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M Partner

McLean Institute for Public Service and
Community Engagement

11-8-2019

Lexington, MS - M Partner Pilot Phase

Laura Martin

University of Mississippi

Albert Nylander

University of Mississippi

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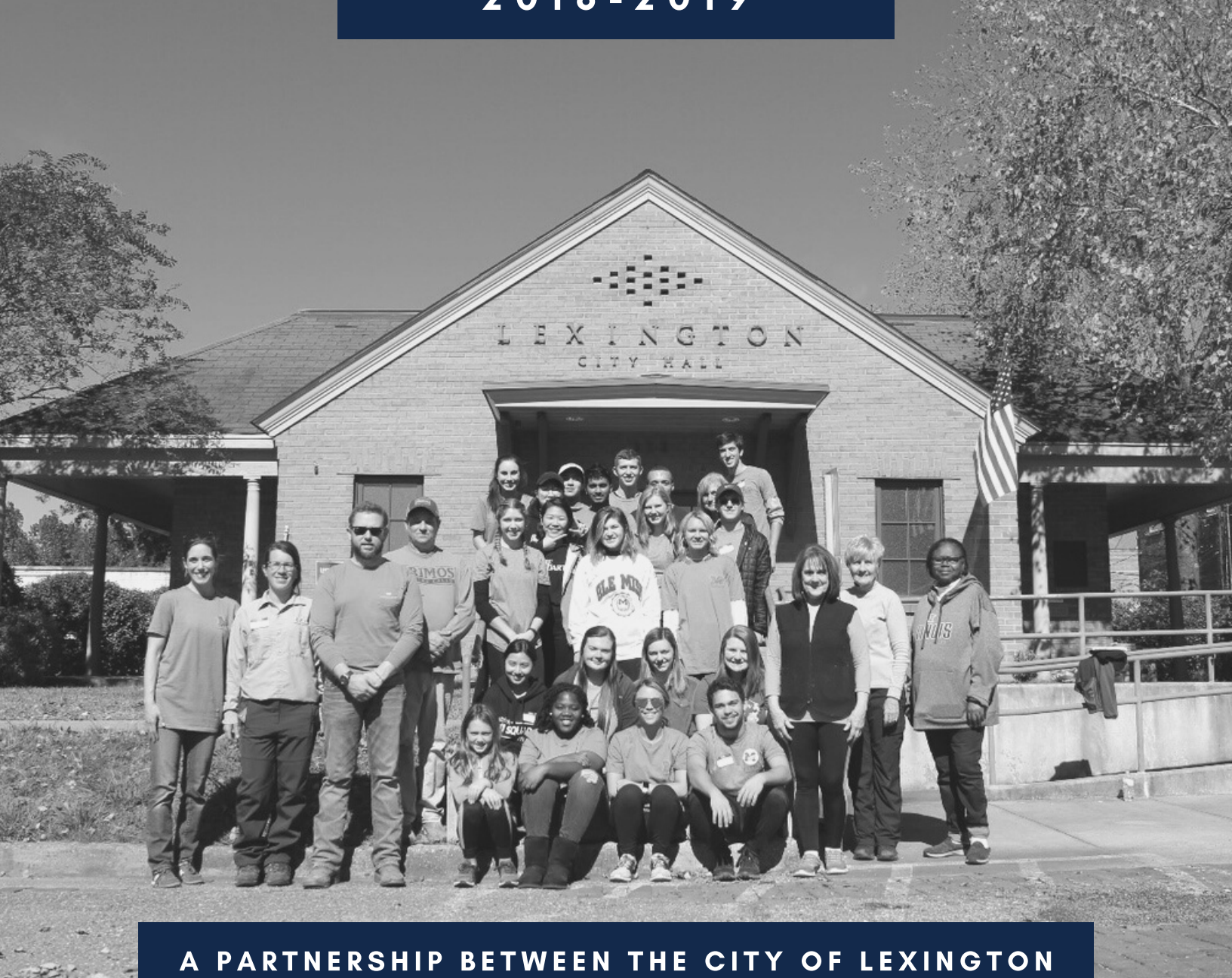
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M Partner Pilot Phase

2018 - 2019



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY OF LEXINGTON
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



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Acknowledgements

Community-campus partnerships involve individuals and organizations coming together to create something larger and more beautiful than they could accomplish by working separately. Thanks to the intentional involvement of students, faculty, and staff at the University of Mississippi, along with the vision and passion of our community partners, M Partner has taken on an impact that exceeded our wildest imagination.

