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Up Close and Personal: Assistant Dean Marni Kendricks

Alumna reflects upon her work, experiences at alma mater

DECEMBER 9, 2013 BY EDWIN SMITH

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Assistant Dean Marni Kendricks and husband Scott

Q: You've been with the School of Engineering nine years in an administrative role. What has been your most challenging task during this time?

Kendricks: Seems like a wide variety of things – from developing our Intro to Engineering course early on and degree audit to finishing my M.S. in Engineering while working full-time, serving as a faculty adviser for the university's Engineers Without Borders chapter, developing the B.E. program areas of emphasis, teaching

Engineering Graphics to hundreds of engineering students over the years and developing a new hybrid version of the course in the last year. More challenges to come, I'm sure!

Q: What was your career path prior to the School of Engineering?

Kendricks: I worked for an engineering firm in Jackson for several years and did independent environmental consulting work for part of that time. I returned to Oxford in 1996 to accept a position in industry with Emerson Electric Co. as the environmental engineer on staff, dealing with a wide range regulatory issues, health and safety, air emissions and discharge water quality/hazard waste, and design of the wastewater treatment plant for the Oxford-Lafayette County Industrial Park. I left Emerson to join the faculty at Oxford High School in 1999, where I taught in the math department for a few years before returning to school myself. That's where I began part two of my time at Ole Miss and finished a second degree in 2004 and began working for Precision Engineers here in town.

Q: And how long were you with Precision?

Kendricks: Only a short time as a full-time employee. I continued to work with my friends at Precision doing environmental consulting work for a few more years after that. But I had the golden opportunity to return to the SoE and work part time for a year alongside my predecessor, Assistant Dean Dr. Stacy Holmes, who would retire but continue part-time for another year teaching me all about this role and allowing me time at home with our youngest, a baby boy who's now 9 years old.

My adviser when I was earning my B.E. degree in 1990 was my predecessor's predecessor, Assistant Dean Professor Damon Wall. It was kind of surreal when I moved into the office previously held by these two gentlemen, who had helped me so much through the years.

Q: What is the most fun part of your job?

Kendricks: It is such a privilege and joy to get to work with ambitious, bright, young, enthusiastic students. I love advising my B.E. students and helping them find their way to medical school, law school, military, into a career as a professional educator or the business world. I have so enjoyed traveling to Africa with our EWB team to design and build a school. What an experience that is!

I really enjoy co-teaching a senior class in the fall with the dean, Engineering Leadership and Professionalism. I've now seen five full classes of freshmen graduate. Hearing how some of our hard-working dedicated engineering students are doing in their careers makes me so incredibly proud!

And probably the highlight of my day over the past couple years is when my own two boys, Sam and Tom, drop by my office to say "Hello," or I stop by the Ole Miss track to watch pole vault practice in the afternoon. Tom is in mechanical engineering and Sam, my pole vaulter, is now in general studies, both in their junior year. Fortunately the PV coach tolerates this high-strung mom since he's married to me! I will probably be one teary-eyed A-Dean at graduation next year. Time flies by so fast.

Q: What is a typical day in your office like?

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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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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 abate. The Federal Reserve's

Kendricks: I get to work with such wonderful people in the dean's office, have the opportunity to be affiliated with the civil engineering department – more wonderful people – advise about 40 students, teach about 100 students a semester with the help of great TAs and deal with all manner of undergraduate academic issues for some 1,300 students.

A typical day is crazy busy, challenging, interesting, never long enough, always days behind in my email, but pretty awesome most of the time. I feel absolutely blessed to get to do what I do every day.

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