

ACCOUNTANT

NEWS FROM THE PATTERSON SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI
www.olemiss.edu/depts/accountancy

'I feel as though I never left.' Alum returns home to lead UM Foundation

by Elaine Pugh

Photo by Robert Jordan



Wendell Weakley

During his employment with PricewaterhouseCoopers, Wendell Weakley has worked and lived in several cities. But if home is where the heart is, then he's been in Oxford the whole time.

"Ole Miss is where my heart is, and my wife and I have many close friends here," Weakley said. "In some ways, I feel as though I never left, and the university fosters that connectivity."

Last summer, Weakley left his position as a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers to become the second president and CEO of the UM Foundation. He accepted the leadership

baton from Don Frugé, who recently retired.

Weakley, who has been an active alumni leader for years, takes on the challenge of fueling the unprecedented momentum the university has experienced in private giving over the last decade. Alumni and friends give approximately \$50 million annually in private support, and the university endowment stands at almost \$415 million.

"Identifying an exceptional leader to fill

**'Ole Miss is where
 my heart is ... the
 university fosters
 that connectivity.'**

— WENDELL WEAKLEY

the foundation position was absolutely crucial considering higher education's constant need for private support to provide a margin of excellence," said Chancellor Robert Khayat. "For years, we have called on our academic leaders to guide our foundation and develop private gifts, and their efforts have been phenomenally successful. Wendell brings the added dimension of corporate-world experience to foundation activities, as well as a deep commitment and understanding of university needs from his longtime involvement as an active alumnus."

Roger Friou, a Jackson businessman who led the search committee, said he had been impressed with Weakley's leadership as chairman of the Advisory Council in the School of Accountancy.

"When Don Frugé announced his retirement, I contacted Wendell immediately, and he expressed interest in joining the foundation as its CEO," Friou said. "I am very pleased

Inside:

2 From the Dean



5 Student athletes find ways to balance academics and athletics

8 UM professor co-authors update of *Gleim's CMA Review*

9 As CFO for Ducks Unlimited, UM alum is on quest to save wetlands



11 UM bids farewell to the late Johnny Williams, vice chancellor for administration and finance



15 Public Accounting Report ranks Patterson School among top 25 in nation.

Ole Miss Accountant is published biannually by the School of Accountancy.

Comments or suggestions?
 Call 662-915-7623



FROM THE DEAN

Dear Accountancy Alumni:

As usual, things are busy here at the Patterson School of Accountancy. Our enrollment is at an all-time high, with approximately 600 undergraduate students and 100 graduate students. Also, we are extremely proud to report that the Patterson School was recently recognized by the *Public Accounting Report*. Our undergraduate program is ranked 22nd nationally (up from 23rd a year ago). Our graduate program is in the rankings for the first time ever at 23rd.

But there have been other changes, as well. It is with mixed feelings that I report to you that Chancellor Robert Khayat promoted Dean Morris Stocks to senior vice chancellor for planning and operations. Dr. Stocks has provided outstanding leadership as dean of the Patterson School for more than four years, and I am honored to succeed him as interim dean. While we are sad to see Dr. Stocks move to the Lyceum, we are grateful for his service to the accountancy program. Morris plans to continue to teach a class for us each semester, and also to be involved in our research and service activities.

We are pleased to welcome Erin Miller as the new assistant to the dean. An Ole Miss graduate, Erin has worked for several years here in the Office of Admissions. In the Patterson School, she will advise students, as well as provide administrative support with scholarships, internships and student recruitment. She replaces Dr. Billy Rhodes, who has been promoted and will assume full-time teaching and advising responsibilities primarily at our DeSoto Center and Tupelo campuses. We thank Dr. Rhodes for his years of service as assistant to the dean.

Many of these developments are covered in this issue of *Ole Miss Accountant*, which contains articles on the successes of our students and the generosity of our alumni. Wendell Weakley is one of the alumni we spotlight in this issue. Wendell assumed the role of president/CEO of the University of Mississippi Foundation on July 1, 2006. We also feature Randy Graves, chief financial officer of Ducks Unlimited in Memphis. Randy has been an extremely active supporter of our accountancy program for many years.

Please visit us when you are on campus. Mark your calendar for Accountancy Weekend, which is scheduled for April 26-28, 2007. The weekend begins with our Accountancy Awards Banquet (slated to be held in the Indoor Practice Facility) on Thursday, April 26. The weekend coincides with Oxford's Double Decker Festival and a home baseball series with Mississippi State. Look for a schedule of events very soon. It will be a great weekend, and I hope you will join us. Also, the Beta Alpha Psi golf tournament is tentatively scheduled for Friday, May 4. We had a great turnout last year and hope you will plan to be a part of the event this year.

We consider it a true privilege to serve you and our students. Your involvement and support are immeasurably important to us. We appreciate your past support of our efforts in the Patterson School and trust that you will remain committed to these efforts.

Sincerely,

W. Mark Wilder

W. Mark Wilder
Interim Dean

Stocks promoted to new UM post; Wilder chosen as interim dean

W Mark Wilder, KPMG Lecturer and associate professor, has been named interim dean of the Patterson School of Accountancy. He was appointed Oct. 1, following Morris Stocks' departure to serve in the newly created position of senior vice chancellor for planning and operations for the Oxford campus.

Wilder joined the Ole Miss faculty in 1993 after completing doctoral studies in accountancy at Florida State University. He holds an MBA from the University of South Alabama and a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama. His numerous honors include the MSCPA Educator of the Year Award in 2006, the campuswide Elsie Hood Outstanding Teacher Award in 2005 and UM's Faculty Achievement Award in 2004.

Meanwhile, in his new role as senior vice chancellor, Stocks will be instrumental in helping Ole Miss adapt to its phenomenal growth. Since 2001, enrollment has soared 21 percent, and the budget for the Oxford campus and the Medical Center in Jackson has risen 37 percent.

"Our growth necessitates additional administrative leadership to provide for a vital, continuing planning process for both on-campus and off-campus academic programs," said Chancellor Robert Khayat. "Clearly, we need someone who will be devoted full time to helping the university prepare for the future.

"Dr. Stocks has a distinguished record as a member of the faculty and brings enormous administrative experience, having served as associate provost as well as dean," Khayat said. "We are fortunate he is willing to take on this important responsibility and begin work immediately." [n](#)



Morris Stocks

A Winning Combination



Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

Patterson School of Accountancy and Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College

by Elaine Pugh

Every student in the Patterson School of Accountancy is learning the craft at one of America's top accountancy schools. Likewise, every student in the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College receives a special blend of creativity, academics and a call to service.

Perhaps that's why accountancy students in the Honors College feel inspired to excel on every level.

"The Honors College has given me so many opportunities to broaden my horizons and learn more about the different ways I can apply my skills to make a difference in my community, whether it be through a chosen career path or through social service," said Rebecca Lo, a junior from Corinth. "It has provided me with many tools—24/7 computer labs, one-on-one time with honors faculty and staff, peers who also have high goals and expectations. [All of these factors] push me to better my education."

Among Lo's most enriching experiences was a trip to Seattle with 40 other sophomore students to perform various acts of service. Such trips are fully subsidized by the Honors College.

"My group went to Northwest Harvest, a hunger-relief agency that dis-

tributes food to about 300 food banks around the state of Washington, where we bagged enough frozen peas to feed around a thousand families for a couple of weeks.