The following individuals have been instrumental in nurturing M Partner from concept to reality. Please accept heartfelt thanks on behalf of M Partner and the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement.

Robin McCrory, Mayor of Lexington

Dr. Glenn Boyce, Chancellor

Dr. Noel Wilkin, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Algenia Adams, Manager, Lexington Farmers' Market

Dr. Katrina Caldwell, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Community Engagement

Dr. Lee Cohen, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts

Michaela Cooper, M Partner VISTA 2018-2019

Kawanna Horton, Director, Boys and Girls Club of Lexington

Dr. Jeff Jackson, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Paige Lawrence, Assistant Administrator and CNO of UMMC Homes County

Taylor Robertson, M Partner VISTA 2019-2020

Dr. Jeffrey S. Vitter, Chancellor Emeritus

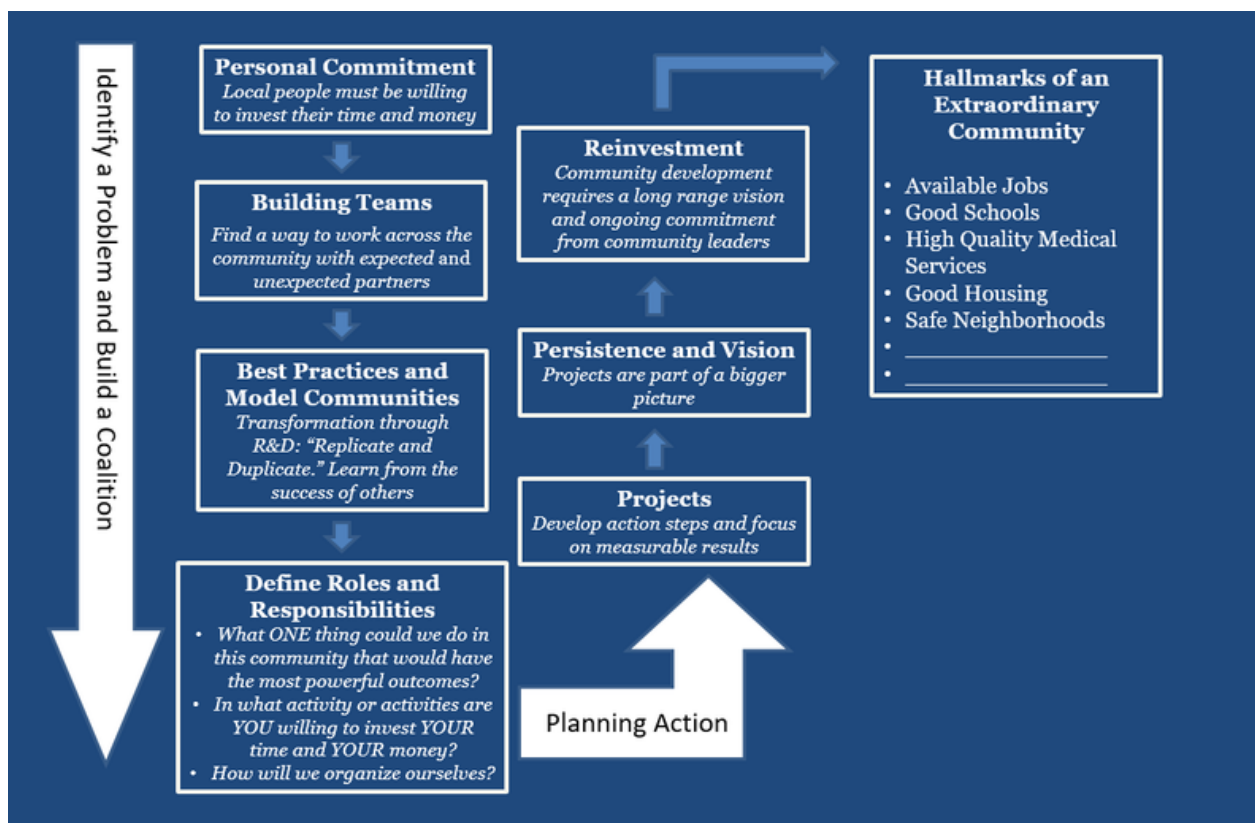


About M Partner

The University of Mississippi is a force for community and economic development across the state. In 2018, the university launched M Partner, a community engagement effort that seeks to improve quality of life in Mississippi communities. M Partner offers a framework for community and university representatives to advance priority projects in partner cities across the state. M Partner is central to the university's mission of learning, discovery, and engagement.

