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## A Family of Luckyday Scholars

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## A Family of Luckyday Scholars

Chavez siblings grateful for common scholarship, Ole Miss experiences

JANUARY 17, 2023 BY SARA MAHMOUD

FaTvLiErCcsMPrSt



UM junior Christene Chavez (standing, center, in gray sweatshirt) and other Luckyday Scholars put together Halloween treat bags as a community service project. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Leaving the comfort and familiarity of a small town to join thousands of other students at the **University of Mississippi** can be a daunting experience for many freshmen.

That wasn't the case for Christene Chavez.

When she first stepped on the Ole Miss campus two years ago as a freshman, Chavez felt as if she had a family and a support network waiting for her. Both her older siblings, Jodie Chavez Alberts and Stephen Chavez, has attended UM.

"My siblings had shared some of the lessons they learned at Ole Miss, especially when they first started," said Christene Chavez, a junior accounting and public policy leadership major.

And like her siblings, Chavez is a **Luckyday Success Scholar**. That brought a built-in sense of security, she said

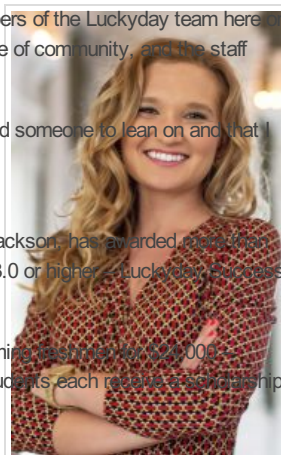
"I knew I had other Luckyday Scholars to connect with and that members of the Luckyday team here on campus were there for me," she said. "Luckyday creates a great sense of community, and the staff does a wonderful job of welcoming new scholars."

"This amazing scholarship program helped me realize that I always had someone to lean on and that I should never feel alone. You always have someone to go to, and they always offer you help."

Since the program's inception in 2000, the Luckyday Foundation, of Jackson, has awarded more than 2,000 students – all Mississippi residents with a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher – Luckyday Success Scholarships.

At Ole Miss, the program provides 80 Luckyday Scholarships to incoming freshmen for \$24,000 – \$6,000 annually for four years – and 25 community college transfer students each receive a scholarship for \$12,000, paid at \$6,000 annually for two years.

Luckyday Scholars are engaged in four areas: scholarship, community, service and leadership. Freshmen scholars can also participate in an annual retreat that includes an opportunity for campus tours and to get to know peer leaders, faculty and staff members.



Jodie Chavez Alberts

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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

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During their time as students at Ole Miss, Luckyday Scholars continue to receive support if they meet minimum requirements, which include maintaining a minimum GPA, participating in Luckyday programming and living their first year in the Luckyday Residential College. A living-learning community, the Luckyday Residential College includes a resident faculty fellow, a dining hall, its own library and an exercise facility.

The Chavez siblings are from Hernando and graduated from Hernando High School, where they learned the foundations of all the skills they took to college.

Alberts, the eldest sibling, lives in Washington state, where she works as vice president of government affairs for the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce.

"As the oldest, hearing that my younger siblings were accepted into Luckyday, I knew they would be getting the most out of their college experience," she said.



Stephen Chavez, the second sibling to be a Luckyday Scholar, recently earned an MBA and is working as a business systems analyst at CoreLogic in Oxford.

"Having siblings who were also Luckyday Scholars amplifies the community aspect that Luckyday thrives to build," he said. "Knowing my siblings had that same connection constantly reminds me of how Luckyday and the people in it were, and still are, my family away from home."

As part of its efforts to provide a welcoming community and supportive program leaders, the Luckyday Success Program has peer mentors available for its newest scholars. These mentors ensure those beginning their college careers do well, know what resources are available and understand how these resources can assist them.

**Stephen Chavez**

The scholarship program nurtured Chavez's leadership skills during her first two years as a scholar, and she serves as a peer mentor.

"One of the most important lessons I've learned is when you develop leadership skills, you are acquiring skills that will help you in college and in your career after you graduate," she said.

For more information on the Luckyday Success Scholarship Program, visit <https://luckyday.olemiss.edu>.

For information on how to establish a student scholarship at Ole Miss, contact Catherine Adkins, development associate for university initiatives and special projects, at [ceadkins@olemiss.edu](mailto:ceadkins@olemiss.edu) or 662-915-2384.

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