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Katie Morrison

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Mossing Left Lasting Mark at UM

Endowment celebrates and continues efforts of Susan Mossing

JULY 21, 2015 BY KATIE MORRISON

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Susan Mossing

OXFORD, Miss. – Michael Mossing, an associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the **University of Mississippi**, has committed a generous gift to the **UM Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning** to honor and memorialize his late wife, UM administrator, counselor and educator Susan Mossing.

The Susan Lynn Mossing Memorial Endowment will provide support for the center, continuing her sustained efforts to assist students struggling with academic demands and college life.

Susan Mossing, 55, died from an aggressive cancer in November 2013. Employed for many years in **UM's Academic Support Center**, she most recently served as the associate director of the **Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning**, or CETL.

"Dr. Sue Mossing was a valued mentor, colleague, friend and advocate to so many individuals," CETL colleagues Nancy Wiggers, Rebekah Reysen and Sara Hill said collectively. "She found purpose and meaning in her quest to help others and saw

the positive qualities in people that were often overlooked, either by society or by themselves. She made it a point to foster the development of those who were struggling on both an academic and personal level, and encouraged students to move past their challenges and persevere despite difficult life circumstances.

"A lifelong learner herself, Sue was a proponent to tailoring the needs of students using a holistic, not one-size-fits-all approach. And although she was busy with numerous roles on campus and in the community, Sue always found the time to be the support system that so many people needed. The endowment that has been made in her honor will help carry her spirit for many years to come."



The late Susan Mossing has been honored by family and friends with a memorial endowment at UM to continue her legacy of service to students struggling to make the transition from high school to college. This photo was taken by her husband, UM associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry Mike Mossing, of the then-22-year-old Susan, waiting for her husband to finish a late night in the laboratory.

In 1998, the Mossings visited Oxford with their four children as Mike considered a faculty position in the **Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry**. While Oxford would be a change from the big cities the family had resided in thanks to academia, they felt it would be a good fit. After Mike accepted the position, the couple received several copies of the Oxford Eagle newspaper from new colleagues: a photo of Sam, their youngest, had been taken at a local playground and appeared on the front page. The couple, touched by the outpouring of welcome from new friends, decided it was a good omen.

But the Mossings' story – and Sue's calling as an adviser, counselor and specialist for faltering

college students – started much earlier. They met in 1976 as high school seniors departing a tour bus during a scholarship competition for incoming freshmen at Michigan State University.

The couple married in 1979, just before their senior year. Sue Mossing's transition from valedictorian of her small-town high school to one of hundreds in her introductory science classes was not easy. She changed her major several times and eventually took a break from college and went to work as Mike completed a bachelor's degree in biochemistry.

A few years later, as Mike finished a Ph.D. in cellular and molecular biology at the University of Wisconsin, children Christopher and Caroline were born. Besides completing her bachelor's degree in psychology, Sue helped manage grocery and child care cooperatives in the UW married housing

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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

complex.

They moved to Boston in 1986. Mike completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Sue received an MBA at Boston University. In 1990, the family went to South Bend, Indiana, where Mike taught biology at Notre Dame.

In South Bend, Sue flourished in full “mom mode.” As a Brownie leader, swim team organizer, Parent Teacher Association leader and more, she worked to make sure her children were fulfilled musically, academically and athletically. The move to Oxford gave Sue an opportunity to pursue an additional master’s degree in educational psychology and a Ph.D. in counselor education. With that completed, she made time to volunteer in the community and her children’s activities.

“Sue was dedicated,” said Suzanne Wilkin, who worked with Mossing in the Oxford High School Band Boosters. “She so wanted and worked for the kids to have whatever they needed. She was a quiet yet remarkable person who helped as many people as she could.”

In her professional life, she found a role on the UM campus developing programs for undecided and at-risk students. During her tenure, she oversaw the implementation of study skills workshops, academic counseling and new freshman courses EDHE 101 (Academic Skills for College) and EDHE 202 (Fundamentals of Active Learning). She also assisted with the Freshmen Absence-Based Intervention program and Supplemental Instruction.

Her husband believes that her personal experience as a young college student and eventual climb through the ranks of academia inspired her career.

“One of the things that allowed her to recognize opportunities was her empathy,” Mike Mossing said. “Sue was valedictorian of her small high school and really did feel lost at that huge college. So I think that translated into a career path. She drew on her experience working with students, and that was sometimes academic, sometimes transitional and sometimes emotional. She knew that it wasn’t easy and believed that with the right tools and support, they could be set up to succeed.”

Just weeks before her death, with a prognosis confirmed, Sue Mossing was still passionately advocating for UM students. She had been coming in to work as often as she felt able, preparing the CETL for her departure. She sent Provost Morris Stocks an email outlining her recommendations, and among them, she detailed suggestions for an upcoming faculty development series. As she suggested themes and speakers, she also insisted that “panels should include someone who will speak for and protect the students.”

Stocks will remember Mossing for her dedication to the UM community.

“Even after learning of her diagnosis, Sue remained committed to her work advocating for academic student support measures,” said Stocks, now UM’s acting chancellor. “She was a tireless leader in the University of Mississippi’s efforts to ensure access to higher education for all students and understood the importance of classroom success and earning a four-year degree. This endowment from her family will undergird our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and maintain her strong presence of encouragement for those students in need.”

Born in South Haven, Michigan, Mossing is survived by her husband, Michael; her children: Christopher (Alexandra) Mossing of New Orleans and granddaughter Agnes Ann, Caroline Mossing of San Antonio, Texas, Daniel Mossing of Princeton, New Jersey, and Samuel Mossing of Evanston, Illinois; and 13 siblings in Michigan.

Individuals and organizations can make gifts to the Susan Lynn Mossing Memorial Endowment by sending a check with the fund noted in the memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; visiting online at <http://www.umfoundation.com/makeagift>; or contacting Sandra Guest at sguest@olemiss.edu or 662-915-5944.

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