"Knowing I was a part of helping so many people's lives, and enjoying the outcome of all the time it took to plan the trip, really made an impact on my life," said Lo, who said she hopes to obtain her master's degree in accountancy and become a CPA, then "work with a great company that prides itself on excellence in work and in ethics."

SMBHC students are immersed in a campus community that allows them to enjoy intellectual novelty and critical thinking. They are encouraged in their pursuit of varied interests and a fuller understanding of the world around them, including a commitment to public service. They come from across the nation, representing all majors. This stunning array of talented students is transforming student culture campuswide, challenging their peers less by competition than by modeling.

Warren Pate of Gallatin, Tenn., said he especially values the personal relationships that he has forged with his professors and with other students as an Honors College student.

"These relationships have had a

continued on Page 15

Wendell Weakley, continued from Page 1

that he will be leading the foundation, and I look forward to working with him.”

Throughout his 29 years with PricewaterhouseCoopers, Weakley advised clients in the banking, manufacturing, distribution and retail industries. His extensive SEC filing experience encompassed numerous initial public, secondary and debt offerings, as well as mergers, acquisitions and special SEC filings. Weakley also has served as a consumer and industrial products and services partner with a retail emphasis, and as a risk management partner.

“Accounting is a people business,” Weakley said. “I’ve learned so much from building close professional relationships with my clients—particularly in regard to seeing different points of view. That experience certainly will impact my relationships

with alumni and friend donors as I work to understand their goals and objectives.”

Through the years, Weakley has remained involved with the university, serving as a member of the UM Foundation Board of Directors and as chair of the Accountancy Advisory Council. A member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, he is a CPA in Tennessee and Mississippi.

“Wendell Weakley’s expertise in financial matters is exceptional,” said James Davis, Peery Chair of Accountancy and former dean of accountancy, as well as mentor and friend to Weakley. “In addition, his contacts with Ole Miss alumni and friends over the last 30 years prepare him to successfully lead the foundation into the foreseeable future.

“Wendell is the perfect fit for this lead-

ership role. Throughout his outstanding career, he has continued to give back to the university,” Davis said.

Weakley and his wife, Sue, are the parents of three daughters: Allison Weakley Sutherland of Memphis and Sloan Weakley Galloway of Atlanta, both UM graduates; and Elizabeth Weakley, a University of Colorado student.

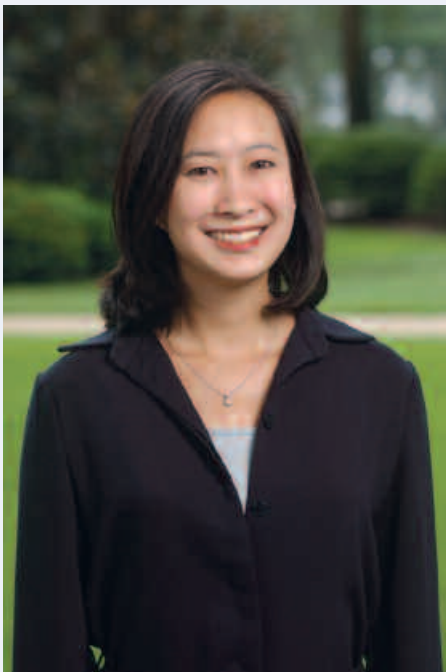
Weakley said the support and encouragement he received from the chancellor and foundation directors convinced him to “come home” to full-time university service.

“I’ve worked in many cities and with alumni from a large number of schools,” Weakley said. “It’s clear the attachment our alumni feel toward Ole Miss is very strong.” [n](#)

UM Foundation taps alum as treasurer, controller

4

Photo by Kevin Bain



Lisa Chow

Patterson School of Accountancy graduate Lisa Chow (BAccy 94) has joined new UM Foundation President/Chief Executive Officer Wendell Weakley on a leadership team poised to take the organization to the next level.

As treasurer and controller of the UM Foundation, Chow is involved in all aspects of the foundation’s fiduciary responsibilities and operations: financial reporting and management, the audit and accounting systems, short-term and long-term investment of foundation funds and financial consultation with donors.

When she joined the foundation in fall 2003, one of her goals was to create a financial reporting program that generates monthly, quarterly and annual reports systematically. This strategically placed program now generates timely, concise reports that are geared toward specific users’ needs. “Wendell, foundation VP Sandra Guest and I bring diverse business experience and different perspectives to the table,” Chow says. “I think we will com-

plement each other as we serve the foundation and the university family. Our goal is to be trusted and competent stewards of resources provided by our donors, as well as effective leaders who help strengthen and expand the foundation. The university’s ability to maintain its phenomenal momentum largely depends upon the private support that flows through the foundation.”

A native of Clarksdale, Miss., Chow earned her accountancy degree in December 1994. She joined the foundation from her position as a certified public accountant and tax manager for Deloitte & Touche in Memphis. Her career experience also includes a similar role with Arthur Andersen in Memphis and a position as an internal auditor for the National Bank of Commerce.

“As foundation treasurer, I am answering to my Ole Miss family, my friends and my colleagues,” says Chow. “I have a personal vested interest in my alma mater. Ole Miss is an important part of my life.” [n](#)



David Traxler



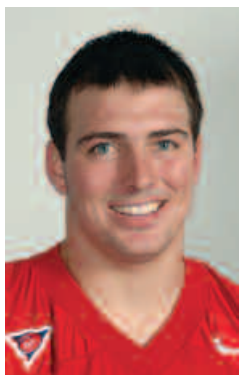
Debits, Credits and Athletics

by Elaine Pugh

From absorbed costs to zero-based budgets, accounting can be overwhelming. Throw in a sport, like football or track, and it's easy to understand why maintaining good academic standing can be difficult for some student-athletes.

"Student-athletes face big challenges, in general, in juggling their time with various responsibilities," said Mark Wilder, interim dean of the Patterson School of Accountancy.

Wilder knows those challenges from his experience as a tennis star at the University of Alabama. "Essentially, student-athletes cannot be normal students," he said. "They may spend 30 or more hours a week in practice or competition, and, given the fiercely competitive nature of the Southeastern Conference, there is pressure for academics to come second to athletics."



Billy Tapp

Several accountancy majors are currently Ole Miss student-athletes. They include David Traxler, a 6-foot-6-inch, 285-pound offensive lineman; Neil Tabor, a red-shirt pole vaulter; and Billy Tapp, a red-shirt quarterback. The three agree on the difficulties associated with being a student-athlete.

'It's always hard balancing academics with football. It's a handful, but with good time management, it's doable.'

—BILLY TAPP

"It's a challenge to find time for both academics and sports," said Tabor, a 20-year-old sophomore from Olive Branch. "You have to manage your time."

A walk-on scholarship recipient, Tabor did not compete last season on the track team due to a head injury he suffered after one of his poles snapped in half.

"I took some time off to recover men-

tally," he said.

Despite the challenges, Tabor's "favorite" UM accounting professor, Pascal Bizarro, was impressed with Tabor's performance in his accounting information systems class.

"Neil had perfect attendance," Bizarro said. "His commitment and work ethic were evident through his excellent grades."

Traxler also suffered a knee injury early in the football season. "After the injury, my playing time was limited," Traxler said. But he maintained a positive attitude toward academics in one of the nation's top accounting schools. Wilder taught Traxler in his ACCY 303 (Financial Accounting I) course last fall, and recalled a bright, serious and conscientious student who didn't miss one day of class.