The inaugural M Partner communities are Charleston (Tallahatchie County), Lexington (Holmes County), and New Albany (Union County). The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement is leading the pilot phase of M Partner, and aligning university resources and expertise with community-driven projects. M Partner affiliates with credit-bearing courses, offers community service opportunities, conducts research, and provides technical assistance to advance community priorities.

The guiding framework below is adapted from the work of Dr. Vaughn Grisham, founding director of the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement and professor emeritus of sociology.





LETTER FROM LAURA MARTIN

**M PARTNER DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE
DIRECTOR OF THE MCLEAN INSTITUTE**

The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement has been part of M Partner since its inception. In the spring 2017 semester, I served on the task force that was asked to envision a framework for a community-university partnership inspired by the EPIC Network, which stands for Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities. The task force was comprised of faculty and staff from across the Oxford and UMMC campuses. While we debated how best to adapt this model to serve Mississippi communities, we shared the conviction that intentional and reciprocal community partnerships were central to the public purpose of the University of Mississippi.

M Partner was launched in March 2018 with three partner communities: Charleston in Tallahatchie County, Lexington in Holmes County, and New Albany in Union County. The McLean Institute then held a series of community meetings in each partner community to identify priority projects. These community conversations revealed a consistent set of themes in each partner community: educational initiatives, community health and wellbeing, business and economic development, and beautification. In all, community partners identified a set of 27 priority projects across all three communities.

The McLean Institute built momentum for M Partner during the summer and fall semesters of 2018 through placements with the North Mississippi VISTA Project, special events such as business forums in partnership with the Entrepreneur Center at the Mississippi Development Authority, and a large-scale day of service across all three communities. By the spring 2019 semester, faculty, staff, and students were engaged in 18 projects across the M Partner communities. In Summer 2019, 11 M Partner Interns worked on priority project areas across the three communities, and campus-wide engagement continues during the fall 2019 semester with the involvement of new faculty members and academic departments.

The pilot phase of M Partner has given me several insights about the University of Mississippi. I have learned that our students have a strong desire for hands-on involvement in communities, and actively seek out opportunities through their coursework, internships, and days of service. Thanks to M Partner, the McLean Institute has developed new partnerships with faculty members across campus, and strengthened a growing network of community-engaged scholars. I am enormously grateful to the students, faculty, staff, and administrators who believed in M Partner and shared their talents during this pilot phase.

I will remain forever grateful to our community partners. In community engagement work, we know that trust is so vital to developing authentic partnerships that advance a larger purpose. We were welcomed with open arms in Charleston, Lexington, and New Albany, and the trust that our community partners placed in us allowed us all to learn, grow, deepen connections, and create something larger than what we could have accomplished separately. Thank you.

This publication provides a snapshot of what M Partner has accomplished during the pilot phase – and we are not finished yet! I hope you enjoy reading.

Laura Martin,
M Partner Director and
Associate Director, McLean Institute

About the McLean Institute

Mission

The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement advances transformative service throughout the University and fights poverty through education in Mississippi.

Vision

The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement will be recognized for expanding community engagement throughout the University of Mississippi and for its success in addressing poverty in Mississippi through mutually beneficial partnerships.

Core Values

Academic Excellence: The McLean Institute believes that education should be a lifelong and empowering experience open to all.

Transformation: The McLean Institute recognizes the potential of the University of Mississippi to transform the inequitable structures of Mississippi that contribute to generational poverty.

Respect: The McLean Institute values the strengths and assets of all people and the organizations with whom we partner.

Integrity: The McLean Institute believes in listening honestly, processing information accurately, and following through on its commitments.

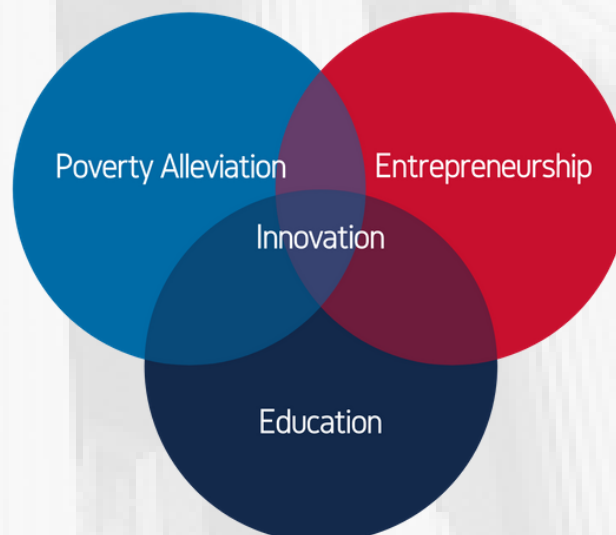
Inclusion: The McLean Institute fosters inclusivity and cultural humility in its work.

