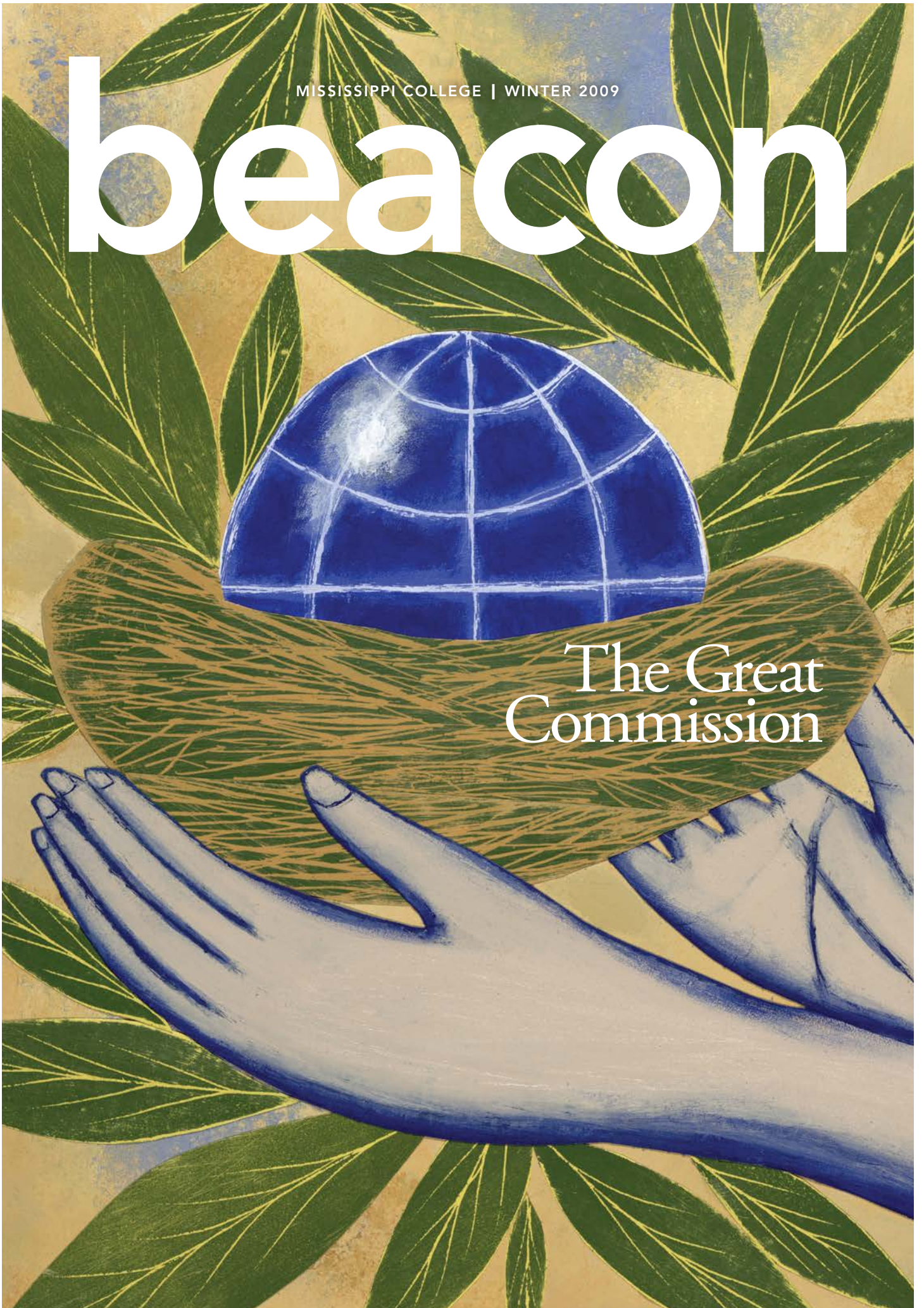


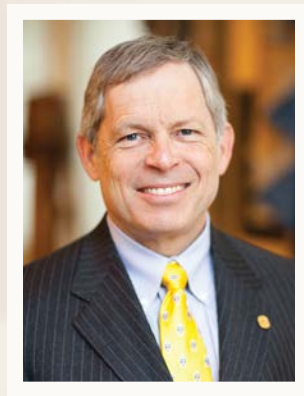
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE | WINTER 2009

# beacon

The Great  
Commission



# beacon



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

LEE GARDNER ROYCE

**H**er career in mission work has led Kay Cassibry '80 to more than 15 countries worldwide. When Kay returned to campus this fall to receive the Order of the Golden Arrow Award, she mentioned that in almost every country she has visited, she has run into someone from Mississippi College who was there for the specific purpose of sharing the Good News.

This issue of the *Beacon* highlights the Great Commission, Jesus' instruction to His followers to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). As a Christian university, Mississippi College sees the Great Commission as part of our mission. But the Great Commission is more than just a duty to fulfill; it is an honor bestowed upon us by Christ. After all, God could have used trumpeting angels, awesome miracles, or skywriting to tell people how to find salvation. Instead, he chose redeemed sinners to deliver the most important message mankind will ever hear.

These pages will introduce you to a few of the many MC students, alumni, faculty members, and friends who are living the Great Commission. From Arthur Blessitt, who was inspired to carry a cross to every nation of the world, to Professor Beth Stapleton, who sees the MC campus as her mission field, their stories prove there is no corner of the world that does not need Jesus.

I hope this issue of the *Beacon* will inspire each of us to ask ourselves where Jesus would have us go, and whom we can share the Good News with today.

*Lee Royce*

## BY THE BEACON'S LIGHT

*"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" – Matthew 28:18-20*

The Great Commission was Jesus' last recorded personal instruction to His disciples, a directive to share the Good News of salvation with people around the world. Of course, the Great Commission didn't end with the original 12. Instead, it is a never-ending call from Jesus to all His followers through the generations.

In these pages, you'll meet people who have followed Christ's call to "make disciples of all the nations." Some have made dramatic sacrifices and traveled to exotic locales, while others have taken quiet action closer to home. But all of their stories share a common thread. As they have fulfilled the Great Commission and worked to share Christ with others, they themselves have been drawn closer to Him, and have experienced first-hand the promise Jesus made at the close of His instruction to the disciples those many centuries ago.

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."



*On the Cover:* Mississippi College nurtures believers in their faith, preparing them to go forth and make disciples of all the nations.



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*Beacon*  
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EDITOR  
Tracy M. Harrison '91, '94

ASSISTANT EDITOR  
Andy Kanengiser

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR  
Marlo Kirkpatrick

CLASS NOTES  
Tracy May  
Amy Rowan '85

DESIGNER  
Alecia Porch

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Robby Followell '07

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ALONG COLLEGE STREET

## Advancing *On* Opportunities

MC HOSTS THE MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

OCTOBER 4-6, MC WELCOMED LEADERS FROM MISSISSIPPI'S public colleges and universities and community colleges to Clinton as the host of the 76th annual conference of the Mississippi Association of Colleges and Universities.

Guests enjoyed a Sunday evening welcome reception at gracious Providence Hill Farm, home of the MC equestrian team, before getting down to business Monday morning. Themed "Advancing on Opportunities," the conference included sessions on such timely topics as campus health concerns in the wake of the swine flu outbreak and recruiting and retaining students in a challenging economy.

Noted guest speakers included Belle S. Wheelan, presi-

dent of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Bob Shireman, the deputy undersecretary for the U.S. Department of Education; and Corky Palmer, former head baseball coach at the University of Southern Mississippi.

"The conference provided an opportunity for leaders in higher education to exchange ideas with one another," said MC President Lee Royce, who served as the president of the organization's board of directors in 2008-2009. "It was also a terrific opportunity to welcome visitors from all over Mississippi to our campus, and to share the vision of Mississippi College with our colleagues in higher education statewide."

Above: MC hosted a reception for conference guests at gracious Providence Hill Farm.



Photo by Jay Thomas

## A Slam Dunk for Brian Anderson

MC'S SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM DIRECTOR SCORES STATEWIDE HONORS

BRIAN ANDERSON IS SCORING BIG NOT ONLY AS AN ACADEMIC leader at Mississippi College, but also as a mentor for young people. The director of MC's social work program and a former Tougaloo College basketball star, Anderson serves as a volunteer coach for the Callaway High School Chargers, Mississippi's defending 4-A boys basketball champions.

Anderson's efforts in the classroom, on the court, and in the community were recognized last October when he received the Mississippi Social Work Educator of the Year Award. The award was presented at the 38th annual Alabama/Mississippi Social Work Education Conference held at Jackson State University. An audience of more than 200 looked on as Anderson was recognized for his scholarly activity, community leadership, and service as a role model for social work students.

Earlier this year, Anderson received the Invisible Giant award from the Jackson-based Mary S. Nelums Scholarship Foundation. The annual award, named in honor of a retired Jackson State University social work professor, is presented to individuals who work behind the scenes to make life

better in their communities.

"This award is just another deserved acknowledgement of the tireless efforts Dr. Anderson expends each day in his many services to children, youth, and young adults in this community," said Gary Mayfield, dean of the MC School of Humanities and Social Sciences. "He is an inspiring role model for all of us who know him."

A graduate of Tougaloo College with a master's degree from Louisiana State University, Anderson holds a doctorate in social work from Jackson State University. He joined the MC social work faculty in 2006. This fall, the energetic Anderson is back on the court guiding the Callaway Chargers and back in the classroom guiding MC social work students who seek to follow in his footsteps.

"God is to be given all of the glory for this. I've been blessed to be in a position of achievement through philanthropic contributions," Anderson says. "My goals for next year are to continue building on my current involvements and make every effort to be a positive influence on the lives of others."

**STAR 93.5**  
Mississippi College's own Christian radio station is now streaming live online. Tune in at:  
[www.star93fm.com](http://www.star93fm.com)



## MC Welcomes Steve Forbes

STEVE FORBES, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *Forbes* MAGAZINE, CEO of Forbes Media, and one of America's most opinionated business leaders, will headline Mississippi College's annual spring scholarship banquet on March 29, 2010.

A regular contributor to Fox News and a columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, Forbes is known for his outspoken opinions on everything from the healthcare debate to the nation's leadership to the economy.

The grandson of B.C. Forbes, founder of *Forbes* magazine, and the son of Malcolm Forbes, who also served as the magazine's publisher, Steve Forbes is now the architect of a must-read publication with a circulation of more than 900,000. *Forbes*, *Forbes Asia*, and the company's ten licensee editions together reach a worldwide audience of 5.5 million readers. In recent months, Steve Forbes has written on such diverse topics as ideas for acquiring more donor organs, America's weak dollar, a look at the life of late U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy, and the economic legacy of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

A 1970 graduate of Princeton University, Forbes founded his first magazine, *Business Today*, on the Princeton campus. In 1985, President Ronald Reagan named Forbes chairman of the bi-partisan Board for International Broadcasting. In that position, Forbes directed the operations of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. He was reappointed to the post by President George H.W. Bush and served until 1993. Forbes' 1996 and 2000 bids for the U.S. Presidency were marked by his popular proposal for a flat income tax.

More than 500 members of the MC community are expected to attend the 2010 scholarship banquet, which is a key component of the "Growing the Vision" campaign to raise support for scholarships, academic programs, the MC endowment, and capital improvements. Appearances by Karl Rove and Bob Dole at the 2009 and 2008 banquets raised more than \$422,000 in scholarship funds for Mississippi College.

"Mississippi College is honored to welcome Steve Forbes to our 2010 scholarship banquet," said MC President Lee Royce. "Readers enjoy the magazine he directs, *Forbes*, not only because it is informative, but also because it is engaging. Steve Forbes' comments on the healthcare debate, taxes, and other issues of vital concern to millions of Americans are sure to be as entertaining as they are timely."

### SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Mississippi College offers several sponsorship opportunities through which you can meet Steve Forbes and help support the "Growing the Vision" campaign. Sponsorships begin at \$1,000. Individual tickets to the scholarship banquet are \$125 per person. For more information, please contact Amy Rowan at 601.925.3257 or rowan@mc.edu.



## Norris Named to Top 50

*The Mississippi Business Journal* recognized MC Graduate School Dean Debbie Norris '79 in its round up of Mississippi's Top 50 Leading Business Women. The *Business Journal* hon-

ored Norris and 49 other female business leaders from around the state with a reception at the Governor's Mansion and a ceremony at Hinds Community College's Eagle Ridge Conference Center.

As dean, Norris oversees more than 40 graduate programs, as well as wearing a second hat as vice president of planning and assessment. Norris coordinates MC's strategic planning and is the go-to person on campus when the university tackles reaccreditation. A successful administrator and professor, Norris teaches business administration communications classes, including online classes, and has also been key to MC's student retention efforts. Always on the move, Norris is a frequent flier who has escorted MC student groups to Italy and England.

The entire MC family will have its collective fingers crossed as Norris competes on January 14, 2010 for the honor of being named Mississippi Business Woman of the Year.

Norris told the *Mississippi Business Journal* that her success is due to her parents, who "grounded me in good daily work habits and a strong relationship with God."



## Economics Made Explicable

THE NEWS THESE DAYS IS ALL ABOUT the economy, but how well do people really understand the complexities of the economic landscape?

A new center housed at the Mississippi College School of Business is giving teachers and students a better understanding of America's economy and what it means to them. MC's Center for Economic Education and Development opened its doors in July 2009 with an inaugural workshop for Clinton High School teachers. In October, the center hosted a second workshop to further enhance classroom skills for economics educators.

MC partnered with the Jackson-based Mississippi Council for Economic Education to create the center; the Clinton office of Bancorp South helped provide funding for the initial teacher workshops.

"The Center for Economic Education and Development is helping us to educate our students on managing their personal finances," said Clinton Public Schools Superintendent Phil Burchfield. "This is another example of MC partnering with the Clinton public schools to benefit the community."

MC School of Business alumnus Chris Smith teaches accounting and finance classes at his alma mater and serves as the center's director.

"The center will provide teachers and students with greater insights into an economic system that's faced major challenges over the past year and will continue to do so into 2010," Smith says. "We're also working to promote an enhanced understanding of economics among working adults. The economy is a topic that touches all of us. The better we understand it, the better decisions we can make."

Above: Chris Smith



## Provine Chapel Celebrates 150 Years

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S VENERABLE PROVINE CHAPEL celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2009. This gracious building, once proclaimed by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright as "one of the finest pieces of antebellum architecture still standing in America," played a lead role in the storied history of Mississippi College and continues to be a focal point for the university today.

The 1855 report of the Mississippi College trustees to the Baptist Convention noted, "At this time, we are feeling very much the need of a large chapel, a church building." Shortly afterward the college began a building fund, supported in part by Clinton Baptist Church, which was promised use of the chapel so long as the church agreed not to "fasten anything to the walls." Construction on the structure, known simply as "the Chapel," began in 1859.

The Chapel was completed in 1861, but there was little time to enjoy the stately structure before the college's faculty and students marched away to fight in the Civil War. Rather than worship services, the Chapel played host to Union forces, who used the upstairs rooms as a hospital for wounded soldiers under the command of General Ulysses S. Grant; the ground floor was used as a stable for Grant's horses.

At the war's end, faculty and students returning to campus were greeted by the melody of the Chapel's bell. For many years, the Chapel was the largest and by far the most impressive structure on campus. The building provided classrooms and an auditorium for worship services and public functions, and was the site for the worship services of Clinton Baptist Church until 1923.

In 1910, the belfry was removed for repairs. When the

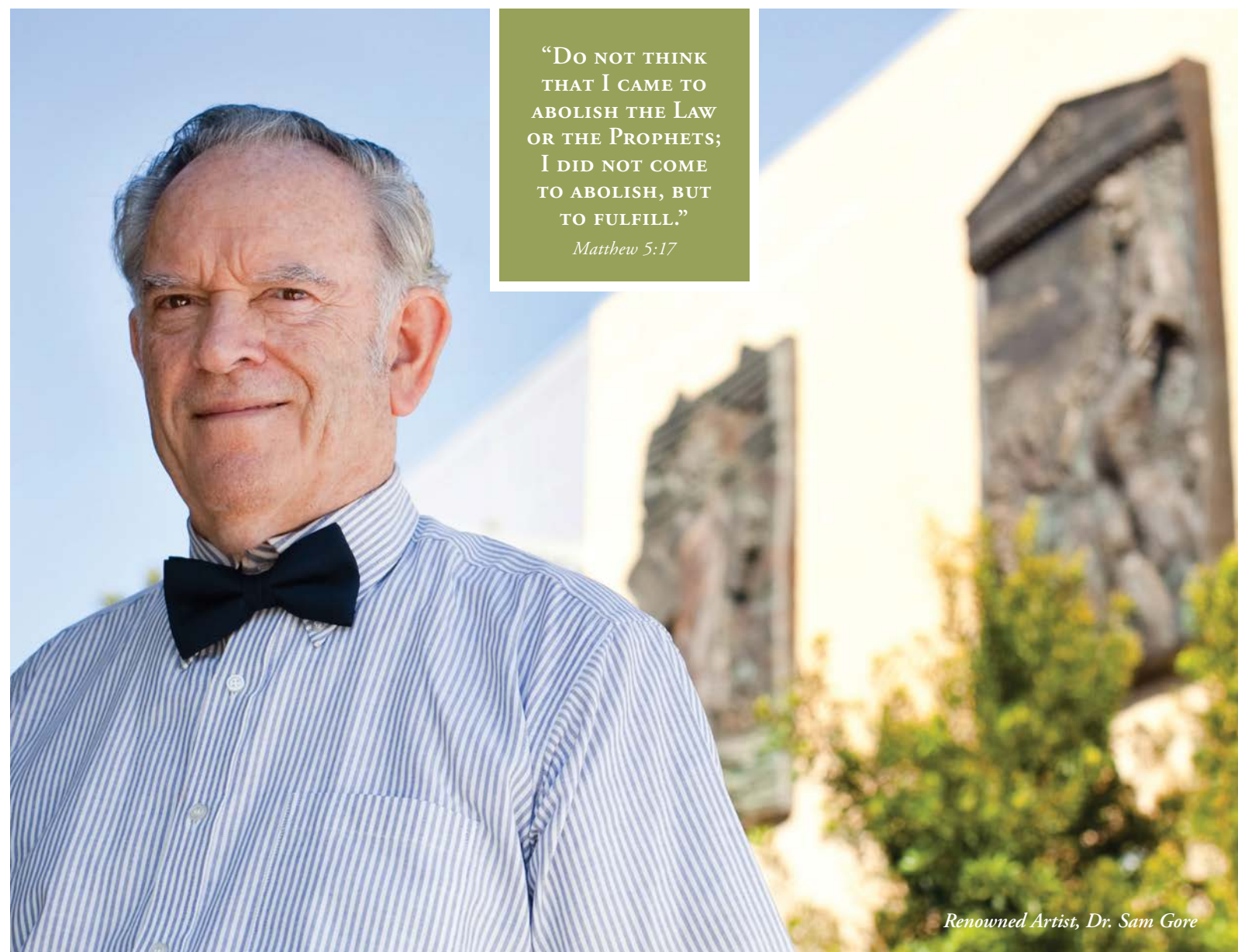
MC administration decided the building looked better without it, the chapel bell was mounted on a temporary stand until 1923, when it was relocated to its current brick bell tower. Other enhancements made to the Chapel over the years included replacing the kerosene-powered chandeliers and fireplaces with modern lighting and heating and air conditioning systems, the addition of a pipe organ, and a complete floor-to-ceiling restoration in 1962. The building was officially christened "Provine Chapel" in 1968 in recognition of one of MC's early leaders, President J. W. Provine, who joined the MC faculty as a professor of natural science in 1893 and went on to serve as president from 1896-98. In 1988 the auditorium was named "Spell" in honor of Dr. Howard Spell's distinguished service as a professor of Bible and Spanish and as dean of Mississippi College from 1947-1969.

Today, Provine Chapel houses classrooms for the department of Christian studies and philosophy and hosts concerts, weddings, and special events. The balcony still houses a few of the chapel's original cypress pews, carved with the initials of long-ago students. While the building has adapted to the changing times and the changing needs of the university, Provine Chapel remains a tangible link to the past and to the rich sense of tradition found at Mississippi College.

In celebration of 150 years as an MC focal point, Provine Chapel will host special concert events this spring. The 150th anniversary theme is "O God, Our Help in Ages Past, Our Hope for Years to Come," a fitting concept for this graceful structure that is intrinsically linked with the university's past, present and future.

### THE PROVINE 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SERIES

FEBRUARY 19, 2010 • VOCESS CONCERT • 7:30 P.M. • The internationally award winning, British a cappella group VOCESS performs the jazz, classical, contemporary pop, and spiritual arrangements that have made the octet a sensation in Europe. Tickets: \$20 for students, \$10 for adults; call 601.925.3440 / APRIL 6, 2010 • HYMN FESTIVAL • 7:30 P.M. • The MC Singers present a joyful celebration of God's love and deliverance through this inspirational concert based on the theme "O God, Our Help in Ages Past, Our Hope for Years to Come." Admission: Free.



