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Revered Attorney and Professor Charles Walker Honored

Former students endow scholarship fund in mentor's name

FEBRUARY 18, 2014 BY KATIE MORRISON

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George and Annie Haymans of Oxford (second and third from left) have established a scholarship at UM in honor of Charles Walker (fourth from left), their longtime professor and mentor. Tim Noss (left) UM development director, Bob Robinson (right) of the School of Business Administration, and Mary Walker (second from right) helped the couple surprise Walker.

OXFORD, Miss. – A stickler for grammar, a lover of clever songwriting and a “natural explainer,” Charles Walker has had a vast impact on the University of Mississippi, Oxford and Lafayette County.

Walker is known by many as one of two things: a favorite professor or the attorney and mediator to whom clients and real estate professionals go to when they have difficult problems – or perhaps both. Having taught business law and real estate law courses in the UM School of Business Administration and the Patterson School of Accountancy for 38 years while practicing law in Oxford, Walker has taught,

mentored or worked alongside hundreds of real estate, business and law professionals.

Among them are George and Annie Haymans of Oxford, two Ole Miss alumni who have been influenced by Walker both personally and professionally. When they wanted to give back to their alma mater, they chose to establish the Charles H. Walker Real Estate Scholarship Endowment, honoring a man who played a big role in their happiness and success.

“This was the result of a conversation Annie and I had about our estate planning and charitable giving,” he said. “We wanted to give back to Ole Miss and honor the impact Charles had in our lives and show him how many people he has influenced in his life.”

George Haymans earned a bachelor’s degree in English in 2001 and met Walker in 2003 while purchasing his first house. He received a law degree from UM in 2006, the same year his future bride, Annie Powers, completed her undergraduate degree in psychology. They married in 2008 and George Haymans opened his practice in real estate law with guidance from Walker and local attorneys Cal Mayo and Lee Tyner. Annie Haymans earned another bachelor’s degree from UM in education in 2011.

“Students comment that Charles was one of their favorite instructors due to his enthusiasm and storytelling to illustrate a point,” said Ken Cyree, dean of the School of Business Administration. “A scholarship established by former students shows the depth of their connection to him as a professor.”

“Charles’ dedication to teaching and devotion to the university serve as an inspiration to us all,” agreed Bob Robinson, the Michael S. Stames Professor of Management who began teaching at UM in 1990. “He has always been regarded as an exceptional teacher with his students’ interests at heart. This scholarship will be an incentive for recruiting bright young scholars to the real estate program. In this manner, Charles continues to bring excellence to the program long after he has left the classroom.”

Walker also encouraged others to devote time to teaching, including Arlen Coyle, a friend and law school classmate. Coyle continues to teach business law at UM, just as he did in the 1970s and ’80s during his career in U.S. Courts system.

“Charles is a natural explainer,” Coyle said. “He has the gift of being able to take complex subjects, break them down into their constituent elements and explain them to students. I cannot envision any other teacher accomplishing as much solid teaching as has Charles during his 38-year career at Ole Miss.

“Plus, Charles is the most honest man I have ever known. There are lawyers who give the legal profession a good name. Charles Walker is at the forefront of that group.”

Coyle appreciates Walker’s work-life balance and recalls Walker’s personal approach from the earliest days of their friendship.

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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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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

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"I first met Charles in 1969 in law school," he said. "It was customary to wear dress trousers, dress shirts and ties. Charles dressed according to hunting seasons; when a season was open, Charles wore hunting trousers, boots, a dress shirt and tie. As soon as classes were over, the shirt and tie came off, a hunting shirt and jacket went on, and off he went. Charles also charmed the secretaries into going out to check on the hunting dogs in his car. Charles knows every bird hunting field in Lafayette, Yalobusha, Panola, Marshall and Union counties."

Walker's in-depth knowledge of the landscape of north Mississippi is well-known. Although Walker was born in Morganton, N.C., his roots and love for Mississippi run deep. His mother was born and reared in Kilmichael, where he visited with his parents most summers. He is also the great-nephew of the late Pat Harrison, former Mississippi congressman (1911-1919) and senator (1919-1941).

Walker was a struggling student at Lees-McRae Junior College in North Carolina when he met his future wife, Mary Mitchell, in 1964. Inspired to shape up academically, he made the dean's list the following semester and transferred to Ole Miss in 1965. He married Mary in 1966 and earned his bachelor's degree in business administration the next year. He earned his law degree from UM in 1970.

"There was a professor, W.W. Joor, from Rolling Fork in the Mississippi Delta, who taught business law then," Walker said. "I took all three of his classes and got an 'A' in each. I realized I had finally found a subject I enjoyed and a field in which I could excel."

He entered law school that fall. Mary quickly read the writing on the wall.

"We had just married and promised our families we'd move closer to North Carolina after Charles finished his undergraduate degree," Mary said. "Then at Christmas, Charles said he thought he might want to go to law school. It wasn't long before I realized we weren't leaving."

The draw to teaching was instilled early. While in law school, Walker was invited to sub for Joor.

"Mr. Joor and I got to be good buddies, and he would ask me to substitute teach for him," Walker said. "I got to teach Archie Manning, Jim Poole and others (while) sitting in for Joor."

By 1977, Walker was offered a full-time faculty position in the business school. Mary Walker referred to teaching as "his true gift." She should know; beginning in 2000 when Walker's vision began deteriorating, Mary would accompany him to class to help take roll and be his eyes in the classroom.

"I watched how the students responded to the way Charles brought real life into the classroom," she recalled. "He even took them to the courthouse to teach them how to check titles."

"I tried to teach practical information," Walker explained. "For example, let's say we hear a forest fire in California has burned 40,000 acres. To put this in perspective for the class, I'd explain that Lafayette County is roughly 20 miles square, or roughly 450,000 acres. I would draw Lafayette County up on the board and show them it is just below 9 percent of Lafayette County. It sounds terrible, but many people have no concept of how large or small an acre of land is."

Walker was regarded as a talented and favorite teacher, earning high ratings from students during end-of-semester evaluations. He also directed the Professional Land Management (formerly Petroleum Land Management) program for 25 years, served as director of the long-range planning committee in the 1980s and was an affirmative action officer. In 1984, he was awarded tenure and served from 1987 to 1997 as the public address announcer for Ole Miss home football games.

The Walkers have three children, Caroline (Todd) Underwood and Mary Beth (John) Cantrell of Tupelo and Jonathan Walker (Sally Kate) of Oxford. They also enjoy their six grandchildren.

Haymans, who also teaches as an adjunct in the business school, encourages others to help grow the Charles H. Walker Real Estate Scholarship Endowment.

"I'm often in court when someone hears I practice in Oxford," he said. "They'll come tell me a story about having Charles in school or that he helped them attain their first job. He helped to train judges and attorneys around the state. He's had a big impact."

Mostly, Haymans wants Walker to know the weight of his influence. "He is one of the few lawyers who can relieve tensions among parties without threatening, without ego. There is no reason to go to court with Charles Walker involved. The biggest lessons I've learned from Charles are humility and the importance of living by my Christian values. He is very self-deprecating, even when it is not his obligation."

Individuals and organizations interested in making a gift to the Charles H. Walker Real Estate Scholarship Endowment can send a check with the fund noted in the memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, P.O. Box 249, University, MS 38677; contact Tim Noss at 662-915-5932 or tnoss@olemiss.edu; or visit <http://www.umfoundation.com/makeagift>.