Approach

Through a cohesive portfolio of programs, the McLean Institute partners with Mississippi communities to fight poverty through education, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

ENGAGE UM

How will you engage UM?



LETTER FROM DR. ALBERT NYLANDER

DIRECTOR OF THE MCLEAN INSTITUTE, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY

The McLean Institute is grateful to everyone that has supported the pilot phase of M Partner. Since 2012, the McLean Institute has been called on to lead strategic priorities for the University of Mississippi, from the Transformation through Service priority of the UM 2020 Strategic Plan to M Partner in the current Flagship Forward strategic plan.

The McLean Institute has watched community engagement efforts take root at UM. Community-campus partnerships are now embedded in the culture of our institution. After years of promoting service-learning and community engagement on campus, it was heartening to see faculty members seek out engagement opportunities from the list of projects identified through M Partner.

The pilot phase of M Partner has recalled the work of George McLean, founder of the CREATE Foundation and the Community Development Foundation, publisher of the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, and visionary leader for whom the McLean Institute is named. McLean believed in the power of people coming together to achieve ambitious goals that would improve quality of life for the entire community. This approach was synthesized by professor emeritus of sociology and founding director of the McLean Institute, Dr. Vaughn Grisham, as creating extraordinary results in ordinary communities. The lessons from George McLean and Dr. Vaughn Grisham teach us that when broad-based coalitions of community members join together, generate momentum through visible victories, and continue to build support for community and economic development, anything is possible.

George McLean saw local leadership as integral to community and economic development efforts. Based on those insights, Dr. Vaughn Grisham led a leadership development program in northeast Mississippi for many years, and we were excited to learn that several of our close collaborators in New Albany were graduates of Dr. Grisham's leadership program. George McLean also encouraged community leaders to partner with universities to harness the economic development potential of higher education. M Partner has provided a template for creating additional points of connection between the University of Mississippi and partner communities, and we see evidence of this in new placements through the North Mississippi VISTA Project and new faculty partnerships in Charleston, Lexington, and New Albany.

The projects and collaborations described on the following pages are a testament to the incredible efforts of our community partners, along with the dedication of faculty, staff, and students at UM. They have demonstrated – as George McLean knew – that by working together in service of common goal, anything is possible.

Albert Nylander, PhD
Director, McLean Institute
Professor of Sociology



THE UNIVERSITY of
MISSISSIPPI
MCLEAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Academic Courses and Internships

2019 HEALTHY HOMETOWN APPLICATION

Course

ES 490: Independent Study

Department

Health, Exercise Science, and Recreation Management

Faculty Member

Ovuokerie Addoh

Community Liaisons

Robin McCrory, *Mayor of Lexington*; Frances Bartee; *Mayor's Health Council*

Semester

Spring 2019

Project Description

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation presents the Healthy Hometown award annually to encourage and reward exemplary community health and wellness in municipalities across the state. Faculty and students worked alongside community leaders to create the grant application based on Lexington's environmental ordinances and policies, reduced tobacco use, community wellness infrastructure and fitness classes, edible community garden, and farmers' market.



Final Deliverables

Application for the 2019 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation Healthy Hometown Award.

\$50,000 grant award as one of the 2019 Healthy Hometown winners. The funds will be used to add a splashpad to the city park.

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

Course

HP 645: Organization and Administration of Health Promotion

Department

Health, Exercise Science, and Recreation Management

Faculty Member

Ovuokerie Addoh

Community Liaisons

Robin McCrory, *Mayor of Lexington*; Frances Bartee; *Mayor's Health Council*; Beulah Greer, *Community Student Learning Center*

Semester

Spring 2019

Project Description

Incorporate health and wellness programming into the annual Lexington Spring Festival, which drives significant tourism and community engagement. Due to inclement weather, the health fair was rescheduled and held in conjunction with the Garage Sale benefiting the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters program of the Community Student Learning Center.



Final Deliverables

Community health fair featuring health-related screening exams, educational resources on pre-diabetes and tobacco use, and information on undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Mississippi.