"For David to be able to excel in athletics as well as in a rigorous accountancy program is a testament to his abilities, his work ethic and his discipline," Wilder said.



Neil Tabor

continued on Page 7

From the boardroom to the classroom, Reynolds professor brings national experience

by Elaine Pugh

Bringing his national professional experience to Ole Miss accounting students computes into job satisfaction for Rick Elam.

Elam joined the UM faculty in 2000 as the inaugural Reynolds Professor of Accountancy. The position, created to attract someone with national experience in the accounting profession, was funded as part of a \$16.5 million gift from The Reynolds Foundation honoring E.H. "Pat" Patterson, a 1955 Ole Miss accountancy alum.

"My experience fit very well with the objectives of the professorship, so I was offered the opportunity," Elam said. "I'm really proud that I have been able to leverage my experiences with accounting on a national level and bring them into the classroom. I'm glad to help students prepare for life in the accounting profession."

Peery Chair of Accountancy James Davis, who was dean of accountancy when Elam was hired, said Elam was an outstanding candidate for the prestigious post.

"Rick Elam's professional achievements are many, and he has helped us gain recognition, as the recent ranking reflects, in the top 25 programs in America," Davis said. "He is a great asset, and our faculty view him as an outstanding colleague and our students respect him highly."

Elam, a nationally respected authority on accounting education, joined the UM faculty after serving as dean of the College

vice president of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, where he was involved in the management of three divisions:

- the Examinations Division, which prepares the Uniform CPA Examination
- the Academic and Career Development Division, which influences the academic community and the public to attract highly qualified people into the accounting profession and ensure they receive the highest quality pre-certification education
- the AICPA Library, which serves the information and research needs of AICPA's 325,000 members

Among his proudest accomplishments since joining the Ole Miss faculty has been helping bring the AICPA national library to the Oxford campus.

"It's a big deal that the library has been entrusted to Ole Miss," he said. "We had a real team effort to bring together the necessary evidence that, because of the quality of our existing library and the quality of the Patterson School of Accountancy, Ole Miss was the right place to house the



Rick Elam

Photo by Robert Jordan

**'My experience fit very well ...
I'm glad to help students prepare for life
in the accounting profession.'**

— RICK ELAM

of Business at Middle Tennessee State University, one of the nation's largest accredited business schools with 3,000 majors and 111 faculty.

From 1989-1995, he was the education

library of the accounting profession."

Prior to joining the AICPA in 1989, Elam was dean of the School of Business at Rutgers University (Camden). Previously, he was professor and director of the

School of Accountancy at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Elam said he is proud to be associated with UM, one of the best accountancy schools in the nation.

"Our school of accountancy has been a major leader nationally in schools fully focused on preparing people to become CPAs," he said. "My whole career has been focused on quality education for students entering the accounting profession. It is great to be with a school that attracts such incredibly high-quality students, and to watch those students be aggressively recruited by the accounting profession."

Elam teaches an accounting policy course, a graduate-level accounting infor-

mation systems class and an honors sequence for undergraduates. The professor has completed a second undergraduate accounting honors course, which is being offered for the first time in spring 2007.

"Teaching the honors classes is a real treat because the students are all so great," he said. "But the students really need to have more honors classes, so we will offer a new one in the spring semester, and that will keep me busy."

Elam said that one of the challenges of being a professor is staying up to date on new technology in the field for his accounting information systems class.

"That class is heavily based on technology and preparing students for the types of new technology they will see out in the workplace," he said. "Technology is rapidly changing, so keeping up with that requires a lot of work."

Elam has written numerous professional articles and participated as a speaker at many national and international educators' conferences. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and economics from Culver-Stockton College and master's and doctoral degrees in accountancy from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

He is a member of the Mississippi State Board of Public Accountancy, appointed to that position by Gov. Haley Barbour. The board issues CPA licenses and helps regulate the accounting profession. He is also involved in the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy.

Outside of work, Elam enjoys entertaining family and friends on his 52-foot houseboat.

"I grew up around boats on the lake in Missouri and have always loved being involved in the maintenance and care of boats," he said. "I was so happy to see the new marina they put in Sardis Lake. We really enjoy entertaining there and spending time on the houseboat."

Elam said that the change of pace from city life to the bucolic atmosphere of Oxford has been a welcome respite.

"My wife, Karen, and I enjoy the overall quality of life in Oxford," he said. "After having worked in the Northeast and commuting into New York City for years, life here is so much better." n

New assistant in dean's office to help with advising, internships

by Elaine Pugh

The Patterson School of Accountancy welcomes Erin Miller (BA '03) to fill the new position of assistant to the dean. A Jackson native, Miller previously served as assistant director for communications in the Office of Admissions.

"I'm excited about my new job," said Miller, who assumed her new post on Nov. 15. "I love it here, and I like having contact with the students."

Miller works with accounting students as an academic adviser, helping them enroll in classes, as well as assisting them with planning internships and preparing résumés. She also coordinates department course schedules and performs administrative duties.

"On her very first morning on the job, Erin advised probably a dozen accounting students," said interim dean Mark Wilder. "She is a quick learner who is enthusiastic and has a positive attitude. She has done a great job in her previous university experience, and we expect her to be an outstanding assistant to the dean."

As an Ole Miss student, the former Erin Findley was a liberal arts major who studied English, music and Southern studies. She sang first soprano in the Women's Glee Club and Concert Singers,



Erin Miller

and still enjoys singing in church and at weddings. Last May, she married fellow singer and Ole Miss graduate Ryan Miller, a second-year law student at UM.

In her spare time, Miller enjoys cooking and traveling. Last November, she spent a week in Paris with family and friends, where she says she was "bitten by the travel bug." She said she fell in love with France, and would like to visit other European countries, such as Italy and Ireland. n

Athletes, continued from Page 5

"The Ole Miss accounting program is nationally recognized," said Traxler, a 21-year-old junior from Jackson. "It's a lot of work, and you have to set your priorities. School comes first, but once you graduate, there are many options for CPAs."

Tapp, a 20-year-old from St. Petersburg, Fla., didn't play during the 2006 season, but said finding the middle ground between academics and athletics takes a lot out of him.

"It's always hard balancing academics with football," Tapp said. "I'm always hav-

ing to go lift weights, attend practice and study film as well as attend study sessions and studying on my own. It's a handful, but with good time management it's doable."

Tapp said supportive professors, such as Dave Nichols, are always a blessing: "Accounting is a real challenge, but Dr. Nichols is able to relate the material to us. He makes the class fun and interesting, and he's never afraid to give a student extra help or time if needed to help us grasp the material." n

Studying for the big exam?

Meet the professor who co-wrote the book on passing the CMA

by Elaine Pugh

A University of Mississippi professor has co-authored the latest edition of a best-selling preparatory manual for the certified management accountancy examination.

Dale L. Flesher, Arthur Andersen Alumni Lecturer and associate dean in the School of Accountancy, and Irvin Gleim completed the 13th edition of *Gleim's CMA Review* (Gleim Publishing, Inc., 2006). The four-volume series, which totals 2,360 pages, was released in October. An online course, software and other learning tools are also available.

"Irvin Gleim initially asked me to co-author the *CMA Review* when it began in 1984," Flesher said. "A retired professor from the University of Florida, Dr. Gleim is well-known for writing and producing certified public accountancy review materials."