"DO NOT THINK THAT I CAME TO ABOLISH THE LAW OR THE PROPHETS; I DID NOT COME TO ABOLISH, BUT TO FULFILL."

Matthew 5:17

Renowned Artist, Dr. Sam Gore

## Blessed is the MC Law Campus

The law school unveils "Christ: the Fulfillment of the Law"

"CHRIST: THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW," THE LATEST WORK by renowned sculptor and MC alumnus Samuel Gore, was installed on the downtown campus of the Mississippi College School of Law last summer. The 12-foot, 3,000-pound bronze work depicts Jesus delivering the Sermon on the Mount. "Christ: the Fulfillment of the Law" is a companion piece to another Gore sculpture displayed at MC School of Law, "Moses the Lawgiver," which captures Moses with the Ten Commandments.

"Visitors from around the United States and as far away as Russia have come by our campus to view these magnificent works of art," says MC Law Dean Jim Rosenblatt. "We've also installed lighting so the sculptures may be

viewed at night. The effect is dramatic and inspiring."

"Christ" is the largest sculpture of Gore's distinguished career, which spans more than a half-century. A graduate of MC and the former chairman of the MC art department, Gore worked on "Christ" for more than eight months. The artist described the sculpture as "a visual drama with a cast of Jesus, His disciples, and several thousand broken-spirited, disconsolate and mournful people subjected to harsh conditions under Roman occupation."

The title of the piece comes from Matthew 5:17, in which Jesus says, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."

**COACH OF THE YEAR**

Head Football Coach Norman Joseph was named the 2009 Division III Region 3 Coach of the Year. Coach Joseph was also recognized earlier this year as the ASC Coach of the Year.



Photo by Chris Brooks



## Choctaws Capture 2009 ASC Football Championship

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S FOOTBALL TEAM FINISHED THE 2009 REGULAR SEASON ON A HIGH NOTE BY CAPTURING THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP. The Choctaws advanced to the NCAA Division III playoffs, falling to the Wesley College Wolverines in the second round. It was the Choctaws' first post-season football appearance since 1991.

Led by star quarterback Adam Shaffer and standout running back Steven Knight, the Choctaws kicked off the season with a dramatic overtime win over rival Millsaps in the annual Backyard Brawl. The heart-pounding excitement continued with a 17-14 triumph over No. 3-rated

Mary Hardin-Baylor and a first round playoff win against Huntington College.

Shaffer threw 29 touchdown passes during the regular season and Knight was a consistent workhorse on the ground, leading the conference with 1,181 rushing yards. The Choctaws finished the regular season 8-2. In late November, MC was ranked No. 19 in the D3Football.com poll.

Adding to the excitement, this season also saw the return of the MC Choctaws Marching Band on the playing field for half-time shows. With so much to build on, MC fans are already looking forward to the next kickoff in 2010.

### FROM BLUE AND GOLD TO GREEN BAY TO THE BROWNS

The next big play for Jake Allen

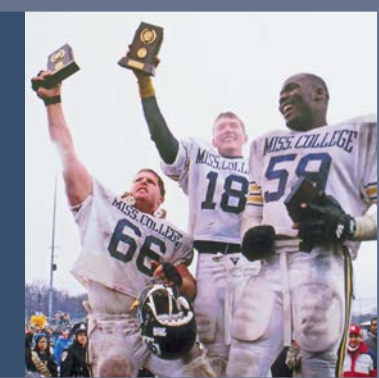
Former Choctaw All-American receiver Jake Allen is the newest member of the NFL's Cleveland Browns. Allen signed with the Browns on November 18, just days after he was waived from the Green Bay Packers' roster. He spent the 2008 season on the Packers' eight-man practice squad before being elevated to the Packers' regular roster in late October of 2009. As a Choctaw from 2005-07, Allen caught 152 passes for 2,867 yards; he still holds the MC record for career touchdown receptions at 26. A 2-11 record in early December puts the Browns in the AFC North cellar, but also opens more opportunities for Allen to become a playmaker when he takes the field as No. 85. Go Browns!

### ASC CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONS

The men's cross-country team won their seventh American Southwest Conference championship in 2009, their first conference championship since 2004. Freshman Tino Gonzalez received top honors with a time of 28:02:32.

**11+1**

20 YEARS LATER, IT'S STILL THE *Magic* FORMULA



ONE OF THE GREATEST SPORTS TEAMS IN MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE HISTORY IS THE CHOCTAWS FOOTBALL TEAM OF 1989, WHICH WON THE NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME. It took a few miraculous upsets and more than a little grit to get there, but the Choctaws lined up against Jacksonville State University in the championship, edging the Alabama school 3-0 on a snowy field in December 1989.

Before they made it to the championship game, MC had to face number one-ranked Texas A&I in the first round of the playoffs. Today, Ron Frank is a successful attorney in Houston, Texas, but on that frigid day in 1989, he was a Choctaw wide receiver playing what he describes as "a real life version of *Facing the Giants*" and charged with leading the Choctaws' pre-game devotional.

"That devotional focused on the story of Gideon, and how God forced Gideon's army to fight in a battle that would

have been impossible for them to win on their own," Frank recalls. "Yet, supernaturally, they won the battle. The moral of the story was that an army plus one – God – can beat any opponent."

After their big win over Texas A&I, the Choctaw team wore shirts printed with the message "11 + 1" under their uniforms as they continued their march to the Division II National Championship game.

Reunited on campus for the 2009 MC homecoming celebration, Frank and members of his team shared memories from that winning season. And while even the most fervent Choctaw fans might question whether God really cares about the outcome of a football game, the championship season of 1989 stands as a reminder that any army, any team – in fact, anyone anywhere – *plus God* can defeat any opponent.

Above: MC kicks the winning field goal in the 1989 championship game. Photos by Rick Guy.



Brett Barnhill, Hunter Clark, Stirling Foxworth, and Allison Hunter are typical college students, wise-cracking with one another as they hang out between classes on the MC campus. But from January to May of 2009, the four friends shared a life-changing, soul-saving adventure a world away in the African bush.

Brett, Hunter, Stirling, and Allison spent five months in Botswana working with Hands-On, a program of the International Mission Board (IMB) that connects college students with mission programs worldwide. The four decided to join Hands-On after they studied under Dr. Robert Fortenberry, a professor in the MC communications department and MC's missionary-in-residence. Dr. Fortenberry and his wife, Margaret, have served as IMB missionaries in Botswana since 1994. During a temporary stay in America from 2007-09, Dr. Fortenberry taught Brett, Hunter, Stirling, and Allison. Inspired by stories of the Fortenberrys' work, the four students decided to accompany the couple back to Botswana as a Hands-On Africa mission team.

The students were not strangers to international missions. Brett Barnhill had participated in trips to Ecuador and the Ukraine, Stirling Foxworth had done mission work in South Africa and Mexico, Allison Hunter had served in Brazil, and Hunter Clark had been a part of missions work in Honduras. But the Botswana trip would be different than anything they had ever experienced.

"It was a longer trip – five months compared to a couple of weeks – and it was more about living with the people and becoming a part of their culture," Hunter says. "Other mission trips I'd been on were about Bible studies and construction projects, which were awesome and glorified the Lord. But in Africa, we focused on building relationships rather than completing a project."

The team made regular trips from their base at the Fortenberrys' home in the city of Lobaste, Botswana, into the African bush. Accompanied by Dr. and Mrs. Fortenberry, the students spent two- to three-week stints serving in the village of Kang, where they lived in a small house, often sharing their cramped quarters with other missionaries and their "yard" with donkeys, cows, and chickens. The house in Kang had running water (cold only) but no furniture. The students slept on mats and cooked outside over an open fire. But what the village lacked in creature comforts, it made up for in warm welcomes from the residents.

"We think Mississippi is hospitable, but Botswana blew us out of the water," Hunter says. "The people accepted us

as their own. I can't remember a time when we were not welcomed or received into a home."

Most of the people in Kang are poor by American standards. The educational level, however, is relatively high. Many of the younger people speak English; the team was sometimes able to communicate without a translator. AIDS/HIV is a tremendous problem not only for Kang, but also for all of Botswana. The unofficial statistics for the HIV positive rate run anywhere from 25 to 33 percent depending upon the source of the statistics. Death due to AIDS is an ever-present reality; the number of AIDS orphans is steadily rising.

It was in this often-harsh environment that the four students worked to introduce the idea of salvation through Jesus Christ. Their days of service in Kang included two- to three-hour prayer walks, with the team working its way through the village, praying for each house, the people who lived there, and the very road itself, and distributing Bibles and tracts printed in the residents' native languages. Brett, Hunter, Stirling, and Allison taught in the local schools, conducted Bible studies, played soccer with the village children, visited AIDS orphanages, and organized open showings of the Jesus film, an evangelical tool

that shares the story of salvation. In addition to witnessing to non-believers, the group offered encouragement to new believers and support to a young, growing church.

"Over the years, we have been received quite well here," Dr. Fortenberry says. "The responsiveness to the Gospel has been lower than in some other African countries, but it's still higher than what is normally encountered in an American setting."

As the Hands-On Africa team soon realized, a key to building that responsiveness was forming relationships and putting the idea of "self" aside.

"In Africa, we made a lifestyle change. At home, you go to class, you go to football practice, you hang out with friends – it's very self-oriented," Brett says. "In Africa, you wake up, you have quiet time, you prayer walk, you study the Bible. You are living with people and ministering to people 24/7. The biggest challenge was being able to constantly give, give, give."

#### JUMPING FOR JOY

The Hands-On Africa team found a little time for some purely fun activities while in Africa. The group participated in hunts for warthog and impala; enjoyed a fishing trip on the Chobe, a river immortalized in several movies; and bungee jumped over Victoria Falls, the world's largest waterfall – an experience that Allison Hunter says she told her parents about "after it was over."

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The four MC students forged a close bond with Mme Grace (“Miss Grace”), a Botswanan woman who cooked for them and traveled with them. Mme Grace gave each of the students names in her native language reflective of their actions or personalities. Hunter Clark’s hunting prowess was recognized in the name *Motsumi*, which literally means “hunter.” Stirling Foxworth was christened *Tidymalo*, or “the Quiet One.” Allison Hunter was known as *Umpo*, or “gift,” in recognition of her giving nature. Perhaps the most memorable name went to Brett Barnhill, who was called *Borotho*, which means “bread.” It seems that when Brett introduced himself, many of the natives thought his real name was “Bread Barnhill.”

According to Dr. Fortenberry, maintaining the giving attitude Brett describes is a constant test, even for a seasoned missionary.

“The greatest challenge we face is staying spiritually fresh,” Dr. Fortenberry says. “Ministry is, by its very nature, a calling which involves intensity of emotion and personal expenditure of effort as we seek to help people come to faith in Christ and grow as believers. When we see someone who doesn’t grow as fast as we think they should, or who takes a real tumble in their lifestyle before getting up again and going forward, it can be demoralizing. The only antidote for the constant up and down of daily interaction with new believers is a vital connection to Jesus.”

“The toughest part was keeping a right heart and a right mindset,” Hunter agrees. “It was easy to wake up and not want to walk seven miles a day under a hot sun to tell people about Jesus. It takes having a pure heart, which means a strong quiet time. When I woke up early to spend personal time with the Lord, worshipping Him and having fellowship and communion with Him, my heart and mind were right.”

The team quickly realized that when their hearts and minds were right, the way was paved for deeper relationships, and sometimes, the most unlikely relationships were the ones that brought the greatest rewards. Hunter and Stirling met 22-year-old Kabo while they were playing soccer with the village children.

“He looked very rough and tough and he didn’t talk. I just thought there was no chance to reach him,” Hunter says. “The next day he came back to where we were playing and I kicked the soccer ball to him. He opened up and talked to us, and the very next day, he got saved.”

“The last week we were there, Kabo asked us to go with him to his grandmother’s house,” Stirling says. “Her house was a ‘depot,’ which is their term for a place that runs an open bar inside a home. We walked up and there were all these people there, smoking pot and drinking.”

“These were older people, and you have to understand that in their culture, younger people are not respected by their elders,” Stirling continues. “Kabo began sharing with them and telling them that what they were doing was wrong, that they needed Christ. And all of these older people saw the change in him and they wanted to know how to get that change for themselves. They were hanging on his every word. Hunter and I both cried.”

Allison had a similar experience with a pregnant, 19-year-old woman named Donna. “She was very standoffish at first and didn’t want to have anything to do with us, but she was placed on our hearts. Then one night she saw the Jesus film. She said to me, ‘I guess we’re supposed to carry the cross like that man did,’ and she prayed to receive Christ.”

“I had a heart connection with Donna,” Allison continues. “Apparently, she felt it, too. She named her baby ‘Allison.’”

Many of the people to whom the team witnessed participated in a group baptism service held near the end of the students’ time in Botswana.

“It was so joyous,” Brett says. “Seeing the joy in their hearts when they were baptized was a positive, emotional experience for all of us.”

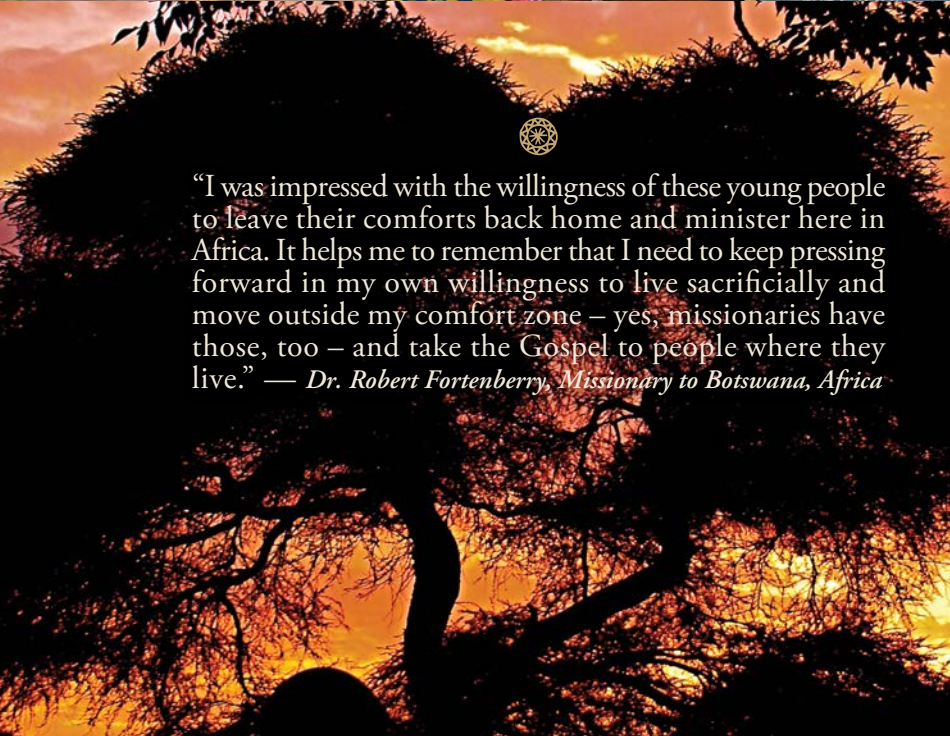
Now back at home in the United States, the four students agree their approach to the Great Commission has been forever altered by their time in Africa.

“Even though I was miles outside my comfort zone there, I realize now that we lived with the people in Africa just like we live with people here,” Allison says. “The difference was being intentional about our relationships.”

“I can’t be complacent anymore,” Stirling agrees. “Seeing Kabo go to his family made me realize he had more guts in one month than I’ve shown in 20 years of believing. If I was doing what I did every day in Africa, why am I not doing it at home? Since we came back, I’m discovering a lot more opportunities to lead and to share because now, I’m seeking out those opportunities.”



**AN ANSWER TO PRAYER** Hunter Clark’s grandmother, Sandra Gunn ’57, is a devoted prayer warrior who keeps a faithful log of her daily conversations with God in her prayer journal. Each year, Mrs. Gunn flips to the same date from the previous year and re-reads her journal entry. On February 20, 2009, Mrs. Gunn re-read her entry from February 20, 2008, and discovered a clear answer to prayer. The entry read: *Lord, this Hands-On program IMB has begun in central and southern Africa sounds so great... I wish all my grandchildren could do something like this. Please plant seeds in their hearts.* As Mrs. Gunn re-read that entry, her grandson, Hunter, was finishing his first month in service with Hands-On in Africa. “I was amazed,” Sandra Gunn says. “But then I thought to myself, why was I so amazed and surprised that God would answer prayers? We shouldn’t be. After all, He is God.” Hunter Clark’s grandparents: Sandra and Dr. Frank Gunn ’57. Dr. Gunn is a retired Baptist minister and a member of the Mississippi College board of trustees.



“I was impressed with the willingness of these young people to leave their comforts back home and minister here in Africa. It helps me to remember that I need to keep pressing forward in my own willingness to live sacrificially and move outside my comfort zone – yes, missionaries have those, too – and take the Gospel to people where they live.” — Dr. Robert Fortenberry, Missionary to Botswana, Africa



1. Allison Hunter poses with the children of Kang, who met the four MC students every day for play time. 2. Hunter Clark shares a high-five with a new friend after a friendly game of soccer. 3. Mme Grace (“Miss Grace”) shares a hug with Brett Barnhill. Mme Grace cooked for the MC students and accompanied them on their travels through Botswana. The students affectionately referred to her as “Botswana Mother.” 4. Stirling Foxworth tells the children good-bye on their last day together in Kang. 5. Dr. Robert Fortenberry and Brett Barnhill baptize 18-year-old Tsofelo, who came to know Jesus during the MC students’ time in Africa.





“I JUST WANT TO GIVE BACK TO GOD A PORTION OF WHAT HE HAS GIVEN ME. I WAS TAUGHT THAT WHEN GOD BLESSES US BEYOND OUR NEEDS, IT’S NOT SO THAT WE CAN LIVE MORE LAVISHLY. IT’S SO THAT WE CAN BLESS OTHERS.”

# CHANGE OF VENUE

LA'VERNE EDNEY'S JOURNEY FROM HIGH-POWERED PARTNER TO EMPOWERING THE LEAST OF THESE

Over the past 16 years, La'Verne Edney has worked her way through law school, earned a coveted clerkship with Judge Leslie Southwick of the Mississippi Court of Appeals, and made partner at Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hughes, PLLC, one of Mississippi's most prestigious law firms.

On September 1, 2009, Edney walked out of Brunini's marbled halls and away from the high profile, high-paying position she had worked so hard to achieve. Today Edney can be found in a small, nondescript office working at a job that pays much less monetarily, but in many other ways, pays much more.

Edney has taken a two-year leave of absence from Brunini – and a substantial pay cut – to serve as general counsel for the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project (MVLP), an organization that matches low-income Mississippians in need of civil legal services with lawyers who are willing to handle their cases pro bono. As general counsel, Edney's focus is recruiting volunteer attorneys for MVLP.

“Having such a powerful Mississippi attorney willing to make this type of sacrifice and to give voice to those who are voiceless speaks volumes,” says Shirley Williams, executive director of MVLP. “Honestly, some days I come to work and I still can't believe she's here.”

“Most people's first reaction is to tell me, ‘I really admire what you're doing,’” Edney says. “The next thing they say is, ‘Why in the world do you want to do it?’” The answer is simple. La'Verne Edney is following a calling.

Growing up in a farming family in the Mississippi Delta, La'Verne Edney was no stranger to doing without. The youngest of Essie Mae and Theodore Ford's 14 children, Edney recalls that she “never felt poor, but always

knew there was no extra money. We certainly didn't splurge on anything.”

What Essie Mae and Theodore Ford did have in abundance were compassion and a desire to serve. When Edney was 10 years old, her parents took in their first foster child. The Fords would eventually foster 11 children.

“My parents were both farmers, but my father was also a Baptist minister,” Edney says. “He and my mother didn't just preach about serving others, they put their words into action.”

If Edney's first two role models were her parents, her third was Ben Matlock, the folksy, fictional TV lawyer played by Andy Griffith.

“I dreamed of being a lawyer like Matlock, but I didn't think of that as something I could actually do,” Edney recalls. “I didn't know any real attorneys and I thought that kind of career was out of my reach.”

Following her graduation from Alcorn State University, Edney accepted a position at Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), but her dream of becoming a lawyer refused to die. After four years at IHL, Edney, by then the mother of a young son, applied to Mississippi College School of Law.

“When I was accepted, I was elated,” Edney recalls. “Then I thought, now I have to make this work.”

Edney quit her job, took out hefty student loans, and dived into three years of juggling motherhood with law school. When her classes ended, Edney would pick up her four-year-old son, E. J., at daycare, then return with him to the MC law library, where both Edneys often stayed into the night.

In addition to her work at MVLP, Edney is active in more than a dozen professional and civic organizations. She serves on the Mississippi College board of trustees and on the building campaign committee at the Mississippi College School of Law. She was the MC Law Young Lawyer of the Year in 2005-06 and was named one of the top businesswomen in Mississippi by the *Mississippi Business Journal*.

