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Chi Omega Chapter Makes Generous Gift to Benefit Women’s Health

First major private contribution to Ole Miss Student Health Center will enhance services

DECEMBER 21, 2017 BY TINA HAHN



The Tau Chapter of Chi Omega has committed a major gift to the University of Mississippi Student Health Center to establish a women’s health initiative. Some of the members gather to mark the creation of extended health services for their fellow students. Photo by Bill Dabney/UM Foundation

OXFORD, Miss. – Fellow students’ health and well-being have captured the attention of the University of Mississippi’s **Chi Omega** sorority chapter, which has committed \$250,000 to establish a women’s health initiative extending the services of the campus Student Health Center.

“Our chapter is thrilled about our new philanthropy endeavor,” said Tracy Buchanan of Oxford, the Tau Chapter philanthropy adviser. “When we discussed it at a chapter meeting, the vote was unanimous to proceed.

“There was even one member who cried because she was so excited about us taking the stand for women’s health.”

Enrollment on the **Ole Miss** campus has grown by 62 percent over the past decade, increasing the need for expanded student services of all types.

UM Vice Chancellor of Development Charlotte Parks praised the chapter for making the first major private gift directed to the **Student Health Center**.

“Chi Omega members have shown exceptional leadership by recognizing a need within our campus community and committing to be part of the solution,” the vice chancellor said. “We want our students to embrace a spirit of service and philanthropy as an important part of their lives. The Chi Omega gift will greatly enhance health options for young women.

“In choosing to support a women’s health initiative as well as the university’s new William Magee Center for Wellness Education, the chapter has put its tangible imprint on the Oxford campus and our students’ health and well-being. Chi Omega has set an inspiring example for all of us.”

Chapter president Anne Watkins Tyson of Columbia, South Carolina, said members are eager to see their private support begin to help fellow students.

“When the idea of making a commitment for a women’s health initiative came about, all the members of Chi Omega were really excited and supportive,” Tyson said. “I think their interest in this project came from the fact that it will benefit women’s health across our campus. We are thankful that we get to play a little part in such a positive addition to our community.

“Sometimes donations are made and you never see where it goes, but with this project, we will be able to see long-term results. We will witness Ole Miss changed for the better for our daughters, friends, sisters, granddaughters and so on.”

With the growing enrollment, the university’s Student Health Center records almost 22,000 patient visits each year. Physicians, nurses and other staff provide acute care, diagnostic services and physical therapy for students. Referrals are made to other medical specialists when appropriate.

Dr. Travis Yates, director of the center, said the staff was “surprised and honored” to learn of the Chi Omega gift.

“This gift is just outstanding – a real honor – and it will enable the center to expand services for our female population,” Yates said. “We currently have a physician and a nurse practitioner who have a particular interest in women’s health needs.

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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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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

"The gift could be used to help procure additional diagnostic equipment, expand our staff or possibly enlist the services of a gynecologist."

The sorority's gift directed to women's health follows two others totaling \$37,500 from the chapter and the Chi Omega House Corp. supporting the William Magee Center for Wellness Education, which will open in the university's new South Campus Recreation Center during the 2018-19 academic year. The contribution was intentionally planned during a period that gifts to the center were being matched by Ole Miss athletics, bringing the impact to \$75,000.

The Magee Center's programming will provide a heightened focus on drug and alcohol education and prevention.

"How proud of Tau Chapter of Chi Omega am I, both as an initiate of this chapter and as Chi Omega's former national president," said Mary Ann Fruge of Oxford. "One of our national founding and guiding principles is philanthropy. Tau Chapter, joined by both collegiate and alumnae Chi Omegas across the country, take to heart the message of lending a helping hand where needed.

"Women's health issues at Ole Miss are such a need. How commendable it is that Tau Chapter is coming forward in a bold and generous way to help meet this need."

The sorority previously focused its attention on supporting Make-A-Wish, the Gardner-Simmons Home of Tupelo and scholarships. Named for Chi Omega members Margaret Gardner and Robin Simmons, who lost their lives in an accident, the Gardner-Simmons Home provided 26 years of service to young women in need before closing its doors in 2014.

According to Buchanan, the Tau Chapter will continue fundraising for Make-A-Wish but will add the women's health initiative to its ongoing philanthropic projects.

"The chapter has wanted to do something on campus for a while," she said. "For 26 years, our philanthropy was the Gardner-Simmons Home in Tupelo that was established after the Chi Omega (walkathon) accident in March 1987.

"When the Gardner-Simmons Home closed, we sought another initiative, in addition to supporting our national philanthropy of Make-A-Wish and fully funding several scholarships that were set up to memorialize Chi Omegas. Our goal was to identify something that would not only benefit the women of our chapter, but also the women of Ole Miss."

The Chi Omega Women's Health Initiative accepts gifts from individuals and organizations. For more information, contact Brett Barefoot, development director for parents and family leadership, at bmbarefo@olemiss.edu or 662-915-2711. Checks can be sent to the University of Mississippi Foundation with the initiative's name noted in the check's memo line at 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655, or online at <https://umfoundation.com/makeagift/>.

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