Gleim said that Flesher gave him feedback regarding the first edition of the publication. Flesher offered him a number of suggestions to improve the book and expressed an interest in co-authoring it, Gleim added.

ment accounting and reporting, strategic management and business applications.

"The exam itself is administered online in four parts," Flesher said. "The first three parts consist of 110 multiple-choice questions each. Students who take the examination have three hours to complete each part. Their results are available immediately."

Students must succeed in passing the first three parts of the CMA before they can take the fourth part, which consists of essay questions, Flesher said. Grades on that part are usually available within two or three weeks, he added.

While Flesher is a veteran researcher and well-published author, he said compiling the *CMA Review* is challenging.

"I have become a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to keeping up with the latest developments in every field of business and accounting," Flesher said. "There are always changes in tax laws and short-lived fads that have to be included. It's a constant job keeping up with it all."

Flesher said the review is usually updated every two to three years, but that



Photo by Robert Jordan

Dale Flesher

'The Gleim/Flesher CMA Review is the leading CMA review program largely due to Dale Flesher. He not only understands the big picture, he also follows through on all the details.'

—IRVIN GLEIM, CO-AUTHOR

"Dr. Flesher has a well-established career of excellence in accounting research and scholarly productivity," Gleim said. "More importantly, he is extremely conscientious, accommodating and resourceful. One couldn't ask for a nicer co-author."

Flesher said the latest edition of the publication marks the first time in its 22-year history that all four volumes have been released in the same month. Subject areas include business analysis, manage-

his colleague and co-author has occasionally also asked him to produce the publication at irregular intervals.

Flesher said he is pleased with the success of his partnership with Gleim and impact the Review has had upon its readers over the years. "More than 90 percent of people who pass the CMA exam have read the book," Flesher said. "Actually, more people have bought it than actually take the examination itself."

"The Gleim/Flesher CMA Review is the leading CMA review program largely due to Dale Flesher," Gleim said. "He not only understands the big picture, he also follows through on all the details."

Flesher joined the UM faculty in 1977, following four years at Appalachian State University. He received both bachelor's and master's degrees from Ball State University and earned a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Cincinnati.

These new editions bring Flesher's total catalog to 41 different titles in 75 editions. He has also authored more than 400 articles in more than 100 different journals. The professor holds CMA certificate No. 178—with a Certificate of Distinguished Performance for one of the 10 highest scores in the nation. He also holds CPA, CIA, CFM, CFE and CGFM certificates. [n](#)



Ducks Unlimited CFO Randy Graves



'Must love ducks'

As CFO for Ducks Unlimited, UM alum strives to save wetlands

by Lee Eric Smith

Many people spend a lifetime searching for their purpose, their life's calling. Randy Graves found his life's calling as a 3-year-old on a duck hunting trip with his dad.

"He would sit me in a tree and let me watch," said Graves, (BBA 73, JD 75). "I've been in love with the outdoors ever since."

Now, as chief financial officer for Ducks Unlimited, Graves plays an instrumental role in the not-for-profit organization's crusade to preserve and restore America's wetlands, where he spent so much of his childhood. "Our mission is to save wetlands across North America," Graves said. "They serve as the world's kidneys, filtering out impurities in the water and in the air. Wetlands are good for wildlife and people both."

Ducks Unlimited was established in 1937 by a small group of duck hunters during the Dust Bowl droughts of the 1930s, when waterfowl populations came close to being wiped out. These days, Ducks Unlimited boasts about 800,000 members and is the world's largest private waterfowl and wetlands conservation organization.

"We work in every state of the Union and every province of Canada," Graves said. "We're working to help recreate coastal wetlands, including those in Louisiana and Mississippi. Of every dollar we raise, 85 cents goes straight back into wetland conservation."

If Graves sounds passionate about his

work, it's because he is. He volunteered with Ducks Unlimited during high school in West Memphis, Ark., and stayed active while at Ole Miss.

"DU was my favorite charity next to church. I was always involved," he said. "It's been a passion and love of mine since high school."

It was during high school that Graves got his first taste of Ole Miss. "My sister

'Saving the wetlands and waterfowl is just a pure passion for me.' ...

—RANDY GRAVES

was there when I was deciding," he said. "I came to football games and fell in love with it."

Like so many other alumni with successful accounting careers, Graves studied under faculty legends Gene Peery and James Davis. "I had no idea what I was going to major in," he said. "But they took me under their wings, and I fell in love with accounting and went on to law school."

But it would be a while before Graves landed his dream job. After leaving Ole Miss in 1975, he spent 15 years with Ernst & Young, which was the accounting firm for Ducks Unlimited. In the early 1990s, Graves caught wind of DU moving its headquarters to Memphis.

"I talked with the managing partner and asked to be the on-site partner," Graves said. "Shortly after, DU made me a 'Godfather' offer I couldn't refuse. They asked me to come and work on the staff as the chief financial officer."

Graves, of course, leapt at the opportunity. He now oversees both the accounting and legal departments, and an annual budget of \$200 million.

"I have not had a single day that I have not wanted to come to work in the past 16 years," Graves said. "Saving the wetlands and waterfowl is just a pure passion for me, plus I get to utilize the skills I learned at the university."

He still gives back to the university he loves so much, serving as co-chair of the H. Eugene Peery Chair endowment, and giving personally to the James Davis Scholarship endowment. "I credit both of them with a lot of my success," Graves said. "It's because of Jimmy Davis that I've been on the accountancy advisory board for so many years."

And as personally rewarding as his current career is, he recommends students follow a tried-and-true path to success before leaping into the not-for-profit sector.

"Go with a reputable accounting firm for at least five years, until you get your CPA certification," Graves said. "If you want to work for a not-for-profit, it has to be your passion. If you get hooked up with one like I have, it is a great and rewarding experience." [n](#)

Academy for Government Accountability awards dissertation fellowship to UM doctoral candidate

by Elaine Pugh

A University of Mississippi doctoral candidate in accountancy has received a national dissertation fellowship from the Academy for Government Accountability.

Annette Pridgen of Jackson was presented with one of two inaugural Dr. Mortimer Dittenhofer Dissertation Research Awards during the American Accounting Association's Government and Non-Profit Sector Luncheon last year in Washington, D.C.

Mark Wilder, interim dean of accountancy, said, "It is a tremendous honor for Annette to receive the Dittenhofer Dissertation Research Award. She has great potential for teaching and research in the governmental accounting area. She is a hard worker with a great attitude. We are extremely proud of her accomplishments."

The award is named after 93-year-old Mortimer Dittenhofer, a retired professor of accounting at Florida International University, who was on hand to present the awards. Dittenhofer, a full colonel in the U.S. Army, retired from government service before spending nearly three decades in academia.

"Winning the Dittenhofer Dissertation Award is indeed a great honor," Pridgen



UM doctoral candidate Annette Pridgen (center) is congratulated on receiving the Dittenhofer Dissertation Research Award by UM professor Dale Flesher (left) and the award's namesake, Mortimer Dittenhofer (right).

as the academy's. She plans to complete her doctorate this summer at the Patterson School of Accountancy, with her studies supported by the \$12,500 Dittenhofer fellowship.

'I love the academic environment, and teaching is my passion.'

**—ANNETTE PRIDGEN
DITTENHOFFER DISSERTATION FELLOW**

said. "Dr. Dittenhofer is a pioneer in advancing government financial management and accountability. As one of the first award recipients, I was especially honored to have Dr. Dittenhofer present the award in person."