PK-12TH GRADE COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY FRAMEWORK

Affiliated Research Center

Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction

Department

Teacher Education

Faculty/Staff Members

Angela Rutherford and Angie Caldwell

Community Liaison

James Henderson, *Superintendent, Holmes County Consolidated School District*

Semester

Spring 2019

Project Description

The Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act places an emphasis on grade-level reading skills, particularly as students progress through grades K-3. UM researchers identified best practices to ensure that every student reads at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Final Deliverables

Comprehensive PK-12th grade Literacy Framework for the Holmes County Consolidated School District. The PK-12 standards in the framework are based on research and effective practice, and will enable teachers and administrators to strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The comprehensive framework provides a roadmap to support teachers in providing students with successful transitions from grade to grade to ensure the literacy achievement of all students.



EXPANSION OF THE LEXINGTON FARMERS' MARKET

M Partner Summer Intern

Kymberle Gordon, PhD student in Nutrition Policy

Community Liaisons

Robin McCrory, *Mayor of Lexington*; Algenia Adams, *Lexington Farmers' Market*

Semester

Summer 2019

Project Description

In 2018, the City of Lexington received funding through the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi to hire a Farmers' Market manager. To continue to develop and enhance the farmers' market as a community resource, the market sought a plan for expansion, engagement, and vendor recruitment.

Final Deliverables

Data collection through exit surveys with customers and interviews with growers to gauge satisfaction with market and seek recommendations for improvement.

Final report including recommendations for marketing strategies, promotion of recipes featuring the fruit and vegetable of the week, and use of a validated objective survey to assess the farmers' market and surrounding food environment.



RESUME AND CAREER BUILDING WORKSHOPS

M Partner Summer Intern

Curtis Hill, English major and Innovation Scholar with the McLean Institute's Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development initiative

Community Liaisons

Beulah Greer, *Community Student Learning Center*; Ellen Reddy, *Nollie Jenkins Family Center*

Semester

Summer 2019

Project Description

Offer enrichment and programming to inspire college-going aspirations and civic engagement among youth participating in summer programs at the Community Student Learning Center and the Nollie Jenkins Family Center.

Final Deliverables

Presentation on resume building and career navigation.

Mock interview sessions to develop public speaking skills.





Special Programs and Events

MCLEAN ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

UM Partners

McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement and CEED Innovation Fellows Elena Bauer, 3rd year Law Student and AK Burress, graduate student in Pharmacy

Semester

Summer 2018

Program Description

The McLean Entrepreneurial Leadership Program is a weeklong, residential summer program on the campus of the University of Mississippi. The purpose of the McLean Entrepreneurial Leadership Program is to foster dialogue about how Mississippi can utilize resources through the University of Mississippi to address some of the state's most pressing needs. Outcomes of the program are designed to help stimulate business in local communities, improve educational systems, and strengthen the conversation between the university and community members. Youth from M Partner communities were invited to participate at no cost.



M PARTNER BUSINESS FORUM

UM Partners

McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement and the Innovation Hub at Insight Park

Statewide Partner

The Entrepreneur Center at the Mississippi Development Authority

Featured Local Businesses

Southern Coffee Services and Gladys' Restaurant

Semester

Fall 2018

Program Description

Business development forum and webinar featuring lessons from local entrepreneurs. The webinar was broadcast on location and the interactive event allowed participants to explore the downtown area and support local businesses.



FINANCIAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP

UM Partners

Blair Wortsmith, *Miss University 2018-2019* and Moneythink

Community Liaisons

Kawanna Horton and Latara Pitchford, *Boys and Girls Club of Lexington*

Semester

Summer 2019

Program Description

Interactive presentation at the Holmes County Career and Technical Center relating to money management and goal-setting around future educational attainment.



M PARTNER COMMUNITY DAY 2018 & 2019

UM Partner

McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement

Semesters

Fall 2018 and Fall 2019

Program

Beautification projects emerged as a priority in the community meetings that identified the focus areas for M Partner. M Partner Community Day is a large-scale day of service across all three communities, designed to contribute to priority projects around beautification in downtown areas and around community landmarks.