“La’Verne no longer surprises me, but I *continue to be impressed* with every new achievement or contribution she makes. Her *decision to leave Brunini* and make *this kind of commitment* is in keeping with the values she has always exhibited. This new direction – *seeking out others willing to volunteer* – will allow La’Verne to *multiply the contributions* she has already been making.” – JUDGE LESLIE SOUTHWICK

### IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY

La’Verne Edney’s sons, Jaylon and E.J., have taken their mother’s example of serving others to heart. Twelve-year-old Jaylon is active in his church. Older brother E.J. has volunteered with youth organizations in Clinton and at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, and tutors children through his church in Oxford. His mother’s example has also influenced E. J. Edney’s choice of careers.

“I want to be a plastic surgeon, but instead of just performing cosmetic surgery, I’d like to do reconstructive surgery for people who need it but can’t afford it on their own,” E. J. says. “I always saw my mother giving without asking for anything in return. I learned from watching her to value the balance between how much money you make and how much fulfillment you get from what you’re doing.”



“I was a quiet little boy, so I didn’t mind sitting in the law library and reading a book, trying to be just like my mom,” E. J. Edney, now a junior at the University of Mississippi, recalls. “Sometimes I fell asleep – law school could be pretty boring for a four year old. I knew my mother was going to school to become a lawyer, but at the time, I think I just thought she was learning how to argue.”

Judge Leslie Southwick met Edney when she served as an extern at the Mississippi Court of Appeals the summer before her final year of law school. Following her graduation from MC law school in 1996, Judge Southwick encouraged Edney to apply for a clerkship.

“It could be that I was concerned about someone else hiring her first, so I made a pre-application contact,” Judge Southwick confesses. “My interview with La’Verne convinced me that the potential I had already seen was a reality. I made her an offer at the end of the interview, which was an unusual practice for me.”

Following her clerkship, Edney practiced privately for nine months, then joined the Brunini firm in 1998. She focused on defending corporate clients involved in medical malpractice, product liability, and general litigation cases, quickly earning a reputation for excellence in her work. In 2004, she was made partner. It was the culmination of a lifelong dream, yet Edney was still searching for something deeper.

“I loved Brunini, but I felt myself growing complacent,” Edney says. “I began praying about doing something

more to help people using my skills as a lawyer.”

In 2008, Edney put together a proposal and received the approval of the firm’s board to begin a family law practice within Brunini. The work was gratifying, but Edney sensed there was still more for her to do.

“Through the family practice I started at Brunini, I saw a lot of people who needed help but couldn’t afford it. To be honest, if I had needed a lawyer, I couldn’t have afforded to hire me,” Edney says. “I didn’t want to just turn those people away. I was still praying that God would show me a way to do more.”

Enter Shirley Williams, the executive director of the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project, who requested a meeting with Edney to discuss the urgent need for volunteer lawyers at MVLP. In that meeting, both women found the answers to their individual prayers.

“Shirley just happened to have the job description for the general counsel position with her when we met,” Edney recalls. “When you pray for something and it falls in your lap, you cannot ignore it. This was a calling. I could not say no.”

“I initially approached La’Verne to ask for volunteer lawyers to partner with MVLP. I must say I never could have seen this coming,” Shirley Williams says. “I was amazed not only by La’Verne’s willingness to join the program, but by the leaders at Brunini who supported the idea.”

The Brunini firm not only agreed to allow Edney a two-year leave to serve with MVLP, but also made a substantial

“*Faith is nourished by uncomfortable trials.* Every roadblock, every tough sell, every mountain, every instance when MVLP lacked the dollars to *fulfill its mission*, and *every closed door* allowed me to exercise *prayer and faith*. Through La’Verne Edney, the substance of things hoped for *came into clear view*. What a blessing to see how it has unfolded.” – SHIRLEY WILLIAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MISSISSIPPI VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

donation to the organization that will help fund the general counsel position.

“Many individual lawyers and firms share their time and skills daily and we’re grateful to each and every one of them,” Williams says. “But this is the first time that a large firm and one of its top lawyers have combined forces to make this type of commitment to MVLP and to access to justice for everyone in this state.”

“Although La’Verne obviously has been a valuable member of our firm, we were willing to make this sacrifice to help meet a critical need and we thought she was the perfect candidate for this role,” says David Kaufman, a member of Brunini who also serves on the firm’s board of directors. “We have the highest confidence that La’Verne will be successful. All one has to do is review her long list of accomplishments to see that she is a leader. Her colleagues at Brunini are very proud of her.”

Her friends and family members are also proud of Edney, but some had a harder time accepting her decision to leave Brunini. Edney’s 87-year-old father sleeps with her certificate to practice law framed above his bed. While he acknowledged that Edney’s late mother would be proud, Theodore Ford did have to ask, “Baby, are you sure this is what you want to do?”

The family’s latest generation also expressed some concerns. Both Edney’s sons, E. J. and his 12-year-old brother, Jaylon, were proud of their mother’s legal career.

“When she made partner at Brunini, I knew that was a big notch on her belt and that it wasn’t easy to give that up,” E. J. Edney says. “But our mother raised us to understand the importance of helping people. It’s like a seesaw – you make less money on one end, but you reach higher because you’re helping people on the other end. Every time I talk to my mother, I try to encourage her and let her know that I believe in her.”

Twelve-year-old Jaylon was a little harder to convince. “When I drove Jaylon by to see my new office, he said, ‘Mama, please tell me this is not where you’re working,’”

Edney recalls with a wry smile. “We had a long talk about sacrificing material things for what’s really important.

“When I was 12, I never would have dreamed I’d be in a position to be having that kind of conversation,” Edney continues. “I never imagined being where I am today, but I know it’s nothing that I’ve done. God put people in my path for a reason – all of the people who pushed me to be where I am – and now He’s putting me in someone else’s path for a reason.”

Edney is navigating that new path with impressive results. Since she joined MVLP on September 1, more than 100 volunteer lawyers have signed on or renewed their commitments to assist with pro bono cases.

“The results were immediate and exactly what I had hoped,” Shirley Williams says. “Over the last few months, lawyers and judges visiting the office have increased 100 percent and interest in the project has increased even more. The outcome of La’Verne’s involvement has already been amazing.”

Edney is methodically working her way through the state bar roll, burning up phone lines and traveling the state with the goal of personally speaking to all 6,700 lawyers in Mississippi over the next two years. Her request is simple: agree to take just one case for free.

“I believe our state’s attorneys will step up if we reach out to them and make them aware of the need,” Edney says. “If they take just one case, they’ll realize it’s not nearly as difficult or time-consuming as they might think and it’s far more rewarding than they imagined.”

It’s little wonder that La’Verne Edney makes a strong case – after all, the sacrifice she’s asking her fellow attorneys to make pales in comparison to her own. When others ask why she’s willing to give up so much, La’Verne Edney has a simple answer.

“I just want to give back to God a portion of what He has given me,” Edney says. “I was taught that when God blesses us beyond our needs, it’s not so that we can live more lavishly. It’s so that we can bless others.”

**30**  
STUDENTS FROM THE  
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
HAVE VOLUNTEERED  
WITH MVLP SINCE  
EDNEY JOINED THE  
ORGANIZATION IN  
SEPTEMBER.

### JOIN THE MISSISSIPPI VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

Lawyers who volunteer with MVLP handle civil cases including divorce, child custody, guardianships, domestic violence, bankruptcies, and landlord/tenant issues. The biggest challenge facing MVLP is a backlog of cases and not enough lawyers. At any given time, 60 cases are waiting for a volunteer lawyer willing to handle them. Each case represents a real person whose life is on hold until help arrives. If you are an attorney or a new law school graduate and you’d like to volunteer with the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project, please contact La’Verne Edney at 601.360.0212 or ledney@mymvlp.net.



SPEAKING  
THEIR

# Language



## Dr. Beth Stapleton knows how to reach her students – in English or in Spanish

*Beep beep!  
Beep beep!*

Professor Beth Stapleton zips around the MC campus on a Roketa scooter, leaving her car parked at home not only to save on gas money, but because the scooter “makes me feel free to smile. It’s that whole ‘born to be wild’ thing.” She still sports the same upbeat attitude, high energy, and razor-sharp wit that earned her recognition as a four-time Class Favorite during her college days at MC, but these days Professor Stapleton is a class favorite among her students, who affectionately refer to her as “Doc.”

Dr. Stapleton juggles chairing the department of modern languages with teaching multiple classes in Spanish and linguistics. But for Stapleton, language is more than just a subject to be taught or verbs to be conjugated. It’s the very essence of being human and the key to connecting with others.

“Language is a part of our humanness. We were created to communicate by nature,” Dr. Stapleton says. “Language leads to relationships, and relationships lead to who we are. Language gets you into another person’s heart, soul, and mind.”

BETH STAPLETON WAS BORN WITH A KNACK FOR GRASPING new languages and an ear for mastering dialects, a God-given talent she describes as being a “linguistic chameleon.” Growing up in Alamo, Georgia, Stapleton’s next-door neighbor was a high school Spanish teacher. Conversing with her neighbor gave Stapleton her first insight into learning a new language.

“It’s much easier to learn a language when it’s personal,” she says, “when you’re sharing a story instead of just reviewing words in a book.”

Stapleton began considering colleges knowing that she wanted to major in Spanish, but unsure where she would pursue that major.

“I walked onto the Mississippi College campus and I knew this was the place for me,” she recalls. “I didn’t know a soul, but God gave me a peace here. I was raised in a Christian home, in a good, safe environment. I was ready to move away from home, but like everyone else, I have a human, sinful nature. Quite honestly, I would’ve been a hot mess at the University of Georgia.”

Stapleton was the polar opposite of a “hot mess” at MC. She was a member of the tennis team, the marching band, multiple honor societies, and the Baptist Student Union, and served as president of the Laguna social tribe. Her senior year Stapleton was selected as Miss Mississippi College and MC Homecoming Queen and was inducted into the MC Hall of Fame.

But perhaps the most important thing Stapleton did as an MC student was spend the summer of her junior year studying abroad. While living in a native family’s home in Segovia, Spain, Stapleton realized the immeasurable value of language as a tool for witnessing to others.

“When I went abroad, something clicked,” she recalls. “I met all of these people I could communicate with, and I realized God had given me this talent for putting language into action.

“You can’t come in and beat people over the head with a cross,” Stapleton continues. “Witnessing is a relational thing. They get to know you, you get to know them, and it evolves from there.”

Stapleton graduated from MC in 1992 still undecided as to how she would use her talent for languages as a career. But while pursuing her master’s degree in Spanish at the University of Mississippi, she served as a teaching assistant and realized she had found her calling. After earning her master’s degree in 1994, Stapleton returned to Georgia, where she spent the next five years teaching Spanish at Taylor County High School.

### BETH STAPLETON HAS GONE TO THE DOGS

Beth Stapleton’s mother, Jeri, is the author of a series of inspirational children’s books about a Boston terrier named Taylor and Taylor’s person, “Mama Beth,” better known in real life as Professor Beth Stapleton. In one of Taylor’s most exciting adventures, the little dog and Mama Beth meet a Spanish-speaking Chihuahua named Chico. For more on the adventures of Taylor and Mama Beth, visit [www.taylorstories.com](http://www.taylorstories.com).

### DID YOU TIP THE BELLMAN?

Beth Stapleton has had more than her share of miscommunications overseas, most involving semantics. During her first trip to Spain, an exhausted Beth made a reference to the bags under her eyes, leaving her host family a bit confused. “What a strange place,” they commented, “to store one’s luggage.”

“The students at that school thought of me as a big sister or a confidential mom. They turned to me for advice about everything – not just their school work,” Stapleton recalls. “I loved working with the students, loved the interaction. And on a deeper level, I felt this certainty that the classroom would be my mission field.”

In 1999, Stapleton left teaching and returned to the classroom as a student, enrolling in Louisiana State University to earn her doctorate. She describes her time at LSU as academically rewarding, but a time of upheaval in her spiritual life.

“I was not at peace during my time there,” Stapleton recalls. “It was a time of realizing that I had to find a way to fit into the world while still maintaining who I was. That time in my life is when I really came to know myself and to trust in God.

“It wasn’t really anything that I was doing – I was not by anyone’s standards a ‘bad girl,’ – it was more what I wasn’t doing,” Stapleton continues. “I realized I needed to get back to who I truly was and to focus on my walk with God. I learned you don’t have to go buck-wild to have a prodigal experience.”

The same day she learned that funding for her teaching assistant position at LSU was being cut, Stapleton received a call inviting her to come back to Mississippi College to teach Spanish. It was a move Stapleton described as “coming home.”



Today Dr. Stapleton uses her skills as a linguistic chameleon not only to teach, but also to open the door to building personal relationships with her students. As Stapleton points out, a language class at any level differs from courses in other subjects because the focus is on conversation. When the class is built on interaction and their grades depend on their ability to communicate, students tend to open up, and as the classes progress, the mood naturally becomes more intimate and the conversations more personal.

### THE *Stapleton* FILE

<b>CAREER</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>BSU</b>	<b>COUNTRIES VISITED</b>
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE: Chair, Department of Modern Languages	LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY Ph.D. in Linguistics	Tennis Team	Argentina
Professor of Spanish and Linguistics	UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI Master of Arts in Spanish	Marching Band	Brazil
Program Director, MC in Spain and MC in Costa Rica	MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Business Administration	Senate	Costa Rica
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY: Teaching Assistant – Spanish	AS A STUDENT AT MC Miss Mississippi College	Mortar Board	France
UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI: Teaching Assistant – Spanish	Homecoming Queen	Alpha Chi	Italy
TAYLOR COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL: Butler, Georgia: Spanish teacher	Hall of Fame	Alpha Mu Gamma	Mexico
	Class Favorite – four years	Alpha Lambda Delta	Puerto Rico
	Freshman Woman of the Year	LANGUAGES SPOKEN	Spain “My second home”
	President of Laguna Social Tribe	English	United Kingdom
		Spanish	
		South Georgia	HOBBIES
		<i>The state, not the country; a dialect that differs from Mississippi’s in many respects. For example, a “purse” in Mississippi speak is a “pocketbook” in South Georgia.</i>	Travel to Spanish-speaking countries and beyond
			Cruising campus on a Roketa scooter
			Quality time with Jack Russell terriers, Dottie and Georgia
			Dreaming of Latin American pop star Ricky Martin

“It’s nothing like a lecture course where the teacher talks and the student takes notes,” Stapleton says. “From the first day of class, we’re conversing with each other. I know these students and as a result, I can usually tell when someone seems ‘off’ in class or is struggling with an issue.”

Dr. Stapleton’s relationship with her students may begin with “¿Cómo se llama usted?” but many of those relationships blossom into friendships, shared prayer requests, and one-on-one counseling sessions covering everything from career advice to family issues to worries about finding Mr. or Miss Right. If she knows it will help a student searching for answers, Dr. Stapleton doesn’t hesitate to share her own prodigal experience and her return to a deeper faith.

“Students scratch the surface to see how much you’ll give, and they’ll discover that I’m willing to give a lot,” Dr. Stapleton says. “That includes sharing my faith. It’s a part of who I am, and at MC, I can be very open with it. This school and its students aren’t just my job and my passion, they’re my mission. Mississippi College is my mission field.”

“Professor Stapleton doesn’t just help with small decisions,” says Carrie Kirk, a senior foreign language/international trade major at MC. “Instead, she asks questions that really mean something and challenge you – questions about your life and your future. Professor Stapleton is not just an incredible teacher, she’s an incredible person.”

While Stapleton takes her calling and her students very seriously, she is anything but solemn in the classroom. She frequently laughs at herself in class, using stories from her adventures and mishaps overseas as educational material.

Malinda Beals met Beth Stapleton nearly a decade ago, when her daughter was one of Stapleton’s students. After meeting Dr. Stapleton, Beals decided to enroll herself, saying, “Beth Stapleton is the reason I came to MC.”

“Learning a language is so personal. It’s all learning by doing, which means talking before you’re really ready to do that,” Beals says. “Beth knows how to put her students at ease. She uses herself to create comedy, she never distances herself from her students, and she doesn’t make you feel foolish. She’s willing to go as far as she needs to to make her students comfortable.”

Prior to her graduation from MC in December 2009, Beals began teaching Spanish at Mt. Salus Christian Academy in Clinton; Beth Stapleton recommended her for the job.

“As a teacher myself now, I know that Beth’s demeanor with her students is something she’s developed over the years of teaching, but it’s also something inherent in her personality,” Beals continues. “I’ve tried to mimic her in my own classroom, but there’s no way that’s possible. Beth Stapleton is one of a kind.”

“My pride likes feedback, but what I like most of all is the peace I have from knowing I’m doing what I was intended to do,” Dr. Stapleton says. “Teaching is part of the fabric of who I am. God created me to teach.”

“It’s been a privilege to be one of Beth’s students and I fully expect to be able to call her in the future if I need advice,” Malinda Beals says. “I have a real relationship with Beth. Whether I need to talk to her about Spanish, about teaching, or about something totally unrelated, I know she’ll always be there for me. Beth Stapleton is the Spanish bomb.”



### A Department on a Mission

MEMBERS OF THE MC modern languages department faculty put their skills to use this summer, participating in missions efforts and humanitarian projects around the world.

Spanish teacher Kathy Ravenhorst traveled to Honduras for a mission trip focused on building homes and schools, providing medical care, and teaching in vacation Bible school.

“I worked as a translator for the vacation Bible school,” Ravenhorst says. “It was a moving experience to use my Spanish language skills so directly to accomplish something so wonderful.”

Other members of the department put their English to use overseas. German and cross-cultural understanding instructor Emily Fokeladeh traveled with fellow members of Northside Baptist Church in Clinton to Macedonia, where she taught English as a second language.

“This is a poor community where few people are gainfully employed and many are Albanian refugees,” Fokeladeh says. “Knowledge of English can open doors for young people and increase the likelihood that they’ll continue their education and improve their lives and the lives of their families.”

Fokeladeh’s church has also contributed funds and books for an English library in the rural farming village of Konjare. The villagers refer to the library as “The Buddy Wagner Library” after Mississippi College’s Buddy Wagner, retired head of the counseling center, who has worked in the village on several occasions.

Ashley Krason, who teaches English as a second language and cross-cultural understanding at MC, spent two weeks last summer in eastern Asia teaching English to migrant children who are not allowed to attend school. On the final day of English camp, Krason had an experience that brought the concept of language as the key to relationships home.

“One of our students with low-level English skills worked very hard to find the following words, which he delivered to my husband and me with tears in his eyes. He said, ‘Before camp, I did not like English very much. Now I really like it.’ The look in his eyes as he spoke those words tattooed my heart.”

Above: Ashley Krason, Emily Fokeladeh, and Kathy Ravenhorst



TAKING  
*up*  
THE  
CROSS

ARTHUR BLESSITT  
AND THE CROSS SEEN 'ROUND  
THE WORLD



*June 22, 1980*

It was midnight in war-torn Beirut, Lebanon, and Arthur Blessitt was sleeping, exhausted from a long day spent carrying a 12-foot, 45-pound wooden cross through bomb-scarred streets and refugee camps. Blessitt was awakened by uniformed men bearing a message.

“Get up. Yasser Arafat would like to see you.”

Two hours later, Blessitt stood face-to-face with the chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization – a hero in the eyes of many, a terrorist in the views of many others. Blessitt was holding a Bible and a small cross. Arafat was wearing a Palestinian head wrap and had a pistol strapped to his hip. The two men stood silently for a moment, regarding one another.

Then Blessitt looked deep into Arafat’s eyes and said, “It’s one fanatic meeting another.”

Arafat extended his arms and hugged Blessitt. The two men exchanged kisses in the traditional Arab fashion, and Arafat spoke.

“You are welcome here.”



**H**is encounter with Yasser Arafat is only one of many memorable events Arthur Blessitt has experienced worldwide over the past four decades. In 1969, Blessitt began his “crosswalk,” a life-consuming mission to carry a wooden cross and the love of Jesus Christ to all the nations of the world.

Blessitt’s journey spanned 315 countries and seven continents. He has walked 38,102 miles – the equivalent of circling the earth one and a half times at the equator. Blessitt has carried the cross through city streets, deserts, jungles, snow and ice, and sandy beaches. He has walked through 52 countries at war, been arrested 24 times, and faced a firing squad.

Blessitt has taken the cross to Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and atheists. He has brought the cross to lands of profound beauty and peace and to countries marked by poverty, strife, and death. Even the closed, communist countries of the world have opened their doors to Blessitt and the cross.

Arthur Blessitt’s journey is the longest in the history of the world, not only in terms of physical miles walked, but perhaps also in terms of spiritual milestones reached.

“The cross has been misunderstood and has been seen as a symbol of judgment. So many people think the cross is against them,” Blessitt says. “The crosswalk is about reinterpreting the cross as a symbol of love. The cross is Jesus saying, ‘I came down here and got involved in this mess called life and died for you because I love you. It’s a message for the world – come to the cross and you will find love.’”

