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## Streets Endow Scholarship to Honor Longtime UM History Professor

Education fund named after Harry P. Owens, professor emeritus and Civil War scholar

DECEMBER 27, 2016 BY ANDREW M. ABERNATHY



Harry P. Owens. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – A recent gift from two **University of Mississippi** donors will provide scholarship opportunities for future UM secondary education majors while honoring Professor Emeritus Harry P. Owens, who taught history at the university for more than 35 years.

The Dr. Harry P. Owens Secondary Education Opportunity Scholarship Endowment was created with a \$25,000 commitment from Bill and Ginny Street of Alabaster, Alabama.

Bill, a senior vice president at ServisFirst Bank, started his post-college career as a social studies teacher in DeSoto County in 1978 after receiving his undergraduate degree in secondary education from UM.

“The thing that I got from Harry was learning how to listen,” Bill explained. “Even if someone is on a different side (of the aisle) than you, you should hear what they have to say because you might learn something useful. I credit him with my ability to do that.”

Bill was a nontraditional college student. After initially losing interest in his studies at UM in 1969, he left the university to serve in the U.S.

Navy, where he became a submarine petty officer. After being discharged in 1975, he returned to the university with two new things: a new resolve for his studies and tuition money from the G.I. Bill.

During this time, he was highly influenced by the Civil War historian. According to Bill, he and the professor just “clicked” and they bonded over their extensive interest and knowledge of Civil War history. The professor became a mentor for the sailor-turned-teacher.

Owens and his wife, MaryLou, still live in Oxford.



Bill and Ginny Street. Submitted photo

“The most telling thing I can say about Bill is this: The first time I met him, I was teaching a new course that I had never taught before about the military history of the American Civil War,” Owens said. “I remember that there was Bill and one other student, who, if ever I had a single doubt in my mind about a particular fact, I could look at Bill for confirmation. He knew that much.”

Owens recently attended a meeting with Bill, Ginny and leadership from the **UM School of Education**, after finalizing the gift.

“Bill doing this in my name is a most gracious thing,” Owens said. “This reinforces the idea that teachers count.”

After college, Bill took a teaching and coaching job in Horn Lake, where he was named the school’s Star Teacher after his very first year in the classroom.

Although no longer a student, he kept in touch with his favorite professor. The two men often conversed via phone or would meet up when Bill and Ginny would return to the Oxford for sporting events.

To the Streets, this scholarship is also a way for the couple to help students who struggle with the tuition demands of college. Without the G.I Bill scholarship, Bill said would not have been able to afford

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OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children’s play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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his Ole Miss education.

A needs-based scholarship, each year recipients of the award will receive tuition support after being selected by the UM School of Education Scholarship Committee. The scholarship will support Ole Miss students majoring in secondary education.

"Harry had a profound impact on me and we want to put his name on this (scholarship)," Bill said. "We want to give someone an opportunity that they might not get otherwise. That's what this is all about."

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