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Alumni and Friends Provide Record \$133 Million to Support University

Private support sustains UM and propels academics, research, athletics across campuses

AUGUST 11, 2015 BY KATIE MORRISON



Surging enrollment has brought UM recognition as one of the nation's fastest growing universities.

OXFORD, Miss. – Private donors and foundations committed a record \$133 million to support programs, facilities and students at the University of Mississippi during the fiscal year that ended June 30, allowing the university to maintain its momentum despite a continuing difficult financial climate for higher education.

The strong private support, all directed to specific programs, allows the university to strengthen its faculty, increase student scholarships, contribute to research discoveries

and help improve health care outcomes for Mississippians, said Morris Stocks, UM acting chancellor.

“Our alumni and friends remain dedicated to helping us reach our goals, and they understand that our institution is committed to excellence,” Stocks said. “Our university has earned record growth as more students seek our degree programs and research institutes, and thanks to those who chose to invest in our future, we are helping realize those goals and those of our students.”

Building faculty support continues as a top priority for UM, which has been identified as the nation's 13th fastest-growing university by [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#). The state's flagship university boasts the largest student body among Mississippi's public universities, making the addition of more than 200 faculty members over the next three years a major priority.



Private support has enabled expansion of programs at the UM Medical Center, where a priority has been set to educate more doctors, nurses and other health professionals to fill the state's needs. Photo courtesy UMMC.

Throughout fiscal year 2015, donors cited the visionary leadership of outgoing Chancellor Dan Jones as a critical element of their confidence in Ole Miss. Under Jones' leadership, the six-year total in private support at UM topped \$570 million, with private giving in each of the previous four years exceeding the \$100 million mark.

Notably, Jones facilitated the largest gift of 2015 for another need on the Oxford campus, increased facilities dedicated to the study of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Pledged by the Gertrude C. Ford Foundation of Jackson, an extraordinary \$20 million gift set the groundwork for a \$100 million campaign to assemble funding for a new building along the university's Science Row.

Cash gifts of all sizes combined for a total \$97.8 million, with new pledges receivable in future years adding up to more than \$30 million. Donors committed \$5 million in planned and deferred gifts to Ole Miss. Donor participation on the Oxford campus increased by more than 30 percent as the number of gifts rose from 42,000 in 2014 to 52,500 in fiscal year 2015. These generous contributions from alumni, private foundations and corporations, friends, parents and others invested in the success of UM has built an endowment of more than \$600 million.

One driver of increased donor participation is UM's new online crowdfunding platform, [Ignite Ole Miss](#). By utilizing the social networks of alumni, faculty and students, Ignite Ole Miss cultivated more than 2,000 contributions for varied programs across the Oxford campus in FY 2015.

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Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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Thank You To Our Donors

Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

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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Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

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 abate. The Federal Reserve's

Donor impact reaches every area of the university, including its **Medical Center** campus. A 2015 gift totaling \$11 million from John and Sandy Black, of Madison, is UMMC's largest private gift received in a single year on record.

"This is a year when the impact of private support is felt more than ever, having a positive effect upon the health of this great state and the many communities in which our graduates serve," said Dr. LouAnn Woodward, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine. "As Mississippi's only academic medical center, the stakes remain high. Our donors make possible our ability to offer state-of-the-art facilities and care, meanwhile educating the health professionals of tomorrow to address ongoing health concerns."

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The **Ole Miss Athletics Foundation** also had a record year, generating more than \$35 million in cash donations, breaking the previous record of \$27.4 million set in 2014. With record membership exceeding 12,000, OMAF donors anticipate the soon-to-be-unveiled improvements to Vaught-Hemingway Stadium and the new Pavilion at Ole Miss made possible by their contributions.

Thanks to generous donations, the Pavilion at Ole Miss will open for SEC play in early 2016.

"Our teams made Ole Miss one of only two programs in NCAA Division I athletics to

participate in a New Year's Six Bowl game, the NCAA Men's basketball tournament and the NCAA Baseball Regional," Athletics Director Ross Bjork said. "But most importantly, the collective efforts of our student-athletes, coaches, staff, fans and donors have made this one of the most inspiring times in Ole Miss athletics history. We are certainly not finished in our endeavors and will continue to move forward together."

The Forward Together campaign has topped \$137 million in commitments with \$25 million in new pledges for the fiscal year, nearing the campaign goal of \$150 million.

Wendell Weakley, president and CEO of the **UM Foundation**, which had a five-year investment return of 9.6 percent as of June 30, thanked everyone who supported the university.

"The unwavering support of our alumni and friends is shown not just in dollars, but also in the number of those who gave back," he said. "We could not be more appreciative of those who entrusted their hard-earned resources to the benefit of the University of Mississippi and its students."

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