#### FROM COLLEGE STREET TO THE SUNSET STRIP

A student at Mississippi College from 1958–1963, Arthur Blessitt points to MC as the foundation of his outreach, the place where his ministry has its roots.

“The professors and students at MC helped form me in the way of Jesus. I was prepared for the world at this awesome school,” Blessitt says. “I was not a good academic student, but at MC, I learned about life and God and following Jesus. It was here that my heart was moved

to a worldview that was the foundation for me going with the cross and the Good News of Jesus to every country on earth. The seeds sown in me at MC have brought forth fruit in every nation.”

Blessitt can still remember exactly where he was sitting in Swor Auditorium the day a missionary came to campus as a guest speaker. Blessitt confesses that he brought along a textbook, hoping to study through the program. But when the missionary began to speak, his words were life changing. He talked of being imprisoned in China and of seeing his colleagues murdered for sharing the Gospel. But what impressed Blessitt the most were the words the missionary used to close the service: “Jesus is worthy of your best *all the way*.”

◀ **While Blessitt credits Mississippi College with inspiring and preparing him to minister, he confesses to being less than an outstanding student academically. In fact, Blessitt left MC without earning his diploma. It seems the man who traveled to every nation on the planet witnessing for Jesus lacks a foreign language credit.**

“After the service, I didn’t even go to class,” Blessitt continues. “Instead, I went back to my dorm room and I prayed, ‘Jesus, I will give you my best and I will go with you *all the way*.’”

Over the next 40 years, Blessitt would fulfill that pledge in ways he never could have imagined. By the mid-1960s, he was living in Hollywood, California, where he owned a “Jesus coffee house” called “His Place” on the Sunset Strip, next door to a topless club called Whiskey A Go-Go. When the bars and clubs closed for the night, Blessitt welcomed hippies, drug addicts, and prostitutes inside for a cup of coffee and a message about Jesus, an ongoing activity that earned him the nickname “the Minister of Sunset Strip.” The coffee

house décor included a large wooden cross, handmade by Blessitt, hanging on the wall.

“I had never worn a cross or even owned a cross before. But the Lord led me to build that cross and hang it on the wall,” Blessitt says. “Then, at 5:00 a.m. one morning, Jesus spoke to me. He said, ‘Arthur, take the cross off the wall and carry it on foot. Identify my message on the highways and roadsides wherever people are.’”

Blessitt planned to walk with the cross from Hollywood to Washington, D.C. But two weeks before he was to leave, he was diagnosed with a brain aneurism. Doctors warned that any physical strain – including heavy lifting – could cause his death.

#### NAVIGATION SYSTEMS ◀ LOST LUGGAGE ◀ CROSS OVERBOARD

BLESSITT LEFT DECIDING WHICH COUNTRY TO VISIT AT WHAT TIME UP TO GOD. HE LIKENS PLANNING HIS JOURNEY AROUND the world to playing in the cotton fields of Louisiana as a child. “I learned that when I lost my bearings, I should just be still and listen, and Jesus would tell me which way to go. I would hear Him say, ‘Go left, turn right, that’s the right way,’” Blessitt says. “I know now that He was training me to hear His voice. Sometimes on the crosswalk I would see a map or a road and hear Him say, ‘There. Now is the time.’” ◀ The logistics of planning some of those trips would seem to prove that God has a sense of humor. Some destinations – for example, some of the world’s remote island groups – actually took more time to reach by plane or boat than they did to walk across. And when it comes to lost luggage, Arthur Blessitt wins the prize, hands down. The 12-foot long, six-foot wide, 45-pound wooden cross has not only been lost by an airline, but has also gone overboard off a ship in the Philippines.



“AT 5:00 A.M. ONE MORNING, JESUS SPOKE TO ME. HE SAID, ‘ARTHUR, TAKE THE CROSS OFF THE WALL AND CARRY IT ON FOOT. IDENTIFY MY MESSAGE ON THE HIGHWAYS AND ROADSIDES WHEREVER PEOPLE ARE.’”



"I laid in bed and prayed, asking God what I was supposed to do. I didn't hear anything," Blessitt recalls. "Then I realized He wasn't answering because He had *already told me* what I was supposed to do. Circumstances don't alter a calling. I decided I would rather die than not heed His call."

On Christmas Day, 1969, Arthur Blessitt walked onto Sunset Boulevard with the cross, taking the first steps of what would become a worldwide journey.

#### BEARING THE CROSS

"The walk from nation to nation and across continents has put me in touch with people in all their hurts, pain, struggles, dreams, wars, happiness, hunger, greed, generosity, hate, and love," Blessitt says. "Sometimes I feel the 45-pound cross is the lightest weight I bear. I go with the cross, Jesus, and a love for people."

Those people have included throngs of "ordinary" men, women, and children Blessitt has witnessed to in every corner of the planet, as well as political and religious leaders who have granted Blessitt an audience where few have been invited to tread. Billy Graham has joined Blessitt for part of his walk, Pope John Paul II welcomed him to Rome, and he once spent the night in Prime Minister Menachem Begin's home in Israel.

Blessitt has met one-on-one with Colonel Mohmar Gaddafi of Libya; Boutros Boutros Ghali, former Secretary General of the United Nations; a Zulu Chief in Africa; and former President George W. Bush, who became a born-again Christian after meeting with Blessitt in 1994. Blessitt has preached at religious revivals and at rock concerts, taking the stage alongside Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Dylan, and The Rolling Stones. To Blessitt, all were simply people in need of Jesus.

Of course, Blessitt has also dealt with his share of cynics, skeptics, and naysayers, handling criticism with love and oftentimes with humor. When a passer-by sees Blessitt walking with his cross and shouts out, "You're a nut!" Blessitt waves and cheerfully replies, "At least I'm screwed to the right 'bolt!'"

Ironically, Blessitt has received his warmest welcomes in countries other than the United States, saying that one of the coldest receptions he has ever experienced came in New York City.

"The mentality in America, in our western culture, is 'What's in it for him? What's he getting out of this?'" Blessitt explains. "But in most of the rest of the world, their view is, 'It's a holy man walking on a pilgrimage.' They feel compelled to take you in, to ask about your mission, to learn more about your journey."

That's not to say the overseas reception to the cross has always been friendly. Blessitt made his first international pilgrimage in 1971, carrying the cross to the United Kingdom and visiting Belfast, Ireland, during the height of "The Troubles," a period of violent conflict between the Protestant and Catholic communities of northern Ireland. A group of men threatened to nail Blessitt to the cross he carried; he responded by handing them stickers reading "Jesus Loves You."

Blessitt faced down a firing squad in Nicaragua with a box of Bibles and a message of love as his only weapons. He interpreted his escape from certain death as, "the Lord telling me, 'You're not getting out of this so easy. You've still got a lot of miles left.'"

When the two friends he'd recruited to help him left after one week, Blessitt made his way alone through the treacherous jungles of the brutal Darien Gap. This roadless terrain between Panama and Columbia was marked by jungles, swamps, armed guerillas, and sparsely populated villages where Blessitt witnessed to the natives. Blessitt recalls that "the only person who spoke English was Jesus, and I enjoyed His company."

Blessitt carried the cross before throngs of people gathered in the Plaza Mayor in Madrid, Spain, during the rule of dictator Francisco Franco. When the Spanish Civil *Guardia* – Franco's military – stormed in and arrested Blessitt, the cross was raised by men, women, and children who kept it from falling to the ground, holding the cross high and shouting praise to Jesus despite being beaten themselves by the soldiers.

Blessitt completed his worldwide journey in North Korea, the last country on the planet to grant him permission to enter with the cross. Asked to explain how he survived his worldwide, often-dangerous journey, Blessitt replies simply, "I obeyed God's call and left the rest up to Him. I was not worthy to be martyred for Him. He had me live, not die."

◀ Arthur Blessitt's seven children grew up knowing their father didn't have a typical job. Several of his children accompanied him on his crosswalk through various countries; three of them have gone into full time ministry work themselves. Blessitt's wife, Denise, has accompanied Arthur on every overseas crosswalk for the past 20 years.

#### NO ROOM AT THE INN

DURING A SWELTERING WALK ACROSS AFRICA, BLESSITT LEARNED THAT A CERTAIN TOWN WAS HOME TO A MISSIONARY HOUSE, a place where weary missionaries could spend a few days resting in the air conditioning and enjoying the luxury of indoor plumbing. Two long, hot months after first hearing of the house, Blessitt reached its doorstep – only to be turned away because he was not a "real" missionary. "I said, 'Thank you,' and I kept walking," Blessitt recalls. "I was so hurt. I thought to myself, 'I guess I'm not enough. All I'm doing is carrying a cross.'" Two miles down the road, a car pulled alongside Blessitt and stopped. A man and a woman got out and gave him an enthusiastic greeting, explaining that they had heard he was in the area and had hoped to meet him. They were atheists, they explained, but they were intrigued by Blessitt's pilgrimage. The couple took Blessitt to their home, where they gave him an air-conditioned room, food, and invited him to stay and rest as long as he wished. "It was one of the most moving experiences," Blessitt says. "The atheists welcomed the pilgrim who had no credentials for the mission compound."



ARTHUR BLESSITT RETURNS TO THE SPOT IN SWOR AUDITORIUM WHERE HE WAS INSPIRED BY A MISSIONARY'S MESSAGE MORE THAN 40 YEARS AGO.



“To have actually carried the cross in all the countries is so profound and awesome that it’s almost too much to comprehend. All the glory goes to God,” Blessitt continues. “Whatever nation you go to from now on, the cross has been there before you.”

#### ONE STEP AT A TIME

Although he has occasionally had to load the cross into the cargo holds of planes or boats or strap it to the top of a vehicle, Blessitt has spent almost every minute of the past 40 years within sight of the cross, most of that time with his hands upon its sturdy wood and always with its message in his heart.

“It has been so very awesome to be chosen to be called and identified with the cross,” he says. “You can never complain when you’re in the presence of this symbol.

“I had a vision of making an impact on the world, but Jesus told me to lie that down,” Blessitt continues. “He said, ‘Let your vision be no bigger than the next person you meet.’ That has taken me around the world. The most important thing God will tell you to do is the next thing. It’s about living your life in obedience. Take it one step at a time.”

In 2009, Blessitt and the cross found their way back to Hollywood, where the crosswalk began. Blessitt carried the cross to Grauman’s Chinese Theatre for the premier of, “The Cross,” a new documentary that recounts the story of his journey to share the cross and its message with every nation of the world.

“I know people are fascinated by stories, but what moves me is my relationship with God and my relationships with people,” Blessitt says in the film. “I wasn’t walking to find a war to go to. Why was I in the Darien? Because there were people in there. Nobody stops me on the road and asks me to tell them a story about a firing squad. They say, ‘Tell me, what do you know about God?’ The real message is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Lord God Almighty.”



The new film “The Cross” tells the story of Arthur Blessitt and his worldwide walk with the cross. To order the movie on DVD, visit [www.thecrossfilm.com](http://www.thecrossfilm.com). Learn more about Arthur Blessitt at [www.blessitt.com](http://www.blessitt.com) or e-mail Arthur Blessitt at [arthur@blessitt.com](mailto:arthur@blessitt.com).

#### CAUGHT IN THE CROSS FIRE

IN 1982, ARTHUR BLESSITT WAS CARRYING HIS CROSS through Sweden when God called him to return with his cross to Lebanon, a war-torn country he had visited two years previously. Blessitt’s first move was to purchase a newspaper, praying, “If I read in the paper that You are sending some other evangelist, then I won’t have to go to this war. Maybe Billy Graham or the Pope will be in West Beirut.”

When he learned that there was no other evangelist in Beirut, Blessitt headed for Lebanon, accompanied by his 11-year-old son, Joshua, who was also carrying a wooden cross. Blessitt had planned to leave Joshua in Jerusalem, but his young son also felt the call to Beirut, saying, “No, Daddy, let’s go.”

As they approached the war zone on foot, armed only with their crosses and Bibles, Israeli troops attempted to stop them, warning that crossing the battlefield meant certain death. Blessitt refused to turn back, telling the commander, “My dear brother, we are here on a mission from God. Please, in the name of Jesus, we must go in.”

Holding hands, Blessitt and his son moved forward, walking carefully through a devastated area in which every building was riddled by bullets and bombs. Soldiers waved them back – this was war, and to be exposed meant certain death. Blessitt and his son walked faster.

They turned a corner and found themselves caught between five fighting armies – the Israeli, the Lebanese, the Philangist, the Syrian, and the PLO.

“We were two crosses and two witnesses in the hot spot and spotlight of the world,” Blessitt wrote afterward. “I was smiling and waving my Bible to all the hundreds of troops that were looking at us, wondering, ‘Where do we step, where are the land mines?’ Huge piles of dirt and steel were in front of us with many tank barricades. We chose one path and entered into the Syrian PLO lines.”

As the Muslim soldiers there looked on at the man, the boy, and their two crosses, their commander asked, “What are you doing?”

“We are here carrying the cross,” Blessitt replied. “We have good news. God loves you! Jesus is alive!”

“Well,” the commander replied. “We need all the good news we can get. Welcome to West Beirut!”

As Blessitt and his son continued through the war zone, a man stepped out from a building and hugged them both.

“I expected you would come,” Yasser Arafat said. “You are welcome.”

Describing that encounter today, Blessitt says, “It’s been awesome to see how people in the worst and most difficult places have welcomed the cross the most. The people you’d think would reject you see the cross going through their battlefield, and instead of them pulling the trigger on you, God pulls the trigger on their hearts.”



#### MILESTONES ALONG THE CROSSWALK

Facts and highlights from Arthur Blessitt’s crosswalk, the longest journey in the history of the world

##### THE CROSS

12 feet long  
6 feet wide  
45 pounds  
*Miles carried by foot:*  
38,102 miles  
*Miles transported by boat:*  
20,000 miles  
*Miles transported by plane:*  
2,020,000  
*Miles transported by car:*  
375,000

##### WALKING IN ARTHUR’S SHOES

*First step with the cross:*  
Hollywood, California  
*Longest walk in one day:*  
72 miles in 24 hours with help; 47 miles alone  
*Longest walk in a single geographic area:*  
Two years walking in Africa  
*Hardest road to walk:*  
Pan-American Highway  
*Best roads to walk:*  
Holland  
*Toughest jungle to trek:*  
The Darien Gap, Panama to Colombia  
*Average lifespan of a pair of Arthur Blessitt’s shoes:*  
500 miles

*The Guinness Book of World Records* 1996-2008 recognizes Arthur Blessitt’s journey as “The World’s Longest Walk.”

##### UNDER ARREST

*Times arrested or in jail:*  
24  
*Country most likely to be arrested in:*  
United States  
*City most likely to be arrested in:*  
Hollywood, California  
*Worst jail:*  
Concord, New Hampshire

##### WELCOME/ UNWELCOME MATS

*Greatest welcome to the cross:*  
New Guinea, Poland, Spain, India, Lithuania, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, West Africa  
*Angriest response to the cross:*  
Amsterdam, Holland and Tetouan, Morocco  
*Friendliest Armies:*  
Israeli Army and the Palestinian Liberation Army

Over half the churches asked to accommodate the cross overnight have declined, but in 40 years around the world, the cross has never been turned away from a bar or nightclub.

##### EXTREMES

*Hottest temperature:*  
Jordan Valley, T Chad, Yemen, Djibouti;  
135 degrees

*Coldest temperature:*  
Nova Scotia, Canada;  
20 degrees below zero

*Best beds:*  
St. James Club, London England; Livingstonia Beach Hotel, Malawi

*Worst beds:*  
A pigpen in Colombia (affectionately referred to as the “Pig Hilton”); a single, narrow board at a blown-up bus stop near the Syria-Israel border

*Worst foods:*  
Squid in ink in Spain, monkey leg in Africa (“when you chew on the tendons, the fingers wiggle”), rat soup in Belize

*Best foods:*  
Freshwater shrimp in El Salvador, fresh salmon in Finland

*Highest the cross has ever been:*  
60,000 feet aboard the Concorde

*Largest crowds addressed:*  
500,000 at the Atlanta Rock Festival, 1970; 500,000 at the Washington for Jesus Rally, 1980

##### ANIMAL PLANET

*Worst dog encountered:*  
Israeli Army dog in the Sinai Desert

*Worst mosquitoes:*  
The Amazon River and Greenland

*Scariest animal encounters:*  
Green mamba snake in Ghana; baboon attack in Kenya; elephant chase in Tanzania; crocodile attack in Zimbabwe

##### MEMORABLE SCARES

Firing squad in Nicaragua  
Stoning and beating in Morocco  
Civil *Guardia* attack in Spain  
Minefield crossing in Lebanon  
Bomb blast in Belfast, Northern Ireland

##### LANDMARKS VISITED BY THE CROSS

Olympic Stadium in Berlin, Germany  
Coliseum in Rome  
Pantheon in Athens, Greece  
Pyramids of Egypt  
Great Wall of China  
Red Square, Moscow  
Second Base at Yankee Stadium, New York  
Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood for the premier of the movie, “The Cross”





“LINDSAY WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF ME. I JUST HOPE THAT GOD USES ME AS MUCH AS HE USED HER.” – LIZ CARPENTER



# Heart And Soul

## *Lindsay Miller's Beautiful Gift*

ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2004, 19-YEAR-OLD LINDSAY MILLER, a sophomore at Mississippi College, climbed into her Toyota 4Runner with her twin brother, Josh, and their friends Beth Finch, Maksim Sisoiev, and Nicole Thurman, headed from the Clinton campus to a birthday party in Pascagoula, Mississippi. A journalism major, Lindsay was outgoing, energetic, and full of life, with dreams of someday traveling the world as a reporter and photographer.

Fifty miles south in Magee, Mississippi, 24-year-old Liz Carpenter was confined to her home, unable to walk the 30 short steps to her own mailbox. A former writer for the *Magee Courier*, Liz had been forced to give up her job when cardiomyopathy, a heart disease she had struggled against all of her short life, made working impossible.

After enduring more than a decade of drug regimens and a series of pacemakers that were no longer proving effective, Liz had been placed on the waiting list for a heart transplant.

Lindsay turned the key in the ignition.

Liz wondered if she would ever again leave her home.

Neither young woman could know that within the next 72 hours, Lindsay's life on earth would end and Liz's life would begin again.

Lindsay Miller was the only daughter in a close-knit family that included her parents, David and Rebecca, and her three brothers, Matt, Josh, and Sam. As a child, Lindsay was free-spirited, opinionated, and unafraid to speak her mind, a bright, curious girl always in search of answers. Lindsay was in the second grade when she gave her heart to Christ; years later she wrote an essay in which she referred to that time in her life as “the year that I came to call God ‘Daddy,’ and could boast that Jesus was my friend.”

As a standout student at Pascagoula High School, Lindsay was active in student government, a member of

the homecoming court, and the editor of the school newspaper. Lindsay and her twin brother were co-presidents of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and were voted Mr. and Miss Pascagoula High School.

By the spring of her senior year in 2002, Lindsay was still undecided as to where she would attend college; the only thing she was certain of was that she wanted to study journalism “at a school far away.” Josh Miller was considering Mississippi College; Lindsay joined him on a campus visit and unexpectedly, completely fell in love with MC, telling her mother, “God is here.”



David and Rebecca Miller



Lindsay Miller

**FAITH IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY** David and Rebecca Miller can identify with the Biblical figure of Job. Eleven months after they lost their daughter, Lindsay, the Millers' Pascagoula home was swept away by Hurricane Katrina; nothing was left but a slab. Rebecca Miller acknowledges that she was angry in the months following the tragedies, but faith and hope have allowed the Millers not only to survive, but also to smile again. "When the rubber meets the road, you have to come to grips with what you believe," Rebecca Miller says. "You ask, 'Why do this to a child of God?' Well, look at who was hanging on that cross. My daughter paid with her life for someone else's mistake, but so did Jesus. Tragedies like these cause you to lose your grip on what you think is important here. Our family has lost so much, but what hasn't been destroyed is our love for our daughter, our love for Christ, and our promise of eternal life together. When I leave this world, I know I'll see Jesus first, and I know I'll be overwhelmed. But then I know I'll look behind Him and ask, 'Okay Lord, where is she?'"

"I was glad when Lindsay and I both chose MC," Josh Miller says. "We had grown up together and I really couldn't imagine not being around her."

It didn't take Lindsay long to leave her mark on Mississippi College. By her sophomore year she was the opinions editor of the *Mississippi Collegian*, the student newspaper, and a gifted member of the speech and debate team. Her professor and debate coach, Web Drake, described Lindsay as "an ideal student...She was always on a quest to learn more, grow more, become more, live more, and share more."