Pridgen's dissertation research on "Analyzing Government Financial Condition" furthers her personal goals, as well

Congratulating Pridgen on being chosen for the award, Sridhar Ramamoorti, a partner with Grant Thornton, LLP, and chairman of the AFGA, said, "The entire academy board of trustees wishes you well in your future endeavors, as we move forward in promoting government accountability and transparency."

Pridgen was selected by Ramamoorti

and the academy's distinguished board of trustees. The board includes members such as Samuel Mok, CFO of the U.S. Department of Labor and vice chairman of the academy; Robert Attmore, chairman of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board; Charles Bowsher, retired comptroller general of the United States; and University of Texas Professor Michael Granof, who led the Dittenhofer selection committee.

"As the academy's chairman, I was personally very thrilled with the selection," Ramamoorti said. "The time, the place, the topic and even the stars seemed to have aligned clearly, and maybe it was just meant that Ole Miss was just the place to find the right person to receive this honor."

An authority on government and internal auditing, Dittenhofer dedicated his entire career to the same objectives as the AFGA: supporting research and education initiatives in bringing transparency and

In memory of Johnny Williams (1950-2006)

Photo by Robert Jordan

Johnny Williams, the university's longtime chief financial officer, died October 8, 2006, after a long illness. He was 56.

As vice chancellor for administration and finance, Williams supervised the university's Accounting, Budgeting, Bursar, Human Resources, Information Technology, Physical Plant and Procurement Services departments, as well as several auxiliary services. He oversaw an annual operating budget of more than \$411 million.

"Our university has lost a gifted member of its administrative team," said Chancellor Robert Khayat. "He was instrumental in helping Ole Miss weather some lean financial times by initiating dramatic efficiencies of operation and innovative programs to cross-train employees.

"But more importantly, we have lost a colleague and a friend," Khayat continued. "Johnny Williams was respected and admired by everyone from the most junior custodial worker to the members of the IHL board."

As a member of the chancellor's cabinet, Williams worked closely with the IHL and other state agencies, and led the university's management team through a comprehensive process re-engineering. The university's electric power generation plant was named in his honor in April 2005.

Williams is survived by his wife Carolyn; sons Stephen and Mark, both graduates of UM; and a daughter, Emily, who is currently an Ole Miss student. And while he certainly was a financial wizard, to many others at Ole Miss, Williams was a leader, visionary, mentor and friend.

"He was one of the finest men I've ever come in contact with," said Terron Jones, director of the UM Physical Plant Department. "He has been quite involved in the lives and careers of many people who have worked with him, and involved



In 2005, Ole Miss named its electrical plant in honor of Johnny Williams, who was instrumental in the plant's construction.

in the lives of their families as well. He will be missed by his staffs, both here at Ole Miss and at several other institutions around the country."

In fact, one of Williams' colleagues will follow in his footsteps. Oxford native Larry Sparks (BAccy 84) was named vice chancellor for administration and finance in December.

"Over the past several years, Larry Sparks has provided valuable leadership in helping streamline our operations, as well as working closely with Johnny Williams to find creative solutions to our challenges," Khayat said. "We are grate-

ful for Larry's service and look forward to his continued leadership as vice chancellor."

Sparks, a certified public accountant, earned a master's of business administration from Mississippi College.

"It's great to be part of the Ole Miss family; however, I've also been fortunate to have experiences with many other institutions, which gives me a broad perspective of higher education," Sparks said. "There's no place I'd rather be than The University of Mississippi." [n](#)

AACSB International
 The ACE INA Foundation
 Mr. Hirschel T. Abbott Jr.
 Mr. Gerald M. Abdalla
 Ms. Dorine A. Adams
 Mrs. Jeannie A. Adams
 Mrs. Karen K. Adams
 Mr. Olen S. Akers
 Mr. Robert H. Alexander Jr.
 Mrs. Hallie L. Anderson
 Mrs. Jennifer M. Anderson
 Mr. Ronald G. Applewhite
 Mr. Wesley Arnold
 Col. Charles Ashley
 Mr. Barry W. Atkins
 Ms. Suzanne Centenio Atkins
 Dr. Keith E. Atkinson
 Mr. E.E. Aune
 Autozone
 Mr. Thomas W. Avent Jr.
 Mrs. Jackie P. Bailey
 Mr. Jason L. Bailey
 Mrs. Eileen Ballock
 Mr. Daniel F. Barber
 Mr. John R. Barge Jr.
 Mr. Walter B. Barlow Jr.
 Barnes-Petty Financial Advisors
 Mr. John B. Barrack
 Mrs. Evana M. Barrett
 Mrs. Amy Andrews Behroozi
 Mrs. Catherine Russ Bell
 Mr. Benny W. Bender
 Mr. Daniel Dale Bennett
 Mr. Zachary L. Bennett
 Mr. Raymond L. Bergin Jr.
 Mrs. Nell King Bieger
 Mrs. Patricia G. Biggers
 Dr. Khamis M. Bilbeisi
 Mr. William Wilson Billips
 Mr. David B. Blackburn
 Mrs. Francine H. Blackmon
 Mr. Louis J. Blanchard
 Ms. Daisy Lorraine Bobo
 Mr. Joel K. Bobo
 Mr. Charles W. Boland
 Mr. Leo Boolos Jr.
 Mrs. Maradith T. Boone
 Mr. John Borchert
 Mr. Lee H. Borden
 Mrs. Rachel D. Bost
 Ms. Jennifer Stoner Bouchillon
 Mr. Kendall O. Bowlin
 Dr. Marianne Bradford
 Mr. William D. Bradley

Mr. Earl B. Brashier
 Mr. A. Braddock Brawner
 Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation
 Mr. Charles L. Brocato
 Mr. Raymond Brocato Sr.
 Mrs. Carol H. Brock
 Mr. Robert P. Broom II
 Mrs. Melanie S. Buckholt
 Buckner Buckner & Bridges
 Ms. Sara L. Burney
 Mr. Roland O. Burns Jr.
 Mr. Hugh C. Buster
 Mr. Charles W. Caldwell Jr.
 Mr. Thomas L. Callicutt Jr.
 Mr. Jason V. Calvasina
 Dr. R. V. Calvasina
 Cannon & Company
 Mr. Louis J. Caplan
 Mr. Sammie Carmichiel
 Mr. James O. Carpenter
 Mr. Preston C. Carpenter Jr.
 Mr. Matthew Tracy Carr
 Mrs. Becky Carson
 Mrs. Lisa D. Carwyle
 Mr. Charles E. Cauthen Jr.
 Mr. James T. Channell
 Mr. William T. Cheairs IV
 Ms. Melanie Elisabeth Chow
 Mr. Charles C. Clark
 Mrs. Reatha H. Clark
 Mr. Keith P. Clingman
 Mr. Jay L. Cofield
 Mr. Walton T. Coleman
 Mr. William D. Coleman
 Mrs. Jamie L. Collier
 Mr. Patrick Christopher Colpitts
 Community Foundation of Greater
 Memphis
 Mr. Daniel O. Conwill IV
 Ms. Vickie M. Cook
 Mr. William Robert Cook
 Mr. Timothy M. Cooper
 Copeland, Cook, Taylor & Bush
 Ms. Jean P. Cottingham
 Mr. William W. Cox Jr.
 Mr. Arlen B. Coyle
 Mr. Dennis M. Craven
 Mr. Leslie L. Crawford Jr.
 Mr. William L. Crim Jr.
 Dr. James R. Crockett
 Mr. Ralph D. Crum
 Mr. John L. Crumby
 Mr. Gerald P. Crystal
 Mr. Stephen T. Cumella

