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Seven Inducted into School of Education Alumni Hall of Fame

Ole Miss graduates honored for teaching, service and leadership

JUNE 25, 2018 BY KATHLEEN MURPHY



Tom Meredith (left), Sidney Henderson, Deborah McKinney, Kathleen Grigsby, Sylvia Ferguson, Bob Ferguson, Pam Smith and Elen Shelton. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi School of Education** recently inducted seven Mississippians into the fourth class of its Alumni Hall of Fame.

Collectively, this year's inductees have committed more than 240 years to improving education from preschool through college in Mississippi and across the nation.

The 2018 inductees include Kathleen Grigsby of Jackson, Thomas C. Meredith of Oxford, Ellen Shelton of Oxford, Pamela Smith of Jackson and the late Dorothy Henderson of Oxford.

Tupelo residents Bob and Sylvia Ferguson, co-winners of the school's Outstanding Service Award, were also honored during the ceremony on campus in May.

The School of Education Alumni Advisory Board selected honorees from nominations submitted earlier this year.

"Each of our Hall of Fame recipients is a model for our current students and alumni to emulate," said David Rock, UM education dean. "With over two centuries of dedicated service among them, they represent the vast impact that educators can make over the course of their careers."

Grigsby, the youngest person to be inducted into the education school's Alumni Hall of Fame with 20 years of service, received both her bachelor's degree in education in 1998 and her master's degree in 1999 from UM.

She is the principal of Barack Obama IB Elementary School, formerly known as Davis Magnet IB Elementary School in Jackson, Mississippi. The A-rated International Baccalaureate elementary school was the top-ranked elementary school in all of Mississippi in 2017.

"I still can't articulate how much being inducted into the Hall of Fame means to me," Grigsby said. "I'm grateful and thankful to everyone who selected me to be honored."

Grigsby has a track record of transforming low-performing schools. She previously led Marshall Elementary School in Jackson from an F-rated school to a C-rated school in three years as principal.

Meredith, who has served more than 46 years in higher education, earned his doctorate from the School of Education in 1971.

Meredith progressed in roles throughout his career including high school teacher, high school principal, professor, vice chancellor of the University of Mississippi, president of Western Kentucky University, chancellor of the University of Alabama system, chancellor of the University of Georgia system and commissioner of higher education for Mississippi's eight public universities.

"It's a great honor," Meredith said. "It is special to be honored by this school, but I'm more honored to just be recognized by this place because it is so special to me."

Shelton, who is director of pre-college programs within the **UM Division of Outreach and Continuing Education** at Ole Miss, received a master's degree in 1994 and a doctorate in 2000 from the School of Education.

Shelton is administrator of the online University of Mississippi High School, which has grown from 60 to 1,500 students in recent years. She has also served as an instructor at both high school and collegiate levels in past 26 years. In her role at UM, she has also mentored hundreds of K-12 Mississippi teachers

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Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

through the [UM Writing Project](#).

"I'm overwhelmed by this incredible honor," Shelton said. "I hope I'm giving back a fraction of what I have been given by the School of Education."

Smith, a longtime member of UM's Education Alumni Advisory Board, earned her doctorate in higher education from UM in 2001. In 2004, she led the Mississippi Council on Economic Education as president for six years, increasing funding by more than 400 percent and teacher training by more than 250 percent.

She also served in several roles with the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, including chief public affairs officer.

Her husband, Jerome Smith, was inducted into the charter class of the Alumni Hall of Fame in 2015.

"I'm extremely humbled to be inducted into the Hall of Fame," Smith said. "I'm so thankful for this award. I hope to continue to do my part for the School of Education."

Henderson, who died in 2015, is being inducted posthumously by special provision. She was the first full-time African-American to serve as a faculty member in the history of the UM School of Education.

She became a UM faculty member in 1978 and retired in 1998. With 43 years in public education, she began her career as a grade school teacher in Mississippi and Tennessee before settling down in Oxford. Henderson's family accepted the award at the ceremony on her behalf.

"It is an honor to have my mother inducted into the Hall of Fame," said Deborah McKinney, Henderson's daughter. "It's an accumulation of everything my family has stood for. We're very thankful and very grateful that she is being honored."

The Fergusons, who have collectively dedicated more than 66 years to public education as teachers, coaches, principals and superintendents, received the Outstanding Service Award, which is a special recognition allowing UM to honor noneducation alumni.

After retiring in 1997, the couple established the Tri-County Educational Foundation in 2000, which is funded by charitable bingo operations in the northeast corner of the state. The foundation has donated almost \$12 million – providing scholarships to 3,000 students at 33 different schools and almost \$2 million to 114 Ole Miss students.

"I'm so flattered to be honored with this award, especially considering all of the people we are being honored alongside," Sylvia Ferguson said.

"In my career, I have always been the one honoring people and acknowledging their success, so this is a little different for me to be the one being honored," Bob Ferguson said. "We do appreciate the recognition though, even though that's not what we do it for, but it certainly is appreciated."

The previous Alumni Hall of Fame inductees include Suzie Adcock, Jahnae Barnett, Cecil Brown, Thomas Burke, Robert Depro, Laura Dunn Jolly, Robert Khayat, Milton Kuykendall, Carole Lynn Meadows, Judith Reynolds, Jean Shaw, Jerome Smith, Cathy Stewart and Theopolis Vinson.

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