Active in several Christian organizations on campus, Lindsay was focused on discovering God's calling for her life after MC. In an essay titled "God's Purpose for My Life," Lindsay wrote:

*Ever since I was a little girl... I have always known that God was going to use me, and that I would do some wonderful things for His kingdom...I have a thirst for knowledge and understanding of the world and the people who inhabit it. This is why I am a communications major, because I want to seek truth and report it. It would be incredible to travel the world...and research, interview, and ultimately understand and solve some of the major issues that face humans daily. I could see myself in other countries...spreading the gospel to the many different people.*

Those dreams crashed to an end on September 10, 2004 on I-10 in Biloxi, when a driver under the influence of prescription drugs forced the Toyota 4Runner Lindsay was driving into a concrete barrier; the impact of the high-speed collision sent the 4Runner rolling. Maksim Sisoiev was killed in the crash; Beth Finch died of her injuries two days later. Josh Miller suffered three skull fractures and a lacerated spleen. Nicole Thurman escaped with minor physical injuries, but would be forever scarred by the loss of her friends.

Lindsay Miller was rushed to the hospital with severe brain injuries. Her father, Dr. David Miller, a trauma surgeon, and her mother, Rebecca, a former nurse, understood that Lindsay would never awaken. On September 11, Lindsay's parents made the heartrending decision to remove their bright, beautiful daughter from life support.

"There was no doubt in my mind," Dr. David Miller says of their decision to donate Lindsay's organs. "Helping someone else was what Lindsay would have wanted to do."

**DR. GIORGIO ARU, A SURGEON WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) in Jackson,** was the doctor assigned to Liz Carpenter's transplant case. Dr. Aru flew to the Gulf Coast to retrieve Lindsay Miller's heart. As he entered the operating room where Lindsay lay on the table, Dr. Aru was startled to see another doctor lean over and gently kiss the donor on the forehead.



**"IN KNOWING THAT THIS LIFE IS MERELY A BACKSTAGE, A BLINK IN TIME, I CAN LIVE IN PEACE... THROUGH HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST, WE CAN BE SAVED. WE SHOULD KNOW THIS AND NOT MUCH MORE TO MAKE IT THROUGH THIS LIFE."**

EXCERPTED FROM THE JOURNAL OF LINDSAY MILLER

"The nurse touched my elbow and said, 'That is her father,'" Dr. Aru recalls. "An emotion came over me and I could not stay there – I guess because I am a father myself. I left the operating room and went into the doctor's lounge.

"It was dark there, the light was very dim," Dr. Aru continues. "In the corner of this room, I noticed what seemed to be a wax statue. This statue was gray, tall, and very elegant. I moved close to the statue and somehow, I knew. I said, 'You must be her mother. I am the surgeon who has come to take your daughter's heart.'"

"The statue looked at me with the face of someone who had no more tears to shed. She grasped my hand very hard and looked me straight in the eyes and said, 'Doctor, you will never find a more beautiful heart for your patient than my daughter's heart.'"

**AT 3:00 A.M. ON SEPTEMBER 12, LIZ CARPENTER WAS AWAKENED** by a ringing telephone. The voice on the other end said simply, "We have a heart."

Liz had been diagnosed with cardiomyopathy, a progressive, genetic heart disease, when she was just 11. The illness had dominated her life, preventing her from participating in normal childhood activities like playing soccer or cheering at pep rallies. For her eighteenth birthday, Liz received a pacemaker. In July of 2004 she was placed on the waiting list for a transplant. Without a new heart, her family feared Liz would be dead before Christmas. By that September morning in 2004, Liz's weight had dropped to a skeletal 82 pounds. She was on oxygen 24 hours a day. Her illness had left her so weak she was unable to brush her own teeth or hair.

Like Lindsay Miller, Liz Carpenter was a Christian, but praying for healing had been a hard thing for Liz, who knew that her survival depended on someone else's death.

"I prayed for healing, but I never prayed specifically for a new heart," Liz says. "In fact, I kept doing research online, hoping I'd find some other cure, some miracle that would heal me without requiring someone else to die."

**THE LINDSAY CAROLE MILLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Established in 2007 by Lindsay's family and friends, the Lindsay Carole Miller Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually to a Mississippi College communications major who is openly dedicated to following Christ and follows the example set by Lindsay Miller. To contribute to the Lindsay Carole Miller Memorial Scholarship Fund, send your tax-deductible gift to: Mississippi College • Office of Advancement / Lindsay Miller Memorial Scholarship Fund • Box 4005 • Clinton, MS 39058



Josh Miller and  
Liz Carpenter

**FIVE YEARS LATER** Liz Carpenter is a marketing representative with Mississippi Blood Services and an inspirational speaker. After losing their home in Pascagoula to Hurricane Katrina, David and Rebecca Miller and their youngest son, Sam, relocated to Madison, Mississippi. Dr. Miller is a surgeon practicing in Jackson. • Josh Miller '07, is a student at the University of Mississippi Medical Center's School of Dentistry. Lindsay and Josh's older brother, Matt, is enrolled in Fordham University School of Law in New York. Their younger brother, Sam, attends a Christian boarding school in Georgia. • Dr. Giorgio Aru has performed more than 100 heart transplants in the United States and Europe. He describes the story of Lindsay Miller and Liz Carpenter as the most emotional experience of his 30-year career. "I have many beautiful stories, but this is the most beautiful because of what evolved between the two families. For me, the story of Lindsay Miller and Liz Carpenter is still like a miracle."

"I lived in a small town, and everyone in Magee knew what was happening," Liz continues. "People always wanted to pray with me and for me, and once it was clear that I would need a transplant, we always prayed for the donor's family, too. They would have to make that life-changing, life-saving decision. They would be the ones who had lost."

Within minutes of receiving that 3:00 a.m. call, Liz and her parents were en route to the University of Mississippi Medical Center. But before they left, the family took a moment to pray, not only for Liz, but also for the family of the unknown donor, the ones who had lost.

The first thing Liz remembered after waking up from the surgery was "breathing. After all those years, I could finally take a deep breath." Twelve hours after the transplant, Liz was out of bed and walking. Two weeks later she left UMMC under her own newfound power, refusing to be pushed out in a wheelchair. Months later, Liz Carpenter, the same girl who had been told she could never be an athlete or a ballerina or a cheerleader, the same young woman who had been unable to walk to her own mailbox, ran her first 5K race.

**IN ADDITION TO HER HEART, DAVID AND REBECCA MILLER** donated Lindsay's lungs, kidneys, and pancreas. While the Millers never heard from the other recipients, Liz Carpenter wrote them a thank you note. Rebecca Miller wrote back, telling Liz about Lindsay, the beautiful young woman whose heart was now beating in Liz's chest. Five months after the transplant, the Millers and Liz arranged to meet in person.

## GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Also killed as a result of the accident were 19-year-old Beth Finch, a sophomore at MC, and Maksim Sisoev, a 20-year-old exchange student visiting MC from Uzbekistan. Mississippi's 2003 Junior Miss, Beth Finch was a member of the Mississippi College Singers and an officer with the Laguna social tribe. A graduate of Clinton High School, she was a National Merit Finalist and Presidential Scholar. Like her friend Lindsay Miller, Beth Finch was an organ donor. Exchange student Maksim Sisoev was an intelligent young man fluent in six languages. While living in Mississippi, Maksim attended Alta Woods Baptist Church, where he played the role of Joseph in the Christmas pageant.

In memory of their late friends, the Mississippi College Class of 2004 donated the brick "Welcome to Mississippi College" sign at the east side of the campus, which includes a plaque bearing the three friends' names.



"PLEASE LET ALL I DO BE IN REMEMBRANCE AND HONOR OF YOU. I LOVE YOU MY ADONAI, YESHUA, ELOHIM, YAHWEH, ABBA, FATHER, FRIEND, AND KING."

FINAL ENTRY IN LINDSAY MILLER'S PRAYER JOURNAL

Their emotional first encounter took place at the Mississippi Organ Recovery Office in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

"I was very nervous," Liz says. "How would they respond to me? Would they think I was the right person for their daughter's heart?"

"Liz walked in and she was beautiful," Rebecca Miller says. "The first thing I did was feel her pulse."

"Mrs. Miller gave me the biggest hug," Liz recalls, "one of those hugs where you don't want to let go. It was almost an 'I've missed you' hug, even though we'd never met."

Liz gave the Millers a drawing she had created, the image of a young girl with dark hair playing in the waters off the Gulf Coast. The Millers presented Liz with a necklace that had belonged to Lindsay, and the families exchanged photos.

The story might have ended there – in fact, many donor families and recipients never meet at all, finding the situation simply too painful. But the Millers and Liz Carpenter had formed a lasting connection. In the five years since the transplant, Liz has kept in touch with Lindsay's parents, and she and Josh Miller have become close friends. When people ask how they know each other, Josh replies, "Liz carries my sister's heart." Liz wears a locket with Lindsay's picture inside. She is proud of the scar that runs from the base of her throat to her navel; when people ask about the scar, she "loves being able to tell the story and share a little piece of Lindsay." It's an uncommon bond between two families – a bond formed by tragedy, but now marked by mutual gratitude and shared faith.

"Liz and her family are so grateful to us, but we're grateful to Liz, too," Rebecca Miller says. "Whenever Liz tells her story, she honors Lindsay. I've always tried to make sure Liz understands that she doesn't owe us anything more. Lindsay has gone on. This is her heart now."

"Lindsay will always be a part of me," Liz says. "I just hope that God uses me as much as He used her. Mrs. Miller gave me copies of some of Lindsay's prayer journals, and I'm amazed how wise Lindsay was at 19. I like to think

that in addition to carrying her heart, maybe I've gained a little of Lindsay's wisdom."

Liz does seem to have gained some of Lindsay's outspoken nature.

"Before the transplant, I was terrified to speak in public. Once in high school, I actually fainted because I had to stand up in class and recite a poem," Liz says. "Now I stand up in front of hundreds of people and tell my and Lindsay's story without even flinching. I know I have an important message to share, and whatever I'm going to say, God has my mind."

In 2008, Liz was the featured speaker at a benefit for the Heart Association. Dr. and Mrs. Miller were in the audience, as was Dr. Giorgio Aru. As Dr. Aru made his way through the crowd to speak to Liz, he saw a familiar face moving toward him.

"Amid hundreds of people there, I recognize this wax statue, but it is not gray anymore, it is pink," Dr. Aru says. "And now this beautiful woman is coming to me and is smiling. It is not the face of a tragic moment, but is smiling. And she looks at me in a beautiful way, holds my hand, and she tells me, 'I told you, doctor, that was the most beautiful heart for your patient. Look how beautiful she is with Lindsay's heart.'"

In purely clinical terms, the heart is an organ like any other. But its symbolic meaning as the seat of human emotion and spirituality gives the heart significance that other organs don't share. Long before she gave her physical heart to Liz Carpenter, Lindsay had given her spiritual heart to Jesus Christ.

In the same essay in which she described her dreams for her future, Lindsay Miller, the girl with the beautiful heart, wrote:

*It may not be in my job; it could be in the people I meet, the hypothetical family I may have, or even in the way that I die that God's purpose for my life is fulfilled...One day I will do my duty and that will be all. But whatever and whenever happens, I have the knowledge that God is my father and that He is going to use me.*

## Heart to Heart

Liz Carpenter's younger sister, Katie Layton, also suffered from cardiomyopathy. Just a year after he performed Liz's transplant, Dr. Giorgio Aru performed a heart transplant on Katie. Today, both sisters are living new lives thanks to the blessing of organ donation. According to Liz, they also share a passion for critiquing medical dramas. "We'll be talking on the phone while we watch *Grey's Anatomy* or *House*, and say, 'Oh please, that is so fake. He didn't even do a proper work-up on that patient.'"

# ALL RISE

*For the*

**HONORABLE  
JUDGE**

**HENRY LACKEY '56**

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S 2009 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

ASK ANYONE WHO KNOWS HIM TO DESCRIBE JUDGE HENRY Lackey and the first word you're likely to hear is "integrity." The judge for Mississippi's Third Circuit District, Lackey has earned a reputation as a man who can be counted on to do the right, honest, and honorable thing.

"Judge Henry Lackey has built a personal life and a professional life characterized by honor," says MC President Dr. Lee Royce. "Judge Lackey represents the highest ideals and values championed by Mississippi College. It is my great pleasure to congratulate him for his recognition as Mississippi College's 2009 Alumnus of the Year."

Judge Lackey's unshakable sense of integrity made the national spotlight in 2007, when he was drawn into a judicial bribery scandal involving billionaire attorney Richard "Dickie" Scruggs. Judge Lackey was approached by New Albany attorney Timothy Balducci, and offered a \$40,000 bribe in exchange for a favorable ruling in a case involving Scruggs' law firm.

"My first thought was, what kind of character flaw has he discovered in me that would lead him to think that I would do something like this?" Judge Lackey said in an interview after the case made headlines.

Judge Lackey contacted federal prosecutors in Oxford, Mississippi, and agreed to participate in an undercover operation to help build the case against Balducci and Scruggs. Prosecutors equipped his law office with audio and video recording equipment, capturing on tape several meetings between Judge Lackey and Balducci in which details of the

bribe were discussed and money was given to the judge. As a result of Judge Lackey's participation in the investigation, Dickie Scruggs, Timothy Balducci, and a handful of other attorneys involved in the bribery scheme were sentenced to prison for their crimes.

"The whole thing was such a shame," Judge Lackey says. "There were some bright, outstanding lawyers involved who didn't have to take that shortcut. They just became enamored with the idea of power and wealth."

"I hope the Scruggs case sends the message that our system ultimately works. Wrong can be rooted out," Judge Lackey continues. "The system is not perfect because it's administered by man, but it did ultimately work to correct this wrong."

Judge Lackey's unwavering determination to do the right thing in the Scruggs case may have thrust him into the headlines, but it was merely the latest milestone in a life devoted to justice.

Lackey enrolled in Mississippi College in the early 1950s on the advice of family members who had attended the university. His fondest MC memories include beating a chronic case of stage fright through participation in the drama club and on the debate team; hitchhiking from Clinton to Calhoun City on weekends ("It was a much safer time back then," Judge Lackey emphasizes); and being "shamed" when he came home for a visit and his mother discovered a book of matches picked up on a clandestine trip to New Orleans in his pocket.

## ALUMNUS *of the* YEAR

The Alumnus of the Year Award honors a Mississippi College or Hillman College graduate who has rendered distinguished service to his or her college, church, and community. The award is limited to those who, through a long period of years, have worked with marked intelligence to promote the higher interests of the college, and who have, through their character and deeds, brought honor to Mississippi College by virtue of their alumnus status.

MY ROBE, PLEASE.

Shortly after Governor Kirk Fordice appointed him as judge, Henry Lackey was hospitalized for a series of tests on his heart. He was actually sworn into office wearing a hospital gown.

"I was so fortunate to have attended Mississippi College. They took a near incorrigible youngster and provided me with a Christian education," Judge Lackey says with a smile. "At Mississippi College, I learned how much your associates can influence you for good or for bad. The friendships I formed at MC have been lasting friendships with good people that I still know and respect today."

Following his 1956 graduation, Lackey married his sweetheart, Helen, a music teacher and Delta State University alumna. The couple settled in Lackey's hometown of Calhoun City where he went to work in his family's business, the Ben Franklin five and dime store. Lackey served in the U.S. Army for two years prior to enrolling in the University of Mississippi School of Law.

"The idea of becoming an attorney had always been in the back of my mind," Judge Lackey says. "But the final factor in that decision was that I made a C in trig and knew that engineering school was out of the question."

Lackey commuted from Calhoun City to the law school in Oxford, convincing his wife that becoming an attorney would enable him to spend more time with her than working at the five and ten allowed (a statement that Lackey confesses soon proved to be inaccurate).

Lackey graduated from law school in 1966; in 1967 he was elected Calhoun County's prosecuting attorney. At the conclusion of his four-year term, he accepted a groundbreaking appointment as Mississippi's first public defender. Launched as a pilot program through the University of Mississippi School of Law, the public defender role was filled by Henry Lackey and three law school

students who conducted research; the small team represented indigent clients in all seven counties of the Third Circuit District.

"The biggest challenge in that position was the work load. It's the same challenge that still faces public defenders in our state today," Lackey says. "I handled six capital cases during that one year. Having been on both sides, the prosecution and the defense, I think the defense side is technically easier because you're looking for weaknesses that can cause doubt, whereas as the prosecution, you have to prove the case. But as a defense attorney, there is so much more pressure – someone's life is literally resting in your hands."

That pilot program laid the groundwork for the Missis-

issippi Legislature to give counties the authority to allocate the funds needed to hire public defenders. When the pilot program ended, Lackey opened a solo practice in Calhoun City. For the next 26 years, he enjoyed his status as an old-fashioned "country lawyer," handling cases of every description. In 1993, Governor Kirk Fordice appointed Lackey to fill a vacancy as a circuit court judge in the Third District of North Mississippi, serving Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Lafayette, Marshall, Tippah, and Union counties. Judge Lackey has been re-elected without opposition every year since.

In 1967, Lackey hired Monette Gann as his secretary; she has been on the job every day of the last 42 years.

"I tell people I came to work for Henry Lackey when we both had black hair and waistlines," Gann says with a smile. "When we first started out, it was just me, Henry, and an electric typewriter. The judge tells people our first telephone system was a vine trailing through the window."

"Today, Judge Lackey works as hard as he ever has," Gann continues. "He always had a great sense of humor, and the only difference I see today is that he's gotten funnier because he has more tales to tell. I can honestly say in 42 years, I have never once dreaded coming to work."

While Gann and Lackey have shared many colorful cases together, Gann describes the months leading up to the arrest of Dickie Scruggs as some of her most memorable on the job.

"It was like something out of a movie or a John Grisham novel. Judge Lackey couldn't tell me everything that was going on, and quite honestly, I didn't want to know any more than I had to," Gann recalls. "For months we just went about our business as

though nothing unusual was happening, but I could tell Henry was tense and I was afraid for him. The FBI agents and I got to know each other on a first name basis. It was just such a relief when it was all over."

In 2008, in recognition of his distinguished legal career and the integrity he demonstrated in the Scruggs case, Judge Lackey was honored as the recipient of the Mississippi Supreme Court's highest honor, the Chief Justice Award.

"The judiciary of our state is forever grateful to Judge Lackey for his dedication to fairness and exemplary behavior in the legal profession," Supreme Court Justice James W. Smith, Jr. said in presenting the award. "Judge Lackey's professional response in promptly reporting severe lawyer



"THE MOST INTERESTING PART of my job as a judge is seeing how lawyers and witnesses react under pressure. The courtroom is a study in human nature." — JUDGE HENRY LACKEY

misconduct exemplifies the principles of honesty that all judges must practice routinely, but which are seldom publicly reported."

Judge Lackey responded to the praise with characteristic humility, saying, "I just did what so many judges do every day: fulfill their responsibility and their obligation. Public officials are just supposed to do what's right. I don't claim to be wise, but I do know that holding God in awe is the basis of all wisdom. For my entire career, my Christian faith has been my North Star and my compass."

That North Star also leads Judge Lackey in his role as chairman of the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance, a watchdog organization that investigates claims of judicial wrongdoing.

"The commission is charged with investigating our own, which is not a pleasant task, but is an important task," Judge Lackey says. "Of course, we're not only correcting wrongs on the part of our judges, we're also protecting our judiciary from unfounded accusations. The bottom line is making sure our court system treats everyone involved with equal fairness."

Judge Lackey has not yet decided if he will run for reelection when his term on the circuit court expires in 2010.

"The Lord and the people have been so good to me," Judge Lackey says. "I've already had a mighty good run. Then again, if I *don't* run, I'm not sure my wife can put up with me 24 hours a day."

Henry and Helen Lackey still live in Calhoun City, in the house next door to the one in which Judge Lackey was born. The couple's son, Kevin, is director of the Administrative Office of Courts in Jackson – or as Monette Gann describes him, "Kevin is our boss."

When he's not hearing cases, Judge Lackey plays the upright bass fiddle with the country music band "The Judge and the Jury." The band plays benefits for people who have suffered tragedies and to raise money for the American Legion Post, and gives free concerts for the residents of the veterans' nursing home in Oxford. Judge Lackey also "prevailed upon the band" to perform at the Mississippi College 50-Year Club meeting in 2008 when he served as the club's president; Judge Lackey jokes that, "they may not ask me to serve in that capacity ever again."

ONCE A CHOCTAW, ALWAYS A CHOCTAW

Judge Lackey is a former MC trustee and served as the 2008 president of the 50-Year Club.

Judge Lackey teaches Sunday school at First Baptist Church of Calhoun City, where he also sings in the choir, and leads Bible classes at a local nursing home. He also takes pride in his summer vegetable garden, sharing bountiful harvests with his friends and neighbors.

"In our community, Henry Lackey is known as someone you can look up to," Gann says. "Old folks or young folks, it doesn't matter. They all know and respect Judge Lackey."

Over the long course of his distinguished legal career, Lackey has tried and presided over hundreds of cases, from capital cases with lives at stake to a recent case involving custody of an organ grinder's monkey. He has dealt with more than his share of unpredictable situations, from walking into a courtroom filled with clucking chickens to agreeing to have his offices bugged by the FBI. Lackey has met every situation with a sense of duty, justice, humor, and above all, integrity.

