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University Launches Flagship Society

Campuswide giving program to benefit academics at Ole Miss

JULY 29, 2018 BY TINA H. HAHN

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The Flagship Society is the first campuswide leadership annual giving program at the University of Mississippi. Individuals can join this fiscal year and become charter members, providing crucial private support to our academic community. Photo by Kirsten Faulkner

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi** has launched the Flagship Society – its first campuswide leadership annual giving program – to recognize annual donors, share the impact of their giving and increase philanthropic support for academic programs and scholarships at a time when higher education costs are escalating.

“The Flagship Society will add to the margin of excellence at Ole Miss, advancing the university’s ability to transform lives and make a profound impact in Mississippi, the nation and the world,” said Charlotte Parks, UM vice chancellor for development.

For the seventh consecutive fiscal year, which ended June 30, Ole Miss alumni, friends, students, faculty and staff have committed in excess of \$100 million in private support, much-needed resources as state support covers only 13 percent of the university’s annual budget.

Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter said he is constantly inspired by donors’ desire to give back to ensure future generations have exceptional educational opportunities and society has a higher quality of life.

“Through their giving, Flagship Society members will be expressing a strong belief in the power of higher education and the positive impact of private support,” he said. “Our alumni and friends are known far and wide for their continuous and generous investments in the Ole Miss student experience, our academic environment and outreach efforts.

“The University of Mississippi is honored to recognize these annual donors who step up, year after year, to propel the flagship forward.”

The Flagship Society name pays homage to the university’s flagship status as the oldest and largest public university in Mississippi. The name also represents members of the Ole Miss family who serve as philanthropic leaders in the academic, service and cultural programs, Parks said.

“We want to honor the Flagship Society members’ generosity by selecting a name that reflects their impact on the university,” she said. “Each Flagship Society gift combines with others to produce powerful resources.”

Gerald Wages, of Tupelo, is an alumnus and former executive with North Mississippi Health Services who has been providing consistent annual support for almost three decades.

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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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Thank You To Our Donors

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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"My decision to make a contribution to Ole Miss was an easy one for two reasons: First, a contribution would be a way to 'pay back' – to recognize the quality of the education I received that prepared me for my career and to repay the university for the outstanding experience that I had on campus during my college years," Wages said. "Secondly, a contribution would represent an investment in the future of Ole Miss and an investment in the many students who will be receiving their education there in the years to come.

"For those reasons, I am excited to have an opportunity to contribute, and I encourage all alumni to continue being a part of the Ole Miss story with annual support."

Annual gifts, for example, can bolster scholarship support for students, increase funds for recruitment and retention of faculty, increase graduate stipends to support doctoral students, heighten access to research grants whose results help people live healthier lives, increase maintenance funds to keep up the university's array of facilities, and increase support for the cultural arts.

Having these funds available enables university leadership to be flexible and prompt in addressing needs and opportunities without diverting resources from elsewhere, said Alyssa Vinluan, an annual gifts officer in the **Office of University Development**.

Membership in the Flagship Society is open to any household or individual whose cumulative giving to academics totals \$1,000 or more during the fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Donors can make unrestricted gifts to the Ole Miss Fund – resources used at the discretion of UM leadership for the university's greatest needs – or donors can choose to direct their gifts to a specific school, program or scholarship, Vinluan said.

Membership in the Flagship Society can be met by an outright gift or by making pledge payments throughout the fiscal year. Levels of membership are Bronze with a gift of \$1,000, Silver with a gift of \$1,848, Gold with a gift of \$2,500 and Platinum with a gift of \$5,000 or above.

Graduates whose most recent UM degree is from the past five years can join the Flagship Society with an annual gift of \$100. Likewise, alumni from the past six to 10 years become members with an annual gift of \$500, as university officials understand these graduates are establishing their lives and careers.

Kirsten Faulkner, of Metropolis, Illinois, who finished her undergraduate degree in journalism in May and is pursuing graduate studies, said she hopes the Flagship Society drives home the message that gifts of all sizes matter.

"Giving back to a university that has given so much to me is something I feel very strongly about," Faulkner said. "The Flagship Society is a great way to engage donors of all ages and let them know that gifts of any size can make a significant impact throughout the university and, in this case, through academic programs."

Flagship Society members will be recognized in several ways and receive an exclusive Flagship Society car decal and invitations to special events. Donors who join in the Flagship Society's inaugural year, which runs through June 30, 2019, will be identified as charter members.

With the support of alumni, friends, university leaders, faculty and staff, the Flagship Society stands to influence many areas of campus for years to come.

"The Flagship Society can help elevate the value of all University of Mississippi degrees; organizations such as U.S. News and World Report factor alumni giving participation into their rankings of the best universities in America," Parks said. "We deeply appreciate each and every gift that fuels our reach for even greater heights of excellence."

Gifts can be made by sending a check in support of academics to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; or by visiting <http://www.umfoundation.com/flagshipsociety>. For more information, contact Alyssa Vinluan, annual giving officer, at alyssa@olemiss.edu or 662-915-1311.

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