Mr. Charles Bradley Cummings
 Mr. Eugene M. Cummings
 Mr. Robert A. Cunningham
 Mrs. Mary H. Curry
 Ms. Sandra C. Darby
 Mr. Wallace E. Davenport
 Mrs. Karen J. Davidson
 Ms. Sara A. Davidson
 Dr. James W. Davis
 Mr. Walter K. Davis
 Mr. William E. Davis
 Mr. Raymond Dearman Jr.
 Deloitte & Touche Foundation
 Deloitte Services, LP
 Mr. Edward A. Demiller Jr.
 Mr. H. Michael Deneka
 Mr. Ladd Dilworth
 Dixon Hughes, PLLC
 Mr. Daniel V. Dixon
 Mr. Kenneth L. Donahue
 Mr. Colt Doom
 Mr. John E. Dorrell
 Mr. Oliver F. Doughtie
 Mr. William M. Douglass
 Mr. Robert W. Dowdy
 Mr. Wallace L. Duke Jr.
 Ms. Cecile F. Dukes
 Mr. James H. Dunn
 E.E. Davidson Rev. Inter Vivos
 Dr. Charles W. Eagles
 Mr. David C. Earwood
 Mr. Boyd M. Edwards
 El Paso Energy Foundation
 Dr. Rick Elam
 Mr. Archie W. England
 Mr. Joe M. Enoch
 Mrs. Allison M. Entrekin
 Ernst & Young Foundation
 Ernst & Young, LLP
 Estate of Gaston Jones
 Estate of James G. Martin
 ExxonMobil Foundation
 Mrs. Donna H. Falkner
 Ms. Dianene G. Fant
 Mrs. Vivian S. Farris
 Mrs. Claudia R. Fath
 Mr. George Alfred Fenger Jr.
 Dr. Walker E. Fesmire
 Mr. Jon K. Finley
 First Tennessee Bank
 Flagstar Construction Company
 Dr. Dale L. Flesher
 Dr. Tonya Flesher
 Mr. Fred R. Flinn

Mr. Harry Flowers
 Mrs. Tina File Floyd
 Mr. Brian M. Folk
 Dr. Sharon K. Ford
 Mrs. Kim E. Francis
 Mrs. Margaret Franetovich
 Ms. Mary Howard Freeman
 Dr. George R. French
 Mr. Jacob M. Fried Jr.
 Mr. Benjamin L. Frierson
 Mr. Roger P. Friou
 Dr. Don L. Frugé
 Mr. Brian W. Fyfe
 Lt. Col. Robert B. Gann, USMC
 (Ret.)
 Mrs. Danelle L. Garraway
 Mrs. Lori B. Geiger
 Mr. Larry T. Gentry
 Georgia-Pacific Foundation
 Mr. Valdis Gercens
 Mr. Gerard R. Gibert
 Mr. Thomas L. Gibson
 Global Impact
 G-Mart Ltd.
 Mr. George D. Gober
 Ms. Vickie A. Gober
 Ms. Wendy W. Goldstein
 Mr. James R. Gordon
 Ms. Lili A. Gordon
 Mr. Patrick C. Gough
 Mr. Randy L. Graves
 Mr. William G. Griesbeck
 Mr. Jeremy B. Griffin
 Mr. Joseph P. Griffin
 The Hon. Thomas Griffiths
 Ms. Catharine M. Grimes
 Mr. James A. Grimes
 Mr. Mark C. Grimes Jr.
 Mrs. Lori House Groscost
 Mr. Charles S. Groshon
 Mrs. Sandra M. Guest
 Mrs. Amanda C. Gufford
 Mr. Charles P. Gufford
 Mrs. Renee T. Gwin
 Haddox, Reid, Burkes & Calhoun,
 PLLC
 Mr. Emmette F. Hale III
 Mr. Christopher L. Haley
 Ms. Cathy T. Haltom
 Mrs. G. A. Hamilton
 Mrs. Belinda B. Hammond
 Dr. Glyn W. Hanbery
 Mr. Barry D. Harbour
 Mr. Ben Bond Harrell