"The power to take a person's freedom or fame or fortune is an awesome power," Judge Lackey says. "It is so important to be certain that every person who appears before you is treated fairly. That goes to the rule of law and to the very heart of our legal system. Any person who doesn't take that responsibility seriously is not worthy of wearing a robe."

YOU'RE PULLING MY LEG.

According to his secretary of 42 years, Monette Gann, Judge Henry Lackey is quite the practical joker. Gann once apologized for intruding to a sneaker-clad leg sticking out from under the stall door in the law firm restroom, only to discover the "visitor" was a mannequin leg – sans body – left there by the judge.



## The Right Chemistry

DR. D. WAYNE GOODMAN '68

DR. WAYNE GOODMAN BEGAN HIS COLLEGE CAREER AS A physics major, but was so impressed with his freshman chemistry professor, Dr. Archie Germany, that he changed his major to chemistry.

The late Dr. Germany would be most proud of his protégé today. A distinguished professor and the Robert A. Welch Chair of Chemistry at Texas A&M University, Dr. Goodman is known worldwide for his pioneering research in catalysis and surface chemistry. While the words “research chemist” may evoke images of a scientist who spends most of his time isolated in a laboratory, Dr. Goodman describes high-level scientific research as a competitive business in which the most successful players are those who capture the international spotlight.

“Cutting edge science is a little like religion,” Dr. Goodman says. “The top scientists are evangelists. They all have ‘the word,’ and part of separating the wheat from the chaff is arguing their findings in the public eye.”

Dr. Goodman’s own work has put him in the scientific public eye worldwide. He has presented at conferences and scientific gatherings in every country in Europe and has given multiple presentations in China, Japan, Korea, Turkey, and Russia. His work has taken him to Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, where he assisted in examining chemistry Ph.D. candidates. In Scandinavia, the examination process is very formal; Dr. Goodman was not only responsible for asking questions and presenting information, but did so while sporting a tuxedo. Dr. Goodman is a member of the faculty of Xiamen University in China, where he spends two weeks a year as a guest professor. To date, he has logged more than two million miles with Continental Airlines alone.

“It’s important to get your voice and your data out

there, to make yourself known and to do it well, or your work could be ignored or discounted,” Dr. Goodman explains. “In many cases, if you fail to do that, you might miss out on the funding or awards that help you continue your work. It’s not that you’re wrong, it just might take you a lot longer to be recognized as having been right.”

The scientific community has long taken notice of Dr. Goodman’s work. He has authored more than 500 publications and has been presented with more than 25 prestigious awards for groundbreaking research. His most recent recognition came when Dr. Goodman was named to the inaugural class of American Chemical Society (ACS) Fellows in recognition of his contributions to chemistry. The largest scientific society in the world, ACS chose only 162 of its 154,000 worldwide members for this honor.

Other recent awards include the 2009 Distinguished Scientist Award presented by the Texas A&M scientific research honorary Sigma Xi and the 2008 JoAnn Treat Research Excellence Award, which included a \$10,000 prize.

Prior to joining the faculty at Texas A&M, Dr. Goodman headed the surface science division at Sandia National Laboratories. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Texas, where he was a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. Wayne Goodman received a Presidential Scholarship to Mississippi College, but confesses that he chose MC because his future wife, Sandra Hewitt, was enrolled at the university. While he learned many lessons at Mississippi College, one in particular continues to influence him today as he shares his scientific findings on the global stage.

“There were no sinks in our dorm room, so I learned to dry-brush my teeth,” Dr. Goodman says with a laugh. “That lesson comes in handy when I’m traveling and I’m not sure I want to drink the water.”

### THE ORDER *of the* GOLDEN ARROW

This award honors alumni or friends of the college who have made outstanding achievements in their professions, businesses, or careers. The Order of the Golden Arrow recognizes exceptional performance or leadership beyond the ordinary.



## Answering the Call

KAY CASSIBRY '80

KAY CASSIBRY SURRENDERED TO THE CALL OF FULL TIME Christian service at the ripe old age of 12, and has pursued that calling ever since.

“My father – who is also an MC alumnus – was a pastor, and from day one he taught me that not only did Jesus die for my sins, but that He had a definite plan for my life,” Cassibry says. “I felt that Jesus was calling me to serve Him in a ministry-related profession. I had no idea what that was, but I knew that He was going to prepare me for a very special task.”

Her dedication to fulfilling those tasks has taken Cassibry to mission fields close to home and worldwide and has earned her recognition as the recipient of the Order of the Golden Arrow.

Cassibry holds a B.S. in education from Mississippi College, an M.A. in elementary education from the University of West Florida, and an M.A. in Christian education from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Her first mission field was the classroom; from 1981–1989, Cassibry served as an elementary school teacher and pre-school director in low-income areas in Mississippi, Florida, and Louisiana.

“Working with children gave me an opportunity to live out my faith in my relationships with other teachers, parents, and most of all, with the kids,” Cassibry recalls. “Oftentimes, it seemed the only kind or encouraging words, hugs, or expressions of love these children received came from me. Some of my most fulfilling days in ministry came in those classrooms, but it could be overwhelming. These were the days when I realized there was no way I was going to carry out my responsibilities without a life committed entirely to Him.”

Following her graduation from seminary in 1993, Cassibry served with the Mississippi Baptist Convention as the Girls in Action and Mission Friends consultant, coordinating mission-related activities for girls in preschool through

sixth grade. Cassibry eventually accepted a position as the executive director of the Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

In 1998, Kay Cassibry returned to Mississippi to accept her current position as executive director of the Woman’s Missionary Union of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The WMU helps people develop mission-oriented lifestyles and apply their God-given talents to mission work. Under Cassibry’s leadership, WMU assists churches in starting or building on missions programs; operates Garaywa Camp and Conference Center, a summer missions camp for girls; and provides financial and emotional support to missionaries worldwide. WMU also supports Mississippi College, providing scholarships for international students and funds that allow MC nursing students to participate in medical missions.

Through her work with the Baptist conventions, Cassibry has been called to mission trips and projects in 10 states and more than 15 countries worldwide, including China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, Russia, Israel, Peru, and sensitive countries in Central and Southeast Asia. While all have been memorable, Cassibry cites a trip to Gaza’s war-torn West Bank as among the most haunting.

“Seeing the effects of war up close was very difficult,” she recalls. “We grew close to one family who had had several members killed or imprisoned. They were a Muslim family, but they opened their home and hearts to us.”

From a first grade classroom to the farthest reaches of the earth, Kay Cassibry’s calling has taken her to places she never imagined she’d go. But since she took that first step at the age of 12, she’s known exactly who was leading the way.

“Each step He has led has been surprising to me at the time,” Cassibry says, “but in retrospect, it’s obvious that every step of my journey has prepared me for the next one.”

### THE ORDER *of the* GOLDEN ARROW

This award honors alumni or friends of the college who have made outstanding achievements in their professions, businesses, or careers. The Order of the Golden Arrow recognizes exceptional performance or leadership beyond the ordinary.



## Following the Family Tradition

STEWART LEE '98

THE YOUNG ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR IS STEWART LEE, A partner with the law firm of Jones, Funderburg, Sessums, Peterson & Lee, PLLC in Jackson, Mississippi.

Lee's family tree has its roots in Mississippi College. The first member of the Lee family to leave his mark at MC was Stewart's grandfather, Judge Percy Mercer Lee, who graduated from MC in 1911. All eight of Judge Lee's children – including Stewart's father, Judge Tom Lee – graduated from Mississippi College. Tom Lee was MC's 2006 Alumnus of the Year.

"I grew up coming to campus for athletic events," Stewart Lee recalls. "My father really appreciated the splendid education he'd received at Mississippi College and literally loved the school. My sister and I used to joke that it was a family requirement to attend MC."

When Stewart Lee graduated from Forest High School in 1994, his academic record and athletic ability led to scholarship offers from many colleges and universities, including an opportunity to play tennis in the Southeastern Conference. But after prayerful consideration, Lee opted to continue the family tradition and attend Mississippi College, where he soon left his own mark.

Lee served as president of his sophomore class, the Student Government Association, and Alpha Chi. He was a member of a number of organizations and honor societies, including Mortar Board and the Mississippi College Hall of Fame, and was the Perry Academic History award winner. An outstanding athlete, Lee played shortstop for the Choctaw baseball team and set a school record for hits in consecutive games. He was selected for the 1996 Gulf-South All-Tournament team and 1998 All-American South-

west Conference. A GTE Academic All-American, Lee was awarded a prestigious NCAA Scholar Athlete Scholarship for graduate study.

Lee graduated summa cum laude from Mississippi College and was awarded the esteemed Eastland Scholarship to attend the University of Mississippi Law School. While in law school, he served on the moot court board and was associate articles editor of the *Mississippi Law Journal*. He graduated magna cum laude in the top 10 of his class.

Today, as a partner with Jones, Funderburg, Sessums, Peterson & Lee, PLLC, Lee practices in all areas of civil litigation, with an emphasis on representing individuals who have been injured on the job. He has served on the board of directors of the Jackson Young Lawyers and on the Mississippi Workers' Compensation Educational Conference steering committee, the Hinds County Bar pro bono committee, and the University of Mississippi School of Law alumni advisory board. Lee was selected as one of the *Metro Business Journal's* "Top Guns Under 30."

Lee continues to support MC as the current Mississippi College National M-Club President and has also served on the Wild Game Dinner planning committee. In his limited spare time, Lee coaches youth baseball, soccer, and Upward basketball and teaches Sunday school at Broadmoor Baptist Church in Madison.

Chances are good that Stewart Lee won't be the last member of this family to follow in the Mississippi College tradition. Stewart's wife, Heather, is also an MC graduate, and the couple's three young children, Tom III, Mollie Elizabeth, and Steven, are already learning the words to the MC fight song.

### YOUNG ALUMNUS of the YEAR

This award honors Mississippi College men and women who have rendered distinguished service to their college, church, and community. Mere prominence is not the criterion. The award is limited to those who, through a long period of years, have worked with marked intelligence and success to promote the highest interest of Mississippi College and their home communities.



## The Right Man for the Job(s)

DR. LLOYD "BO" ROBERTS

ISAIAH 6:8 READS, "THEN I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here I am. Send me.'"

That verse has been a touchstone for Dr. Lloyd Roberts, a professor in the School of Business and the 2009 recipient of the Award of Excellence. Roberts joined MC as a professor in the School of Business in 1982. While his passion is teaching and he is happiest in the classroom, when MC needed his services in other capacities, Dr. Roberts has never hesitated to answer the call. He has served as chair of the department of business administration (1982–1995), dean of the School of Business (1995–2000), vice president of business affairs (2000–2002), interim president (2001–2002), senior vice president for administration and chief financial officer (2002–2006), and treasurer of the Mississippi College Foundation Board (2005– present).

Dr. Roberts stepped out of the classroom and into administration in 2000 at the request of President Dr. Howell Todd, who sought Roberts' expertise in resolving pressing financial issues challenging the university. Roberts assumed the position of vice president of business affairs – the equivalent of chief financial officer – and played a critical role in securing the university's long-term financial stability.

When Dr. Todd retired in 2001, the Mississippi College board of trustees asked Dr. Roberts to play dual roles, serving as both vice president of business affairs and as interim president.

"It was an honor to be asked and to be trusted with so much responsibility, but it was also a little overwhelming," Roberts recalls. "I couldn't have fulfilled those roles with-

out the help and support of so many people at Mississippi College. As far as the hours it required, let's just say my wife, Rowland, is a very understanding person."

Dr. Roberts signed his final piece of paperwork related to the pressing financial issues the same day that Dr. Lee Royce accepted the position as Mississippi College's next president in 2002. Roberts remained on in the newly-created position of chief financial officer until 2006, when he returned full time to his true passion, teaching.

A favorite with his MC students, Dr. Roberts can often be found tossing a baseball with students in the Quad between classes. During his years at MC, Dr. Roberts has mentored hundreds of students, many of whom have returned to campus to thank him for his help in shaping their careers.

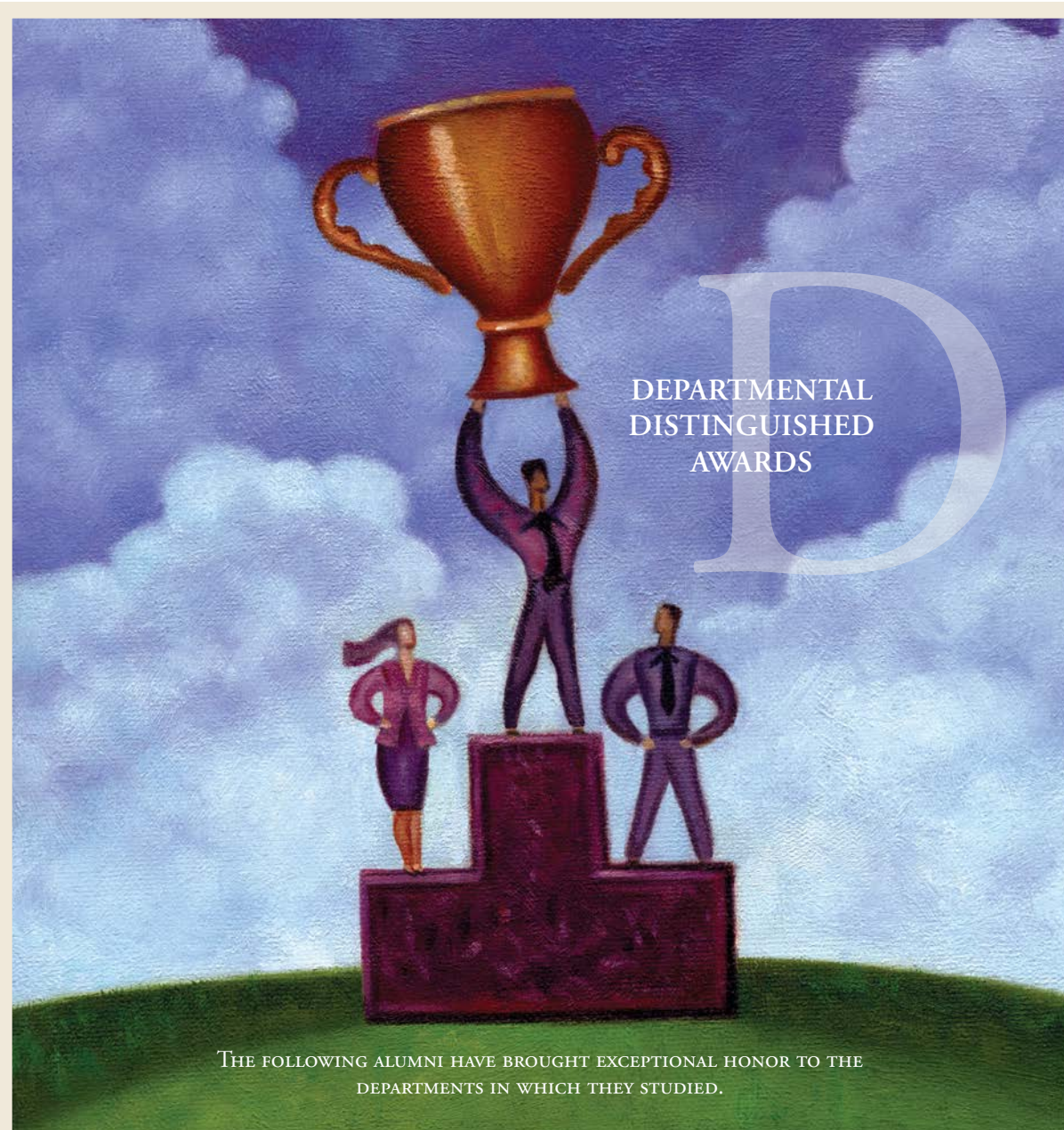
"College teaching is the best job in America," Dr. Roberts says. "You have the chance to make a difference every day, and you get immediate feedback. We're helping students learn how to think. To be there to see that moment of enlightenment when a student suddenly understands a concept is what makes teaching truly worthwhile."

The many positions he's filled at the university have left Dr. Roberts with a permanent appreciation for people at every level of MC, from the president to the custodial staff, and their dedication to their jobs.

"I absolutely loved those people. I'm happiest teaching and I don't really miss working in administration, but I do miss the people. I still stop by Nelson Hall every now and then," Dr. Roberts says with a smile, "but they know it's just to visit with them and not because I'm looking for a job."

### THE AWARD of EXCELLENCE

This award honors men and women who have rendered distinguished service to Mississippi College. Mere prominence is not the criterion. The award is limited to those who, through a long period of years, have worked with marked intelligence and success to promote the highest interests of Mississippi College. The Award of Excellence expresses recognition and gratitude to them for their efforts.



DEPARTMENTAL  
DISTINGUISHED  
AWARDS

THE FOLLOWING ALUMNI HAVE BROUGHT EXCEPTIONAL HONOR TO THE DEPARTMENTS IN WHICH THEY STUDIED.

*Art*

ETOYLE MEADOWS SERMONS '58

Etoyle Sermons is an accomplished artist proficient in many mediums, but her specialty is watercolor. Her ability to interpret subject matter with creativity and feeling has made her an award-winning artist. Sermons taught art at the high school level before joining the faculty of Pensacola (Florida) Junior College, where she developed a continuing art education program for adults. The program grew to include more than 1,000 students, including many public school art teachers. Sermons went on to become a full professor and head of the art department. Since her retirement from Pensacola Junior College in 1997, she has focused on creating her own artwork.

*Biology*

DR. EDGAR "EDDIE" DONAHOE, JR. '85

Raised in rural Sunflower County, Mississippi, Eddie Donahoe's childhood dream was to return home to serve his community as a physician. Donahoe worked to make that

dream a reality, earning his M.D. from the University of Mississippi Medical Center and returning to the Delta as a partner in the Indianola Family Medical Group, where he's served patients since 1992. Dr. Donahoe is also on staff at South Sunflower County Hospital, where he served as Chief of Staff from 2000-2001. He serves on the Mississippi College Alumni Board and is the MC Medical and Dental Alumni Association board advisor, and is a deacon and member of the choir at First Baptist Church of Indianola. Dr. Donahoe enjoys his role as a small town family doctor who still delivers babies, makes house calls, and drives a tractor on his day off.

*Chemistry*

DR. BRADFORD L. THERRELL, JR. '66

Dr. Brad Therrell is one of the world's foremost experts on screening newborns for metabolic conditions and chemistry activities. Dr. Therrell's career in public health includes three decades at the Texas Department of Health, where he was given supervisory responsibility for a clinical chemistry



screening program detecting health problems in the Medicaid population. His leadership abilities led to expansion of his duties to include laboratory management of the statewide newborn screening program for inherited metabolic conditions. From analyzing about 275,000 newborns annually for one condition, Dr. Therrell's laboratory was soon expanded to cover multiple conditions in approximately 600,000 specimens each year – the largest in the world at that time. Dr. Therrell presented his first international report in Japan in 1982, hosted the first international newborn screening meeting in the U.S. in 1986, and in 1987, helped organize the International Society for Neonatal Screening. Dr. Therrell now serves as a research professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and director of the National Newborn Screening and Genetics Resource Center in Austin.

*Christian Studies*

DR. RUSSELL "RUSTY" M. MCINTIRE, JR. '67

Dr. Rusty McIntire is the associate dean for graduate programs with the College of Arts and Sciences at Vanderbilt University. In addition to his administrative duties, Dr. McIntyre teaches an undergraduate seminar in ethics of life and death and an introduction to medical ethics undergraduate course. Dr. McIntyre came to Vanderbilt in 1988 as the first director of the College of Arts and Sciences Learning Center, charged with creating academic counseling, tutorial services, and other academic support programs. His previous positions include service as clinical instructor of medical ethics with the University of Tennessee Center for the Health Sciences, where he designed and taught a medical ethics curriculum to family practice residents, and professor of philosophy and associate dean of Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee. He earned his master's degree and Ph.D. in philosophy from Vanderbilt University.

*Communications*

PETE K. SMITH '94

Pete Smith has built a career helping the leaders of the State of Mississippi communicate with their constituents. As the current communications director for the Mississippi Department of Education, Smith serves as the official spokesperson for the department, managing the activities of a press staff, coordinating statewide and national media events, and handling special projects for the superintendent of education. Smith was formerly press secretary for Governor Haley Barbour and director of communications for the state auditor's office. From 1994-1999, he served as the director of sports information for Mississippi College, compiling stats and coordinating publicity for the university's 12 sports programs. Smith is the current president of the Public Relations Association of Mississippi. He was Mississippi College's 2005 Young Alumnus of the Year.

