M. Sills
Gurpreet Singh
Melany C. Neilson and Frederick Slabach
Catherine C. and Taylor M. Sledge Jr.
Gabriella and Marshall St. Amant
Ysabella C. St. Amant
Stamps Family Charitable Foundation
Yujing Z. and Timothy C. Steenwyk
Steven B. King Charitable Fund
Dora Frances Sullivan-González
Maribel and Douglass Sullivan-González
Arianna N. Swensen
Dawn H. and James F. Taylor III
Kimberly N. and Randy D. Taylor
The Blackbaud Giving Fund c/o YourCause
The Elsevier Foundation c/o Cybergrants
The Merck Foundation
Patricia Thompson
Thomas Tobin
Jessica N. Tran
Mary K. and Robert L. Tri
J. Irene and Robert E. Tyson Jr.
Koby Van
Ralph B. Vance Sr.

Neville S. Vanderburg
Caroline A. and Marc E. Walker
Arielle D. Wallace
Diane and Jeffery Wallace
Phillip C. Waller
Isabella and Jeffrey R. Watt
Elizabeth J. Weathersby
Melody S. and John H. Webb
Eric Welch
Lindsay W. Wencel
Connie Whitley
Anne J. Wilbourne
Laura Williams
LeaAnne and Al L. Williams
Mary V. Williams
Stephanie R. and Ryan J. Williams
W. MyKayla Williamson
Nancy O. and Zebulon M. Winstead
Katie E. Wisdom
Bethany A. Wood and William Leidt
Blair N. Wortsmith
Gingia and W. Swan Yerger
John T. York
Debra B. Young
Miriam E. Abadie and Anthony K. Yuen

Is your name missing, or would you prefer your name listed in a different way? Contact Brady Bramlett, associate director of development, at bradyb@olemiss.edu.

I/We will support the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College with a gift of $ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____ Email _____

Phone_____

❑ My monthly pledge will be fulfilled as indicated:

Payment Schedule*

Monthly $ _____ Beginning _____ | Quarterly $ _____ Beginning_____ | Yearly $ _____ Beginning _____

❑ My one-time payment is enclosed.

Payment Method:

❑ Check enclosed Bill my: ❑ MasterCard ❑ Visa

Card number _____ _____ Exp. date _____ Name on card _____

One-time Donation/Monthly Pledge designation: Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

Signature _____ Date _____

*Please complete this section exactly as you wish your payments to be scheduled by the Foundation office.

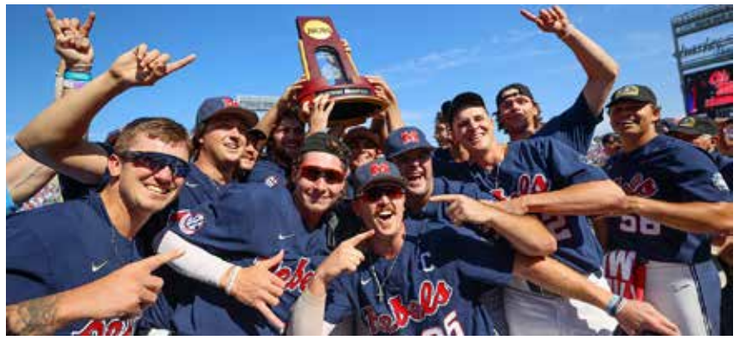
Please make checks payable to UM Foundation, then detach and return to:

The University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655

Contributions may also be made online at: ***honors.olemiss.edu/invest***

Appeal code: 02374

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS



06
22

Congratulations to **Coach Mike Bianco** and the Ole Miss men's baseball team who made history when they swept the Oklahoma Sooners to win the 2022 NCAA Men's College World Series in Omaha. Among the champions is honors student and Flowood native **Mason Nichols** (SMBHC 25), who pitched during the first of two championship games. After winning in Omaha, Nichols pitched for Team USA, where he finished with four strikeouts and allowed only one hit and one walk. A year before becoming a national champion, Nichols pitched Jackson Prep to the state championship. During his first year in the Honors College, Nichols earned 21 honors hours and maintained a 4.0 GPA. Nichols is the son of Kimberly and Michael Nichols. (Photo by Josh McCoy)

07
22

Associate professor of philosophy **Timothy Yenter** has been named associate dean for capstone at the Honors College. Yenter served as interim associate dean for six months before being selected for the permanent role. Yenter received his B.A. in philosophy and history from Bethel University (Minnesota), and his Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University. He has taught at the University of Mississippi since 2012. His research focuses on underrepresented figures in 17th- and 18th-century European philosophy, such as Anne Conway, Samuel Clarke and Mary Astell. He also publishes on issues at the intersection of philosophy and media studies. His teaching models collaborative approaches to research and learning, encouraging students to develop and pursue their own questions about the world around them. As associate dean for capstone, Yenter coordinates and directs the capstone experience as students prepare to research, write and defend their honors theses. He advises students, works with department chairs and deans, and coordinates expectations and best practices with honors thesis advisers. Yenter is the 2022 Howell Family Outstanding Teacher of the Year for the College of Liberal Arts. (Photo by Robert Jordan)

60 Sorority Circle
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677
662-915-7294
honors.olemiss.edu

@UMHOCO

Sally McDonnell Barksdale
Honors College
60 Sorority Circle
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677

THE UNIVERSITY of MISSISSIPPI

SALLY MCDONNELL BARKSDALE HONORS COLLEGE

25th ANNIVERSARY

'Stockholm.' 2017,
10" x 10"
Acrylic and ink on paper
by Neely Mullen