Mr. Jerry W. Harris II	Mr. Sydney J. Keasler	Mr. Michael S. McKeown	Mrs. Annette B. Parish
Mr. Joe D. Havens Jr.	Dr. Gloria Kellum	Ms. Laura M. McKinley	Capt. Richard J. Parish
Mr. Aubrey C. Hayes Jr.	Mrs. Audra L. Kimble	Mrs. Anne E. McLaughlin	Mrs. Susan C. Parker
Mr. Lionel Henderson Jr.	Kinney & Associates, PLLC	Mrs. Christine B. McLeod	Mrs. Renita A. Partin
Mrs. Charlotte L. Henry	Mr. Rex A. Kinnison	Mr. John M. McMahon	Mrs. Melanie P. Patrick
Mrs. Julie Bradley Hensley	Ms. Lauren C. Kitchen	Dr. Frances E. McNair	Mr. Gary W. Patterson
Mr. A. E. Henson Jr.	Mrs. Maura D. Klingen	Mrs. Wendy H. McNulty	Ms. Melody C. Patterson
Ms. Ann E. Herring	Mr. Alfred R. Koenenn	Dr. Carol M. Megehee	Pearce, Beville, Leesburg & Moore
Mrs. Lori Hertel	Mr. James G. Kornegay	Ms. Pamela Mendez	Mr. John H. Pecarek
Mr. Robert S. Hester Jr.	KPMG Foundation	Ms. Mandy K. Mendoza	Mr. James T. Pegues
Mr. William B. Hicks	KPMG, LLP	Mr. Ricardo J. Merlos	Mr. W. P. Pennebaker Jr.
Mr. Cyrus H. Higgs III	Mr. Edward A. Krei	Dr. Dan W. Meyer	Perimeter Foods Inc. No. 2
Mr. Jimmy L. Hill	Ms. Olena Olexandrivna Kulikova	Mr. John R. Meyer	Mr. Mickey J. Perry
Mr. D. Kirkland Hines	Mr. Brian W. Lambiotte	Mr. Ronnie G. Michaels	Pfizer Foundation
Mr. R.T. Hines	Mr. P.B. Landess	Mrs. Beverly Y. Milam	Mr. D. Timothy Phillips
Mr. Matthew Miller Hinson	Mr. Joe K. Larson	Mr. David L. Miller	Mr. Walter J. Pierron Jr.
Mr. Samuel C. Hix	Mr. Ashley Lee	Mrs. Kimberly T. Miller	Mr. Chris A. Polk
Mr. Clayton Joseph Holland	Lefoldt & Company, PA	Ms. Nora R. Miller	Mr. Ross B. Polk
Mrs. Cindy M. Hollingsworth	Mr. Christopher M. Leopold	Mr. Robert D. Mims	Mr. James E. Poole Jr.
Mr. H.E. Holloway Jr.	Mr. James A. Lesemann Jr.	Mississippi Tax Institute Inc.	Mr. Bradley K. Pounds
Mr. Miller P. Holmes Jr.	Mr. Jerry L. Levens	Dr. Ben L. Mitchell	Mr. T.A. Pounds
Mr. Jason L. Honeycutt	Ms. Andrea Lenee Lewis	Mr. Buck A. Moore Sr.	Ms. Jane Powell
Ms. Rebecca L. Horn	Mr. James M. Lightsey	Mr. Guy W. Moore Jr.	Mr. David F. Poythress Sr.
Horne CPA Group	Ms. Xuwen Lin	Mr. Norman E. Moore Jr.	Mrs. Karen Preston-Morf
Mrs. Dana D. Horner	Mr. Charles S. Locke	Mr. William F. Moore Jr.	PricewaterhouseCoopers
Mr. Ernest E. Howard III	Mr. William Joseph Lomax	Mr. Jonathan P. Moorehead	Foundation
Mrs. Shioh Lie Huang	Lorman Education Services	Mrs. Kelly K. Moorehead	PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP
Ms. Jennifer A. Hufford	Mr. Ronald W. Lott	Mr. Orlando A. Morales	Mr. Floyd E. Pruden Jr.
Mr. Gregory P. Husnik	Mr. C. Matthew Lusco	Ms. Robba Moran	Mr. Charles P. Quarterman
Mr. Darrell S. Hyde	Mr. Eugene D. Lyne Jr.	Mr. William A. Morehead	Mrs. Frieda S. Quon
Ms. Kristy Marie Hyde	Mr. Kevin A. Lyon	Morgan Stanley-Dean Witter	Mr. Daniel Rabinowitz
Mr. Mwiya C. Imakando	Mr. Robert Leslie Lyon Jr.	Mr. Mark G. Morris	Mr. Bradford W. Rainey
ING Funds Distributors Inc.	Mrs. Kristen S. Macadams	Dr. Patricia A. Mounce	Dr. Kenneth C. Rakow Jr.
International Paper Company	Mr. A. Sonny MacArthur	Mr. Joel W. Mulkin	Mr. Lee W. Randall
Foundation	Mrs. Carolyn F. Magruder	Murphy Oil USA Inc.	Mr. Richard V. Randall
Mr. Selby A. Ireland	Mr. Ralph H. Marble	Mr. Christopher D. Murphy	Mr. Robert L. Rawls
Mr. Michael J. Iupe	Ms. Carol Anne Marion	Mr. J. Blake Murphy	Mr. Fred G. Ray
Mr. Quinon R. Ivy	Mr. Scott T. Marshall	Mr. Norman K. Nail Jr.	Mr. Paul A. Ray
J. E. Vance & Company CPAs	Fr. Troy W. Mashburn Jr.	Ms. Judy Napier	Mr. William A. Ray
Mrs. Geneva C. Jackson	Dr. D.Shawn Mauldin	National Business Institute	Rhea & Ivy PLC
Mr. Walter T. Jagodinski	Mr. Nick A. Mavar Jr.	Mr. Mark H. Nicolas	Mr. Olen Jourdan Rhea
Mrs. Amy L. James	Mr. Stuart M. Maxey	Mr. William W. Nixon	Dr. William R. Rhodes
Jefferies & Company Inc.	Mrs. Tara D. May	Northstar Gas Company Inc.	Ms. Jennifer L. Rice
Mrs. Jennifer Johnston Jenkins	Mr. Cal Mayo Jr.	Mr. John J. Nosser II	Mr. Hugh M. Riley
Mr. Alex G. Johnson III	Mr. William T. Mays Jr.	Mrs. Cheryl F. Nutter	Mrs. Stephanie M. Rippee
Mr. Charles M. Johnson	Mr. Robert L. McClafflin	Mr. Mark C. Odom	Mr. Marshall Dewayne Rivers
Mr. Jeremy F. Johnson	Mr. Burwell B. McClendon	Mr. Joseph D. Oliver III	Mr. William H. Roark
Mr. Paul K. Joiner	Mrs. Robin Y. McCormick	Mr. Morgan R. Olsen	Mr. Anthony M. Robbins
Mr. Thomas E. Jolly Jr.	Mr. Brian L. McCoy	Mr. Michael Overstreet	Mrs. Allyson F. Robertson
Mrs. Melissa Lean Jones	Mr. Russell P. McDaniel	Oxford Banking Association	Mr. Terry A. Robertson
Mrs. Melissa M. Jones	Mr. William Michael McDonald Sr.	Pace Accounting Company	Mrs. Eleanor H. Roessler
Dr. Robert E. Jordan	Mrs. Andrea K. McDowell	Ms. Georgina L. Pace	Mr. Ernest D. Ross
Mrs. Kristen C. Kalinowski	Mr. Peter T. McDowell	Ms. Mary Pack	Ms. Sharon K. Rowland
Mrs. Kathy Keasler	Ms. Eileen M. McGinley	Mr. Michael J. Parentin	Mr. Tommy L. Rowland

Mrs. Molly Lomax Roy	Mr. Larry D. Sparks	Mr. William D. Trahan	Mrs. Susan S. Weatherholt
Mrs. Pamela K. Roy	Ms. Jacquelyn M. Stahlman	Mr. Terry F. Traylor	Mr. Michael A. Webb
Mrs. Georgiana R. Rushing	Mrs. Teresa C. Standard	Mrs. Angelyn S. Treutel	Mr. Joseph C. Webster
Mr. Richard Weston Russ Jr.	State Farm Companies Foundation	Mr. John W. Turk Jr.	Mr. Joseph T. Weller
Mr. Michael C. Russell	Ms. Ginny R. Stearns	Mr. Danny E. Turman	Mr. Christopher J. Wells
Mr. Joe T. Rye	Mr. Daniel B. Stimpson	Mr. Edward W. Turnage III	Mr. Jerry E. West
Ms. Amy M. Sammons	Mr. Eric P. Stine	Turner Promotions	Mr. Donald A. White
Sanderson Farms	Dr. Morris H. Stocks	Mr. Jon C. Turner	Mrs. Tina Marie W. White
Mr. Virgil L. Sandifer Jr.	Mr. Robert Strickland Jr.	Mr. Bobby Tutor Jr.	Mr. Robert B. Whitten II
Mr. Eric M. Saul	Mr. Jeffrey B. Strouse	Mr. Jesse B. Tutor Jr.	Mrs. Tanya R. Wilborn
Mr. J. G. Schaffer Jr.	Mrs. Mary S. Stukenborg	Mr. Jeffrey W. Underwood	Dr. Rebecca S. Wilkie
Mrs. Donna L. Schmidt	Mr. John M. Sullivan	Mr. Jeffery C. Vap	Mr. A. T. Williams
Mrs. Lisa C. Schmidt	Ms. Angela Summers	Mr. K. S. Verheek Jr.	Mr. Clestle W. Williams
Mrs. Barry Schuster	Mrs. Rhonda C. Swider	Ms. Donna Dukes Wade	Mrs. Dana W. Williams
Mr. Richard H. Sears	Mrs. Melody W. Taylor	Mr. David J. Wages	Dr. John Richard Williams
Mr. Jason T. Shackelford	Mrs. Paula D. Teague	Mr. Gerald D. Wages	Mr. Jeffrey R. Wills
Mrs. Judy W. Shannon	Dr. Thomas R. Thies	Mrs. Carolyn R. Wakefield	Dr. Arlette C. Wilson
Dr. Andrew D. Sharp	Mr. Gary D. Thigpen	Mr. James S. Walden	Mr. Vance L. Witt
Mrs. Jane E. Sharp	Ms. Bettina D. Thomas	Mr. John E. Walendzik Jr.	Mr. Brent W. Wood
Dr. Roy D. Sheffield	Mr. James T. Thomas IV	Mr. David M. Walls	Mr. David C. Wood
Mr. Thomas B. Shepherd III	Thompson Dunavant, PLC	Mr. Tommy T. Wammack	Mr. Robert T. Woods
Smith Turner & Reeves	Mr. Robert C. Thompson III	Mr. Yalin Wang	Mrs. Julia B. Woodward
Mr. G. Witt Smith Jr.	Mr. Joseph W. Thomson III	Mr. M. E. Ward III	Mrs. Nina Margaret Word
Mr. John B. Smith	Mrs. Patti G. Thrash	Watkins Uiberall, PLLC	Mr. J. E. Wright
Mr. Justin Andrew Smith	Mrs. Jillayne M. Tillman	Mr. Jon L. Watson	Mrs. Shonda H. Young
Mr. R. Hunter Smith Jr.	Mr. Gregory A. Ton	Mr. Michael D. Watson Jr.	Mrs. Wanda B. Young
Mrs. D. A. Smitherman	Mrs. Grace DeSha Toohig	Mr. William L. Watt	Mr. Albert E. Yow
Mrs. Kristie K. Sochovka	Mr. Huey L. Townsend	Mr. Wendell W. Weakley	Mr. Chuck Zadina