*Computer Sciences*

STEVEN J. SAFIGAN '83

Steven Safigan is a facilitator and personal coach with Foundations for Tomorrow, Inc. and Foundations Workshops Canada, a non-profit organization he founded that conducts interactive seminars throughout North America. Foundations for Tomorrow equips seminar participants with the

tools and support they need to break through self-imposed limitations and realize true success. When it comes to personal and professional success, Safigan is a shining example. Prior to forming Foundations for Tomorrow, he was president and chairman of the board of Universal Tax Systems, Inc. (UTS), a manufacturer of income tax preparation and electronic filing software used by independent tax preparers, CPAs, and the Internal Revenue Service. Safigan grew UTS from its founding in his home office to more than \$45 million in annual revenues and 400 employees; Safigan and his partners sold UTS in 2004. Safigan founded UTS while still working at his day job as a computer scientist with the Naval Surface Warfare Center, where he designed computer systems for aircraft carriers.

*English*

DR. CHARLINE R. MCCORD '86

Dr. Charline McCord is deputy director of communications/associate director of the Southeast Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies, which provides substance abuse prevention training in the Southeastern United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. She was previously vice president and editor-in-chief of the publishing division of DREAM, a non-profit alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program. Dr. McCord has edited or co-edited a dozen books, including *Christmas Stories from the South's Best Writers*, *Growing Up in Mississippi*, and *Christmas Stories from Mississippi*, and has written and published several short stories, book reviews, and magazine articles. Dr. McCord helped to organize the Arts Council of Clinton and the Clinton Community Theatre and has served as president and a board member of both organizations.

*Health Services Administration*

BEATRICE "BEBE" RICHARDSON '87

Bebe Richardson has devoted her professional life to caring for others. Richardson is the former chief nursing officer/associate hospital director for the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). Since her retirement from UMMC in 2002, she has continued to serve the medical school as part-time manager of special projects. Her distinguished nursing career includes service as director of nursing at Woman's Hospital, acting director of nursing at University Hospital, staff nurse at Mississippi Baptist Hospital, office nurse for a physician in private practice, and head nurse in pediatrics at Mississippi Baptist Hospital. Richardson's long list of volunteer positions includes service on the boards of the Center for Pregnancy Choices, the Mississippi Lions Club, and the Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Services for the Blind. Richardson is a member of the Mississippi Nurses Association Hall of Fame and received a 2002 special commendation from the Mississippi Legislature recognizing 50 years of service as a nurse in Mississippi.

*Kinesiology*

GLEND A CARPENTER HOLLEYMAN '76

Glenda Holleyman is the director of the Leake County Career and Technical Center, which offers career training classes in fields including allied health, the automotive industry, building trades, and business computer technology, as well as GED programs. A former elementary, junior high, and





high school physical education teacher, Holleyman coached many sports, including basketball, track, volleyball, and tennis. From 1977-1993, Holleyman taught physical education and nutrition at Mississippi College, where she also served as the Lady Choctaws' assistant basketball coach and head tennis coach. Holleyman attended MC on a basketball scholarship and was the leading scorer for the 1974 Choctaw team that finished second in the nation. She was selected as a 1976 Olympic Trials finalist in women's basketball and played for the Women's Professional Basketball League's Houston Angels in 1978-79.

#### Mathematics

DR. SELWYN ELLIS '87

Dr. Selwyn Ellis is an associate professor with tenure in the management and information systems department at Louisiana Tech University. He received his doctor of business degree with a major in quantitative analysis and management information systems from Louisiana Tech University in 1993. His academic experience also includes faculty positions at Ouachita Baptist University and Mississippi College, where he served as assistant professor from 1992-95. Dr. Ellis also worked as a programmer/analyst at Mississippi College and Southern Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company. Dr. Ellis has published numerous articles in several information management journals. His current research interests include computer ethics, managerial accounting systems, impacts of ecommerce, and telecommuting.

#### Music

KAY OWENS '00

Kay Owens has taught secondary choral music in public schools for 26 years, including teaching elementary, junior high, and high school choirs in Natchez and Tupelo, Mississippi. Owens recently marked her 11th year teaching and her third year as head director at Martin High School in Arlington, Texas, where she also serves as chair of the fine arts department. Under Owens' direction, Martin High School Chorale debuted at Carnegie Hall in the 2006 National Youth Festival. In addition to her duties at Martin High School, Owens is the organist at First Baptist Church Arlington and is an active member of several professional music educators' organizations.

#### Distinguished Young Alumnus

JEREMY LITTLE '00

Described as a "first-rate tenor" with "a clarion lyric" voice by the *New York Times*, Jeremy Little has been a featured soloist with the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Anchorage Opera, and Des Moines Metro Opera. Performing leading roles in operas including *Roméo et Juliette*, *The Elixir of Love*, and *The Magic Flute*, his portrayals have garnered praise as "remarkable theatrical suavity, revealing a robust tenor to go with the rich characterization" (*Opera News*). Little has also enjoyed an active recital career, appearing in San Francisco, New York (Carnegie Hall), and Washington, D.C. (The Kennedy Center). After graduating from MC, Little received degrees from LSU and The Juilliard

School, apprenticed with the San Francisco Opera, and was awarded a grant to study Italian in Florence, Italy. He recently joined the celebrated Metropolitan Opera Chorus, appearing in over 20 productions during the company's eight-month season.

#### Nursing

DEB BECKENBAUGH WELCH '78

During her 25-year career at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC), Deb Welch became a certified pediatric nurse and obtained her master of science in nursing with certification as a family nurse practitioner. Welch's nursing experience ranges from emergency pediatrics to adult critical care. Following her retirement from UMMC, Welch worked as a family nurse practitioner at a rural health clinic, then joined the nursing school faculty at Mississippi College in January 2005. Welch is the chair of the Mississippi Nurses Association committee on health affairs and the past president, secretary, membership chair, and current education chair for the Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society. She is the faculty counselor and president-elect of the Omicron Lambda chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, the honor society of nursing, and the faculty sponsor for the Mississippi College Student Nurses Association. Welch authored a chapter in the *Clinical Handbook of Pediatric Endocrinology* and has spoken nationally on topics related to pediatric endocrinology.

#### Physics

GREGORY B. TACKETT '82

Greg Tackett is director of system simulation and development with the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center. Tackett has worked for the Department of Defense since 1982 in the field of modeling and simulation (M&S) and is an international leader in the field both academically and professionally. His additional current positions include service as the U.S. national representative to the NATO Modeling and Simulation Group Panel on Conceptual Modeling for Military M&S; the U.S. Army representative to the international Technical Coordination Panel on network enabled weapon systems; and associate editor for the industry journals *Transactions of the Society of Modeling and Simulation International* and *Journal for Defense Modeling and Simulation*. In addition to his B.S. in physics from MC, Tackett completed graduate studies in computer science at the University of Alabama. He is currently enrolled in the executive M.B.A. program at the University of Tennessee and will graduate in December of 2009.

#### Psychology

DR. JAN CUMMINS LEMON '95

Dr. Jan Lemon is the senior counselor at Florence High School in Florence, Mississippi, where she provides students with individual and group counseling and serves as the testing coordinator, college and career planning coordinator, Mississippi virtual on-line school coordinator, and coordinator for dual enrollment. She has also served as an adjunct instructor in the department of counseling and education

at the Meridian branch of Mississippi State University. Dr. Lemon is president of the Mississippi School Counselors Association and a member of the executive board of the Mississippi Counseling Association. She holds a bachelor of arts in business administration from Belhaven University, a master of education in counseling education from Mississippi College, and a Ph.D. in Christian counseling and psychology from Louisiana Baptist University and Theological Seminary. Dr. Lemon is a current Ph.D. candidate in counseling education at Mississippi State University.

#### School of Business

COLIN MALONEY '86

The construction business is in Colin Maloney's blood. Maloney's great-grandfather built the original Sears, Roebuck, and Company in Tupelo, Mississippi, in 1967, and his parents were involved in real estate development, so it came as no surprise when Maloney opened his construction company, Century Construction, in Tupelo in 1997. Maloney began the business with two laborers and one truck. Today, Century Construction employs more than 100 people; in 2008, the company posted total sales in excess of \$30 million. Century Construction is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council and has accredited Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design professionals on staff. His company has received multiple industry awards, but Maloney is most proud of the support Century Construction offers to local non-profit groups, including the Boy Scouts of America and Touched by an Angel Ministries.

#### Sociology and Social Work

DR. NOLLIE WILBUR CARPENTER, JR. '43

Dr. Nollie Wilbur Carpenter served as a high school teacher, coach, and principal and taught at Clarke Memorial College before joining the Mississippi College faculty in 1954. Dr. Carpenter taught and served as chairman of the department of sociology at MC until his retirement in 1986. While his primary focus at MC was teaching, Dr. Carpenter led in the establishment of new programs in social work and applied sociology and spent a summer conducting sociological research in Ireland. In 1997, Dr. Carpenter traveled to Nanning, China, where he taught at Guanzi University. A graduate of Mississippi College, the University of Alabama, and the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Carpenter's lifelong ministry has been teaching people to enrich their lives and enhance their service through an understanding of human relationships.

#### Teacher Education/Leadership

DR. ROBERT N. FORTENBERRY '54

Dr. Robert Fortenberry's distinguished career in education includes service as a high school teacher, coach, and principal; associate professor in the School of Education at Auburn University; assistant superintendent for instruction in Huntsville, Alabama; and 17 years as the Jackson Public School System's Superintendent of Schools. His efforts on behalf of higher education include service on the Mississippi College Business Advisory Committee for Cooperative Education, the Mississippi State University College of



Education Advisory Committee, and the Auburn University School of Education Advisory Board. Dr. Fortenberry's many honors include the Medgar Evers Award presented by the NAACP, the State of Mississippi's Service to Humanity Award, and the Mississippi Educational Administrator of the Year Award. He was twice selected by Executive Educator as among the top 100 educators in North America.

#### MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

##### Lawyer of the Year

ROBERT "BOB" G. ANDERSON '87

Bob Anderson is senior counsel with Butler, Snow, O'Mara, Stevens & Cannada, PLLC. His areas of emphasis include white-collar crime, governmental investigations, commercial litigation, and healthcare law. Anderson's vast trial experience includes prosecuting multi-million dollar cases involving everything from HIPAA healthcare fraud to money laundering schemes to public corruption. Anderson serves as an adjunct professor at MC School of Law, teaching courses in healthcare law, appellate advocacy, and white-collar criminal crime. His distinguished legal career includes clerkships for Judge Glenn Davidson, Judge William H. Barbour, Jr., and Judge Charles Pickering.

##### Young Lawyer of the Year

TINA S. WILLIAMSON '04

Tina Williamson is the director of corporate compliance with Mississippi Children's Home Services in Jackson, Mississippi. She was formerly the director of annual giving and alumni affairs at Mississippi College School of Law, where she also served as co-editor of the *Amicus* alumni magazine. In addition to her J.D., Williamson holds an A.A.S. in respiratory therapy and B.A. degrees in psychology and Biblical studies from Belhaven University. While attending law school, she worked as a respiratory therapist at hospitals in Jackson and Tupelo, Mississippi. After graduating from law school, Williamson worked part-time as a member of a criminal defense team in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Holland. She has lectured on healthcare-related topics and is the author of several articles for corporate compliance and risk management in the medical field.

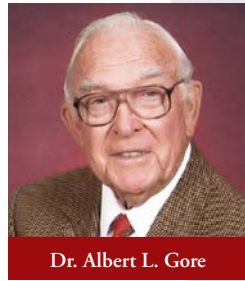
##### BLA Lawyer of the Year

GALE WALKER '03

An associate with the Jackson-based Walker Group law firm, Gale Walker practices in the areas of medical malpractice, professional negligence, and nursing home abuse and neglect. She was previously an attorney with Wilkes & McHugh, and also served as clerk for Judge Leslie Southwick of the Mississippi Court of Appeals. Walker is president of the Magnolia Bar Association, a statewide organization composed primarily of African-American attorneys, and coaches the Frederick Douglass Moot Court teams at the Mississippi College School of Law. Prior to enrolling in MC School of Law, Walker enjoyed a successful, 30-year career as a registered nurse.

# Class Notes

**40s** Dr. Albert L. Gore (B.A. '47) was named Mississippi's Family Physician of the Year at the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians' 60th annual meeting in Sandestin, Florida. The award goes to



Dr. Albert L. Gore

a physician contributing the most to the development of family medicine in the state. Dr. Gore was one of the original members who organized the academy. Dr. Gore is retired and lives in Raymond with his wife, Marianna. They have five children, 14 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

**50s** Dr. William N. Still, Jr. (B.S.Ed. '53) was awarded the Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt Naval History Prize for his book *Crisis at Sea: The U.S. Navy in European Waters in World War I* (University Press of Florida). *Crisis at Sea* is the first comprehensive history of the United States Navy in European waters during World War I. Still is a professor emeritus of history and former director of the maritime history and underwater archeology program at East Carolina University.

Jose' Orraca ('59) received an honorary membership from the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) at the annual meeting of AIC. Orraca conducted ground-breaking research at the Rochester Institute of Technology and Eastman Kodak that laid the foundation upon which present-day photography conservation treatments are built.

**60s** Dr. Thomas "Tommy" Lovorn (B.A. '60) retired in 2004 after 19 years as senior pastor of Monumental Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia. This year he came out of retirement to pastor Storehouse Baptist Church in Richmond. Dr. Lovorn and his wife, Janie, were honored last year for 40 years' support and service on the executive board of the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf. Dr. and Mrs. Lovorn lead Bible study tours of Turkey, Greece, Italy, Israel, Jordan, and Egypt. Dr. Lovorn's weekly Bible Q&A column is published in the *Progress-Index* newspaper of Petersburg, and e-mailed into more than 20 countries. Those wishing to receive his column may e-mail him at [drtom@tomlovorn.us](mailto:drtom@tomlovorn.us) or read archived columns at [www.tomlovorn.us](http://www.tomlovorn.us).

Bob Allen Dunaway's (B.A. '61) newest book titled *Things Remembered . . . Recollections about Recollections* (Brick Streets Press) will benefit scholarships for Mississippi College art students. The book is a compilation of columns Dunaway penned

over the years for the *Tylertown Times* newspaper in his native Walthall County. For more information on the book, contact MC's graphic design coordinator and art instructor Michael Hataway at 601.925.7351 or [hataway@mc.edu](mailto:hataway@mc.edu).

Dr. Richard S. Myers (B.S. '64) was honored by Delta State University (DSU) with the naming of the physical chemistry laboratory in Walters Science Hall as the Myers Physical Chemistry Laboratory and the establishment of the Richard S. Myers College Arts and Sciences Enhancement Fund. Dr. Myers was employed at DSU for 35 years, serving as professor of chemistry, director of institutional research and planning, and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He and his wife, Harriet (B.S.E. '65), reside in Collierville, Tennessee.

Eugene C. "Gene" Tullos (B.S.Ed. '64) was inducted into the Mississippi Association of Community & Junior Colleges Sports Hall of Fame. Tullos practices law in Smith County.

Dr. Mike Simoneaux (B.M.Ed. '65) has been named vice president for advancement services at Truett-McConnell College in Cleveland, Georgia. Simoneaux has been at Truett-McConnell since 1999, serving as vice president for academic services for the past several years and holding the faculty rank of professor of music.

Ron Harrist (B.S.Ed. '66) retired as news editor at The Associated Press in Jackson after 41 years.

Senator Dean Kirby (B.S. '66) was named "Champion of Small Business" for Mississippi by the National Coalition for Capital. The award salutes Kirby's leadership role in supporting economic development initiatives that help small business by providing access to funding for entrepreneurs and growing businesses.

Dr. Walter Price (B.A. '69, M.Ed. '72) published a new book *God Focus* (CrossBooks Publishing). The book examines God's holiness as seen through the eyes of the prophet Isaiah. For more information, visit [www.crossbooks.com](http://www.crossbooks.com).

**70s** Dr. Rory Lee (B.A. '71, M.Ed. '73) has assumed duties as president of the Baptist Child Care Executives. The national association of chief administrative officers from childcare facilities supported by Southern Baptists represents 19 states and the District of Columbia.

Dr. Judy Lewis (B.S.Ed. '71, M.Ed. '74) has been named executive director of Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB), a Jackson-based agency and popular network of public TV and radio stations plus learning and community outreach



## THE END OF AN ERA

DR. MORRIS CHAPMAN ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT

Dr. Morris Chapman '63 has announced that he will retire as president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee on September 30, 2010. At the time of his retirement, Dr. Chapman will have led the Executive Committee for 18 years.

Dr. Chapman's long record of service also includes two terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1990-1992). He has traveled and spoken extensively in the United States and in numerous foreign countries, including participating in the Kenyan Coast Crusade in Mombasa, Kenya, and the Baptist World Congress in Seoul, South Korea.

In 1979 at the age of 38, Dr. Chapman became pastor of the 7,700-member First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas. For each of the 13 years he served as pastor, the church's baptisms and cooperative program gifts were in the top one percent in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Prior to accepting the Wichita Falls pastorate, Dr. Chapman served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Albuquerque, New Mexico, the First Baptist Church of Rogers, Texas, and the First Baptist Church of Woodway in Waco, Texas.

Dr. Chapman graduated with distinction from Mississippi College and received his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. During his freshman year at MC, he served as minister of music and youth at Colonial Heights Baptist Church in Jackson.

"In college, the one person who influenced me the most was Doc Quick," Dr. Chapman says, referring to MC's former vice president of alumni and student affairs. "As he has to so many students and former students, Doc has been a lifelong friend."

Dr. Chapman has been married for 46 years to his college sweetheart, the former Jodi Francis, a registered nurse and former trustee of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Chapmans have two children and eight grandchildren. The couple will continue to live in Nashville following Dr. Chapman's retirement, although as a native Mississippian, his home state and its people are never far from his mind.

"No matter where I've lived, I've always thanked the Lord for the privilege of growing up in Mississippi among godly people who taught me how to love the Lord Jesus and His Word," Dr. Chapman says. "For the rest of my life, I will continue to give thanks to the Lord for the wonderful people who were a part of my Mississippi experiences as a boy and as a college student. Due to God's grace and their witness, my life has been fulfilling."

services. MPB's TV signal reaches 2.2 million people. Its radio stations touch the lives of more than 127,000 Mississippians each week.

Dr. Randy Easterling (B.S. '73) was installed as president of the Mississippi State Medical Association. Dr. Easterling is in private practice in Vicksburg.

Wyatt Waters (B.A. '77, M.A. '82), award-winning watercolor artist, has joined Mississippi Public Broadcasting's weekly series *Southern Expressions*. The program airs Thursdays at 8 p.m. on MPB's statewide network of stations. The Mississippi Main Street Association recognized the Wyatt Waters Art Gallery, owned by Waters and his wife, Vicki (B.S.Ed. '79), as its merchant of the year.

Tom Gladney (B.S.Ed. '78, M.Ed. '79) is Biloxi High School's new athletic director. Gladney coached at MC for 15 years and has spent the last 10 years at Midway High School in Texas. He has a combined record of 620-411 in 25 years of coaching baseball.

**80s** Thomas B. Alexander (B.S.B.A. '80), general counsel for AT&T Mississippi, has been elected president of the Hinds County Bar



Thomas B. Alexander

Association (HCBA). The HCBA serves attorneys in Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties and is the largest volunteer bar organization in the state.

Dr. Douglas H. Vinzant (B.S. '80) has been named vice president for administration at the University of Wyoming. Vinzant served as senior associate vice president for planning and administration at the University of Illinois (Urbana) since 2007. He has 23 years' experience in higher education with financial and infrastructure management and strategic planning.

J. Carter Thompson, Jr. (B.A. '81) has been promoted to leader of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz. Based in Jackson, he will oversee more than 70 professionals across the law firm's 15 offices.

Dr. Anne Fortenberry (B.S.N. '84) has written a new Bible study called *Faith that Works: A Topical Study on the Book of*



Christy Case Keirn

*James*. Fortenberry draws upon her 10 years' experience as a missionary in Muslim countries and her years as a registered nurse to offer an in-depth look at how to daily live out the Christian faith.

Christy Case Keirn (B.S.B.A. '85) was installed as president of the National Association of Junior Auxiliaries (NAJA) at the association's annual conference. NAJA is

## A LESSON THAT STILL RINGS TRUE



My father completed his degree at Mississippi College by going to night classes while working full time and raising four kids. I was only eight years old when my dad took me to the MC bookstore in 1967 to pick up his class ring, but I remember that moment as if it were yesterday. Dad was beaming as the lady handed him the ring box. When we got back in the car, we just sat there for a while, admiring the ring and talking. My father explained that it wasn't the ring itself he was so happy about, but the accomplishment it represented.

"Everyone has challenges and obstacles in his life, but never, ever accept any excuses from yourself or anyone else," he told me. "No matter how hard something might seem, there's someone else in the world who has a more difficult challenge. Faith lit the path along the way to my goals, and this ring represents one of them."

