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Tina H. Hahn

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Scholarship Endowments Honor Longtime Professor

Late Donald Summers helped build resources to support talented students in physics and astronomy

NOVEMBER 5, 2022 BY TINA H. HAHN

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A teaching assistant aligns a 25-inch telescope during an astronomy open house hosted by the Department of Physics and Astronomy. The Dr. Donald Summers Undergraduate Scholarship Endowment and the Dr. Donald Summers Graduate Student Fellowship Stipend Endowment will enable Ole Miss students to pursue work in the department. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – The late Donald Summers loved studying the universe and spent his career as a **University of Mississippi** professor teaching astronomy and conducting physics research. A new gift in his name will enable students to reach for the stars.

The \$200,000 gift from his brother, Robert Summers, of Palo Alto, California, establishes the Dr. Donald Summers Undergraduate Scholarship Endowment and the Dr. Donald Summers Graduate Student Fellowship Stipend Endowment. Summers died March 3, 2021.

"We are extremely grateful for this generous gift that will provide valuable scholarship support to students studying physics and astronomy, enabling them to pursue their dreams," said Lee Cohen, dean of the **College of Liberal Arts**. "Dr. Summers was a dedicated teacher and a productive researcher who made a difference and strengthened the academic reputation of our university.

"I know of no better way to pay tribute to his life's passion than to fund scholarships in his name."

When Summers was an undergraduate, he knew he wanted a career in higher education. But he didn't want his work to be limited to conducting research in physics and astronomy; his desire was to teach, as well.

"These scholarship endowments will provide great assistance in our efforts to recruit strong students," said Luca Bombelli, chair of the **Department of Physics and Astronomy**. "These funds are consistent with Dr. Summers' commitment to graduate education, as he has helped doctoral students earn degrees and move on to successful careers. We hope to extend his dedication with these two new endowments."

Summers began his philanthropic support of Ole Miss students years ago. His gift of \$175,000 created an endowment to help graduate students pursue degrees in experimental particle physics and he later increased the endowment with an \$87,000 gift.

He named the fund in honor of James J. Reidy, former chair and professor emeritus of physics and astronomy, whom he credited with bringing the university to the attention of the international scientific community through high-energy physics research.

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Campus Briefs

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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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

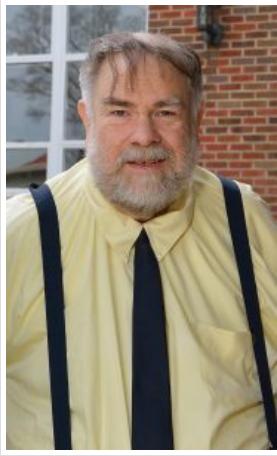
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Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

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



The late Donald Summers dedicated his professional life to teaching and conducting research. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

"I saw the opportunity to help with what I consider to be a real need of our graduate students, while also honoring Dr. Reidy, who started particle physics research here," Summers said, talking about the 2013 gift. "I think we have to provide more support to our graduate students, so they do not have to work full time while pursuing important research.

"Funding for higher education is much more challenging these days, and at the same time teachers for the sciences are scarce in many parts of the country. I saw this gift as a way I could make a real contribution to address these needs."

Summers also established the Dr. Lee N. Bolen Jr. Scholarship Endowment in 2015 with gifts of almost \$50,000 to provide scholarship assistance to undergraduate or graduate students in physics and to honor Bolen, another professor of physics.

Summers was recruited to Ole Miss in 1989 and rose to the rank of full professor in 2002. His research interests were focused on the investigation of the fundamental nature of matter. The professor collaborated on high-energy physics experiments at **Fermilab** in Illinois and at **CERN**, the European Organization for Nuclear

Research headquartered in Switzerland.

Summers worked on the discovery of the W^+ , W^- and Z^0 heavy particles, which mediate all weak interactions, and this discovery at CERN was eventually awarded the Nobel Prize. With Mississippi's experiment at Fermilab, Summers accumulated the world's largest sample of heavy charmed quarks, a type of elementary particle and a fundamental constituent of matter.

"Dr. Summers was a long-term member of our high-energy physics research group and was very successful in helping the university gain prominence and external funding for our research," Bombelli said.

Summers, Reidy and other faculty members in the UM high-energy physics research group built a reputation for their work and also for advancing the understanding of this research. All were members of QuarkNet, a program involving some 60 universities and laboratories across the nation.

The program brings high school students, physics teachers and particle physicists together to further physics education. Teachers and students work with real data from one or more laboratories in the organization and learn how to interpret the data.

Other activities include fabricating components for the large detectors at Stanford or CERN and building a portable cosmic ray detector that can be used in the classroom.

Summers attended St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Oxford and was a generous donor to its many social programs.

To make a gift to the **Dr. Donald Summers Undergraduate Scholarship Endowment** or the **Dr. Donald Summers Graduate Student Fellowship Stipend Endowment**, click the endowment names or send a check, with the fund's name noted in the memo line, to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655.

For more information on supporting the Department of Physics and Astronomy, contact Caroline Hourin, development associate for the College of Liberal Arts, at cehourin@olemiss.edu or 662-915-6385.

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