Dissertation, continued from Page 10

accountability to government financial management and forging relationships among government, business and academia to further such goals.

Dale Flesher, associate dean and Arthur Andersen Lecturer in the Patterson School, accompanied Pridgen to the awards banquet. Flesher has long known Dittenhofer, who provided him with the idea for his own dissertation topic more than 30 years ago, calling him “a legend in government accounting circles.”

Flesher said he was pleased that the award’s selection committee included Ramamoorti.

“Sri and I have worked on several projects together involving the Academy of Accounting Historians over the years,” Flesher said. “Not only is he a distinguished practicing accountant in his own right, but his father, Mr. G.R. Moorti, was

essentially the father of internal auditing in India.”

Patricia Patrick of Pennsylvania State University won the award along with Pridgen.

Pridgen spent some 14 years auditing government agencies, which influenced her to pursue research in this area.

“I developed a keen interest in government financial condition,” she said. “There have been major changes in reporting government financial condition over the past few years, and my interest in this topic has increased.”

A graduate of Jackson State University with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accounting, Pridgen worked from 1986 until 2000 in the Office of the State Auditor of Mississippi, rising from intermediate auditor to manager. She then served for a year as an internal auditor in the Depart-

ment of Human Services before joining the JSU accounting faculty. She entered the doctoral program in accountancy at Ole Miss in 2004. She has taught the government accounting course at UM’s DeSoto Center in Southaven and Principles of Accounting and Governmental Accounting on the Oxford campus.

She is actively involved in the Association of Government Accountants, American Accounting Association’s Government and Nonprofit Section, and Mississippi Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Pridgen plans to continue her work in the academic field. “I love the academic environment, and teaching is my passion,” she said. “My doctoral program has provided me with the skills needed to succeed in conducting academic research. I am eager to continue to add to the body of accounting knowledge through research.” n

positive influence on my life,” said Pate, a junior who plans to pursue a master’s in accountancy and possibly enter law school. “The Honors College has provided me with an environment where the standard barriers that exist between professors and students are broken down because the lecture-based approach toward learning is replaced by interactive and stimulating round-table discussions.”

Jeannie Blair, a junior from Dallas, considers the Honors College and the Patterson School of Accountancy a winning combination that has enabled her to accomplish her academic goals.

“The Honors College has been a very important part of my academic career,” Blair said. “It provides students with unique opportunities for strong academics,

‘The Honors College has been a very important part of my academic career. My classes in accounting have been my most challenging so far, and I have loved it.’

—JEANNIE BLAIR
SMBHC ACCOUNTANCY STUDENT

including smaller, more concentrated classes.

“My classes in accounting have been my most challenging so far, and I have loved it. The professors are one of a kind; they are so knowledgeable in their field and are always available for extra help.”

Blair changed her major after enrolling at Ole Miss.

“I decided to switch my major after I took Principles of Accounting classes and realized that my successes pointed to a possible future job in accountancy,” she said, adding that she wants to become a CPA and pursue a career in accounting, then eventually start her own business, “a specialty store of some sort.”

“Whatever I do, I know that I will have great connections through being a member of the School of Accountancy and the Honors College.” n



Patterson School ranks in top 25 accountancy programs in U.S.

A new national ranking places The University of Mississippi’s undergraduate and graduate programs in accounting education in the nation’s top 25.

The Oct. 30 issue of the *Public Accounting Report* slots Ole Miss at No. 22 in undergraduate education, up one spot from the 2005 report. Also, UM’s graduate accountancy program cracked the 2006 list at No. 23 after being unranked in 2005.

“We have long known that our program in the Patterson School of Accountancy is among the best programs in the country and produces outstanding graduates who consistently rise to the challenges of professional competition,” said Chancellor Robert Khayat. “Recognition by the *Public Accounting Report*—the independent newsletter of the accounting profession—is a high compliment for our faculty, students and graduates.”

More than 1,000 schools in the United States offer accounting programs, and about 500 of those, including UM, are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, or AACSB International, as being among “the best accountancy and business programs in the world.”

“Being in the top 25 is indeed a significant accomplishment,” said Dale Flesher, associate dean and the Arthur Andersen Alumni Lecturer.

The University of Texas and Brigham Young University hold the top two places in both graduate and undergraduate programs, repeating their 2005 rankings. The top-ranked SEC school for 2006 is the University of Florida at No. 13 in both programs. The only other SEC schools ranked higher than Ole Miss are the universities of Alabama and Georgia.

Top 25 undergraduate accountancy programs as in the Oct. 30, 2006, issue of the *Public Accounting Report* follows:

1. University of Texas-Austin
2. Brigham Young University
3. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
4. University of Notre Dame
5. University of Southern California
6. Texas A&M University
7. Indiana University
8. Michigan State University
9. Ohio State University
10. University of Wisconsin
11. Northern Illinois University
12. Miami University (Ohio)
13. University of Florida
14. University of Virginia
15. University of Alabama
16. University of Georgia
17. University of Washington
18. Baylor University
19. University of Missouri
20. North Carolina State University
21. University of Iowa
22. The University of Mississippi
23. College of William & Mary
24. Bentley College
25. University of Tennessee and Florida State University (tie).

“The ranking addresses the perception of how well our graduates will perform,” said former accountancy dean Tonya Flesher, the Arthur Andersen Professor of Accountancy. “This perception is based on the success of past graduates, the national reputation of the faculty and the availability of the largest accountancy library in the world.” Flesher was referring to the AICPA National Library of the Accountancy Profession, which is permanently housed on the Oxford campus. n



Photo by Harry Briscoe



The newest display at Conner Hall is the James W. Davis Scholarship in Accountancy plaque, honoring donors who have generously given at least \$5,000 to support the scholarship. Pictured here are Rick Elam (left), Reynolds Professor of Accountancy, and James W. 'Jimmy' Davis, who holds the distinguished Peery Chair of Accountancy in the Patterson School and has been a faculty member since 1965. To find out how you can support the scholarship and add your name to the plaque, contact the dean's office at 662-915-7468.



3110D/3-07

The University of Mississippi
Oxford • Jackson • Tupelo • Southaven
 Patterson School of Accountancy
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 6
University, MS