My father, Ramon Tate, Sr. has a severe physical handicap; something as simple as standing up has always been difficult for him. He's now 80 years old, long since retired from his career as an accountant. More than four decades have passed since that moment in the car, but I have never once since that day seen my dad without his MC class ring. And every time he looks down at that ring, I know my father is thinking about the challenges he faced to earn it, and how faith lit his path. — Darrell Tate '83

IF YOU HAVE A SPECIAL MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE MOMENT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE, PLEASE E-MAIL YOUR STORY TO TRACEY HARRISON AT THARRISO@MC.EDU.

"No matter how hard something might seem, there's someone else in the world who has a more difficult challenge. Faith lit the path along the way to my goals, and this ring represents one of them."

a non-profit service organization dedicated to community improvement by meeting the needs of children, youth, and family. Keim serves as the director of public relations and marketing for Arkansas State University-Mountain Home.

Anne Harvey Everett (B.S.N. '88) received her master of science degree in nursing from Delta State University. Anne and her husband, Kevin, have two children.

**90s** Walter Johnson (J.D. '90), a partner in Watkins & Eager in Jackson, has been elected a fellow. Johnson began his law career with Stennis & McDonald in Gulfport.

Dr. Reid Bishop (B.S. '93) is the new director of Audubon's Mississippi River Field Institute in Vicksburg. The Institute is a broad-based educational and science program to support Audubon's conservation efforts along the Mississippi.

Anthony Beazley (B.S. '93) was promoted to chief of chaplain service at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Steffanie Haskins Methvin (B.A. '94) is the new director of children and family ministry at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Dallas, Texas. Steffanie and her husband, Greg, have two daughters.

Robert (B.A. '94) and Tracy (Harris, B.A. '94) Sugg have published a book of Tracy's sculptures, *In Pursuit of the Artist's Arcanum*. Also a potter, Robert assists with the monuments Tracy produces, and together they have completed monuments to Congressman Sonny Montgomery, revolutionary war hero and Polish freedom fighter Tadeusz Kosciuszko, and an 18-foot by 34-foot wall installation depicting Christ and the sacraments of the church. They have four children and reside in Wartrace, Tennessee.

Shane Williams (B.S. '94, M.S.S. '95) is the new campus police chief at Meridian Community College. Williams worked for 11 years with the Mississippi Department of Corrections as a probation and parole officer as well as serving as a police officer in Newton. He also taught criminal justice at East Central Community College.

## SAY "CHEESE!"



Robby Followell '07 majored in graphic design at MC, but a photography trip to Africa and an internship with one of the South's premier wedding photographers led him to his true calling as a professional photographer. While he specializes in capturing weddings, Followell also lends his considerable talent to his alma mater, photographing the Mississippi College *Beacon* magazine and the Mississippi College School of Law *Amicus* magazine.

"My philosophy and approach to photography are simple: capture the fun of real life," Followell says. "My goal is to create still images that absorb the viewer in the moment, in the experience. It's both my passion for art and love for people that allow me to accomplish that goal."

In 2009, Followell opened a studio and office in the historic business district of Clinton, Mississippi. Five months after officially opening its doors, followell photography was recognized as the Best Photographer in the Jackson area in the 2009 Best of the WAPT A-List Awards.

"The real credit for my success so far belongs to my Jesus and my wife, Jessica," Followell continues. "It's a true team effort — Jesus sustains and Jessica supports. Now, if I could only learn to listen to both of them a whole lot more..."



## FROM CHOCTAW TO HEAD REBEL

DR. DAN JONES '71 BECOMES THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI'S 16TH CHANCELLOR

In July 2009, Dr. Daniel W. Jones assumed leadership of the University of Mississippi, which includes not only the main campus in Oxford, but also the University of Mississippi Medical School (UMMC) in Jackson, the Advanced Education Center in Tupelo, and the DeSoto County Center in Southaven. Total enrollment on all campuses is more than 17,000.

"There are some differences, but also a lot of similarities between Mississippi College and Ole Miss," Dr. Jones says. "At both universities, I see people who care for one another like a family, and people who identify with and care very deeply about their school."

Prior to his appointment as chancellor, Dr. Jones was vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the school of medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He previously operated a private practice in Laurel, Mississippi, worked in Korea as a medical missionary, and served as president of the American Heart Association. Dr. Jones graduated from MC in 1971, earned his M.D. from UMMC in 1975, and completed his residency in internal medicine at UMMC in 1978.

"My education and experience at Mississippi College have served me throughout my entire career and continue to benefit me in my new role as chancellor," Dr. Jones says. "At MC, I gained a strong sense of discipline and of responsibility — qualities that are vital if one is going to assume a leadership position."

Dr. Jones is a former member of the MC board of trustees and the former national president of the MC Alumni Association. His wife, Lydia, is also an MC graduate. Dr. Jones considers himself fortunate to have strong ties to not one, but two outstanding Mississippi universities. Asked to definitively identify which colors he now bleeds — blue and gold or red and blue — Dr. Jones says with a laugh, "*Beacon* readers probably won't like it, but from where I'm sitting these days, I'd better say red and blue." — Photo by Robert Jordan

Joe Roberts (M.C.P. '95) has opened a consulting practice for corporations marketing to Latino populations.

Joey Smith (B.S. '95, M.S. '96) published his first book, *The Blender*, with independent distributor Capital C. Smith's book focuses on his military service in the Middle East and his interaction with a diverse group of men "blending" together during wartime.

Margaret M. Swarts (M.M. '98) received an education specialist degree from Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia. She teaches music at Sixes Elementary School in Canton, Georgia.

**00s** Paul Chrestman, Jr. (B.S.Ed. '00, M.S.S. '03) has been named principal of Hernando Middle School in Hernando, Mississippi. Chrestman received his master's degree in educational leadership in 2008 from Delta State University.

Rodney Markos (B.S. '00) received the Regional Commissioner's Award from the Social Security Administration. The honor recognized his consistently exceeding expectations in the areas of efficiency and exceptional customer service. Markos, service representative with the Social Security Administration in Birmingham, Alabama, since 2005, has recently been promoted to a benefit authorizer.

Dr. Pamela Tolbert-Bynum (M.Ed. '01) has been appointed academic division director of the arts and humanities division at Naugatuck Valley Community College in Waterbury, Connecticut.

Ben Ingram (B.S. '03), the voice of the Mississippi Braves, was named the 2009 Southern League Radio Broadcaster of the Year.

Stacey Parham (Gaines, B.A. '03, M.A. '06) is a Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Alabama. Stacey and her husband, Jason, reside in McCalla, Alabama.

Jennifer Lynch (B.S.Ed. '04) received a master's degree in library science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Lynch is a media specialist at Campbell Elementary in Anchorage, Alaska.

Daniel Wentland (M.B.A. '04) published his second book, *Organizational Performance in a Nutshell* (Information Age Publishing). His book addresses the growing need for a more effective relationship between managers and employees. For more information, visit [www.infoagepub.com](http://www.infoagepub.com).

Shamwun Williams (B.A. '05) is editor of the *Northeast Louisiana Sentinel*.

Lauren McDaniel (B.S. '08) has joined Obsidian Public Relations in Memphis, Tennessee as an account specialist. McDaniel previously served as an intern at Obsidian.



## UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

### CAREER DAY FEBRUARY 9, 2010

The MC Office of Career Services is looking for alumni who have found their dream jobs. These alums are invited to visit the Clinton campus and share their experiences with current Mississippi College students as presenters during MC's annual Career Day on February 9, 2010. If you'd like to come back to campus as a presenter, contact Karen Lindsey-Lloyd at 601.925.3901 or career-services@mc.edu.

### ALUMNI GATHERINGS SPRING 2010

President Lee Royce and representatives of the alumni office will be traveling to the following locations this spring:

Hattiesburg, Oxford, and Meridian, Mississippi  
Memphis, Tennessee  
Birmingham, Alabama  
Atlanta, Georgia  
New York, New York

If you are interested in connecting with alumni in your area or in having an alumni event, please contact the alumni office at 601.925.3252.

### SPRING SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET WITH STEVE FORBES MARCH 29, 2010

MC's third annual scholarship banquet will feature keynote speaker Steve Forbes, editor-in-chief of *Forbes* magazine, CEO of Forbes Media, and one of America's most opinionated business leaders. Tickets are \$125 per person. Sponsorship opportunities, some of which include a private reception with Steve Forbes, are also available. For more information, contact Amy Rowan at 601.925.3257 or rowan@mc.edu.

### MC NIGHT WITH THE MISSISSIPPI BRAVES APRIL 2010

Mississippi College alumni, students, and friends are invited to MC Night with the Mississippi Braves at Trustmark Park April 2010. Join us for a night of baseball, hot dogs, fun, and fellowship at the home of the Atlanta Braves' minor league team. For

more information, contact Andy Kanengiser, the MC Night organizer and university news coordinator, at 601.925.7760 or kanengis@mc.edu or Ross Aven, director of the alumni affairs office, at 601.925.3228.

### SPORTS HALL OF FAME BANQUET APRIL 24, 2010

The Sports Hall of Fame pays tribute to those superior Choctaw athletes, coaches, and administrators who have made major contributions to the honor and fame of MC, and have continued to demonstrate the positive values learned through competing in intercollegiate sports. This award is the highest honor the university can bestow on former athletes. The M Club plays a vital role in nominating and voting for members of the Sports Hall of Fame, as well as planning the annual Sports Hall of Fame Banquet. To find out how you can be involved, visit [www.gochoctaws.com](http://www.gochoctaws.com).

### SPRING ATHLETIC GOLF TOURNAMENT MAY 28, 2010

The Mississippi College Trustmark Classic Golf Tournament is a major fund-raiser for MC's athletic department. The annual tournament at Patrick Farms offers the friends of Mississippi College athletics the opportunity to support our 400 dedicated student-athletes and coaches while enjoying a fine golf outing. Proceeds from the tournament fund critical needs ranging from equipment purchases to facilities enhancements. For more information, contact Mike Jones at 601.925.3819 or Jones01@mc.edu.

### 50-YEAR CLUB REUNION WEEKEND HONORING THE CLASS OF 1960 HOMECOMING 2010

The Class of 1960 will celebrate its Golden Anniversary during Homecoming 2010, and the 50-Year Club will welcome new members into the club at that time. Traditionally, the 50-Year Club has welcomed new members in April; as this year represents a break with that tradition, the 50-Year Club officers plan to instead host a new event on campus during the spring semester. More information will be available soon.

Mississippi Braves photo by Rick Guy

## Births & Adoptions

Paul (B.S.Ed. '00, M.S.S. '03) and Tricia (Parlin, B.S. '03) Chrestman, Eleanor Grace Chrestman, July 3, 2009

Angie (Hale, B.S. '00, M.S. '02) and Mitch Miller, Marshall Thomas Miller, August 5, 2009

Kim (Yarbrough, B.S.B.A. '00) and Dr. Fleetwood Vincent Loustalot III, Logan Gail Loustalot, October 6, 2008

Joseph (B.A. '02) and Jennifer (McGee, B.S. '02) Luby, Sadie Marie Luby, August 13, 2009. Sadie Marie is welcomed by big brother William Hunter (3).

Ben (B.A. '03) and Estelle Sones, Jackson McKee Sones, March 31, 2009. Jackson is welcomed by big brother Benjamin (3) and sister Caroline (2).

Claire (Waycaster, B.A. '06) and Wesley Strebeck, Kuyper Heath Strebeck, November 20, 2008

## Marriages

Iram Shahid Nazir (B.S. '01) and Joel Lawrence Gaddis, April 11, 2009

Stacy Denise Gaines (B.A. '03, M.A. '06) and Jason Larry Parham, June 13, 2009

Robby Brown (B.A. '06, M.S.S. '08) and Adriane Stephenson (B.S.B.A. '06), October 25, 2008

Keating Simons Coleman (J.D. '07) and Patrick Hayne Lowery, July 18, 2009

Bethany Boteler (B.S.N. '09) and Josh Sabins, June 12, 2009

Jenny Baker (B.S.B.A. '09) and Tyler Blount (B.S.B.A. '07), June 27, 2009

Kayla Mason (B.S.Ed. '09) and Kevin Fowler (B.S. '08), July 11, 2009

Courtney Strong (B.S. '06) and Benjamin Davis (B.S.B.A. '05), July 25, 2009

Heather Hughes (B.S.W. '08) and Elliott Vines (B.S.B.A. '06, M.B.A. '07), August 8, 2009

## In Memoriam

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE EXTENDS SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE FOLLOWING ALUMNI, FRIENDS AND FORMER FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS.

### Alumni

Dr. Jimmy G. Walker ('32) December, 2000

Dr. Alfred "Freddy" Habeeb ('35) August 22, 2009

Dr. Everette Irl Howell (B.A. '36) September 13, 2009

Dr. Bowen C. Dees (B.A. '37, former MC physics professor) June 15, 2009

Flora Earls Marshall (Hillman '38) June 10, 2004

Regina Sugg (Hillman '41, B.S. '43) December 14, 2008

Dale P. Jones ('42) May 11, 2007

Maude E. Thames ('42) June 16, 2009

Dr. Hubert L. Prevost, Sr. (B.S. '43) December 30, 2008

Dr. Eugene Carter Sample, Jr. (B.S. '51) May, 2009

Rev. Walter Frank Horton (B.A. '52, former Baptist Campus Minister director at MC) June 18, 2009

Betty Joyce Bush (B.A. '53) March 14, 2009

Rev. W.J. "Dub" Hughes (B.A. '53) March 14, 2009

Rudolph Erick Larson, Jr. (B.S. '54) July 3, 2009

George Roy Davis ('55) December 12, 2008

Rev. Ted G. Langford (B.S.Ed. '56, M.Ed. '61) March 23, 2009

Rev. Kenneth Clinton "Ken" Duke, Sr. (B.S.B.A. '57) April 7, 2009

Terry Dale Monk (B.S. '58) November 4, 2008

Carolyn Marie Nance (B.A. '58) August 12, 2009

Henry D. Mulholland (M.B.A. '78) May 15, 2009

### Friends

Essie Mae Barber, mother of Tommy Lee Alexander, housekeeping, July, 2009

James R. Ellis, father of Teresa Jarnagin, professor of nursing, July 17, 2009

Hap Hederman, chairman and CEO of Hederman Brothers Printing, August 4, 2009

William "Billy" Holyfield III, brother of Deborah Bolian, assistant professor of nursing, May 14, 2009

J.P. Hubbard, father-in-law of Eric Pratt, vice president for Christian development, July 29, 2009

James McClendon, brother of Hattie Cavett, housekeeping, April 12, 2009

George Regan, father-in-law of Edward Dacus, associate professor in music, August 23, 2009

Doris Reeves, mother-in-law of Tina Reeves, secretary in Department of Chemistry, July 17, 2009

Christine Woodall, mother-in-law of Deborah Woodall, assistant professor of computer sciences, May 28, 2009

**IF YOU HAVE NEWS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE,** please send it to Class Notes, *Beacon* magazine, Box 4003, Clinton, MS 39058 or e-mail to [pr@mc.edu](mailto:pr@mc.edu). Please provide your class year(s), degree(s) and phone number for verification with each note. Photos submitted should be of professional quality.



## PORTRAITS FROM THE HALL OF FAME

The Mississippi College Hall of Fame was established in 1960 to annually honor four senior students for their outstanding leadership ability, scholastic achievement, extracurricular activities participation, contribution to student life, and dedication to serving God and their fellowman.



The *Beacon* catches up with Jerry Rankin '64 and Bobbye Simmons Rankin '66, members of the Mississippi College Hall of Fame.

Jerry Rankin and Bobbye Simmons met at the top of the MC library steps in the fall of 1962, when Jerry was a junior and Bobbye was a freshman.

"Each of us had noticed the other because of our mutual involvement in the Baptist Student Union," Jerry recalls. "We didn't begin dating until the following year, but after that, we were a number!"

On January 22, 1966 – the last day of Bobbye's final exams – the two were married in a ceremony capped by the members of the BSU singing "O Zion Haste" as their recessional. Their wedding marked the beginning of a fulfilling, dedicated, and often adventurous life together in service for the Lord. Over the next four decades, God would lead Jerry and Bobbye into service as missionaries worldwide, culminating with Jerry Rankin's current role as president of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention.



In 1970, the Foreign Mission Board (now IMB) appointed the young couple as missionaries to Indonesia, where they served for the next decade. Jerry Rankin went on to work with IMB in India and in South and Southeast Asia. He eventually became the area director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, where he oversaw the work of 480 missionaries in 15 countries. In 1993, after serving overseas for 23 years, Jerry Rankin was elected IMB's 10th president.

"I never anticipated that I would move beyond the niche where God had called us to serve as missionaries in Indonesia," Rankin says. "I had not even attended a Southern

Baptist Convention annual meeting until the year prior to my election. I reluctantly accepted the role not out of any desire for status...but only to make the greatest impact on reaching a lost world that my life could make."

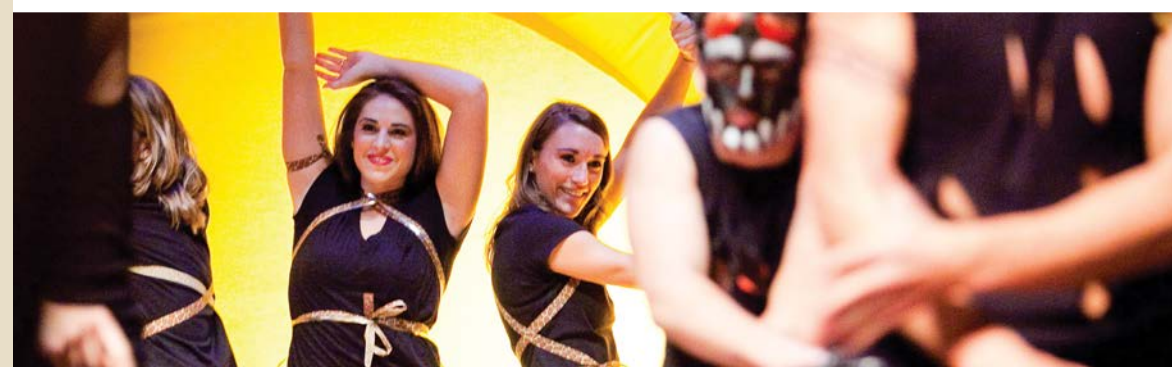
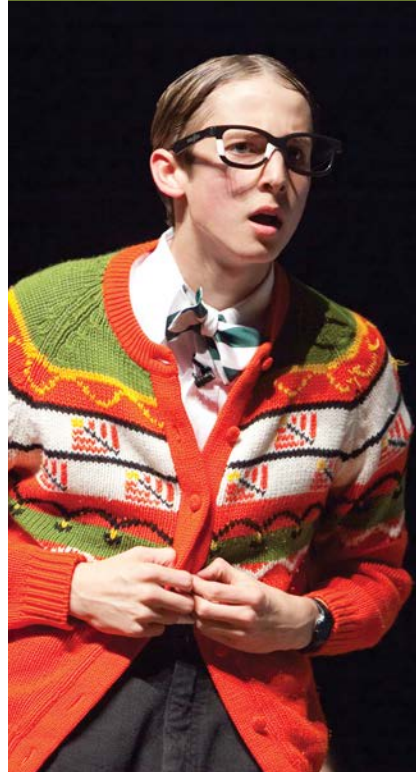
When Rankin assumed leadership of the IMB in 1993, the organization saw more than 4,000 missionaries help start more than 2,000 churches in 142 countries. Last year, more than 5,500 IMB missionaries planted nearly 27,000 churches and registered a total of 1,190 "people groups" worldwide. The move from counting the number of countries served to tracking the number of ethnic people groups reached was one of the biggest changes Rankin implemented as the IMB's leader.

In July 2010, Jerry Rankin will retire as IMB president. At that time, his 17 years of service will represent the second-longest tenure of any IMB president in the last century. After a lifetime of traveling the globe teaching, sharing, leading, and encouraging others to answer God's call, Jerry and Bobbye plan to return to their native Mississippi, where they first heard the call to the mission field.

"Bobbye and I have been all over the world and experienced a cosmopolitan life of diverse cultures, but the catfish and collard greens keep drawing us back," Jerry Rankin says. "We're looking forward to basing our next stage of ministry among churches who love missions and nurtured us in our personal call and walk with the Lord."

"Our goal is to finish well and honor our Lord," Bobbye Rankin adds.

For the former BSU president and former MC homecoming queen who've dedicated their entire lives to serving God and their fellowman, it's a worthy goal indeed.



JERRY RANKIN  
*Hall of Fame '64*  
Chief Justice,  
Judicial Council  
President Pro-Tem,  
Senate  
Senator of the Year

Executive and  
Greater Councils,  
Baptist Student Union  
President, Baptist  
Student Union  
Alpha Chi  
President, Phi  
Alpha Theta

Vice-president,  
ODK  
Circle K  
Who's Who in  
American Colleges  
and Universities

BOBBYE SIMMONS  
RANKIN  
*Hall of Fame '66*  
Homecoming Queen  
Miss Mississippi  
College  
Class Favorite

President,  
Freshman Dorm  
Who's Who in  
American Colleges  
and Universities  
Women's Affairs  
Board



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TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.