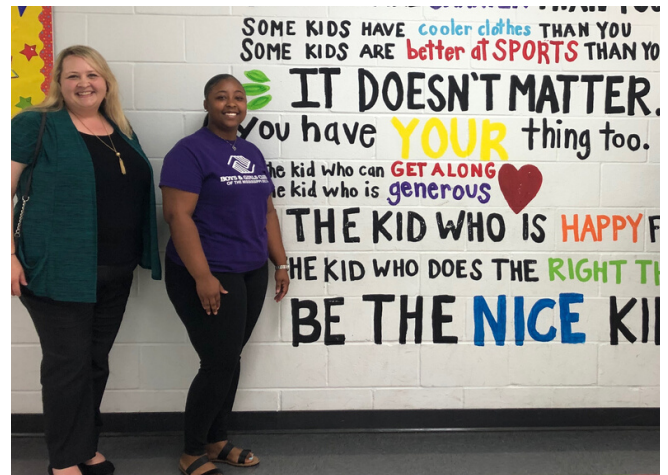
Partnerships through the North Mississippi VISTA Project

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT VISTA WITH THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF LEXINGTON (2018-2020)

Community Partner
Boys and Girls Club of Lexington

Terms of Service
2018-2019 and 2019-2020

Objective
VISTA members make a full-time, yearlong commitment to uphold the program priorities of poverty alleviation, capacity building, sustainable solutions, and community empowerment. VISTA members work to build capacity at community partner sites so those organizations can fulfill their mission with greater efficiency and impact. At the Boys and Girls Club of Lexington, VISTA Member Latara Pitchford is working to strengthen community partnerships, engage parents, promote college and career exposure, and develop new fundraising opportunities.



VISTA SUMMER ASSOCIATES 2018 & 2019

Community Partner
Boys and Girls Club of Lexington

Terms of Service
Summer 2018 and Summer 2019

Objective
VISTA Summer Associates complete 300 hours of hands-on, direct service with community partner organizations, with an emphasis on summer learning and food security. VISTA Summer Associates Breanna Adams (2018) and Tawanna Jefferson (2019) engaged K-12 students to strengthen literacy and math skills during the summer program.



AMERICORPS WEEK SERVICE PROJECT

Community Partner

Boys and Girls Club of Lexington

Semester

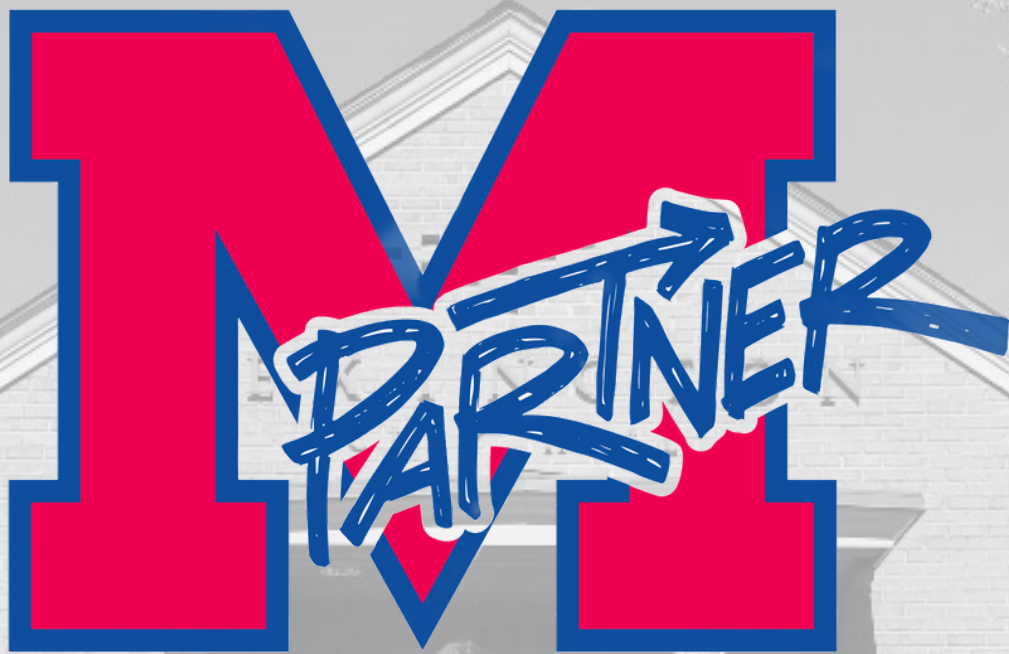
Spring 2019

Objective

AmeriCorps Week is an opportunity to celebrate national service programs that transform lives and communities across the nation. To celebrate AmeriCorps Week in 2019, members of the North Mississippi VISTA Projects and UM volunteers traveled to Lexington to offer activities for the Boys and Girls Club spring carnival. Activities included a STEM lesson on how to make a slingshot, nutrition education, and an art project inspired by artifacts from the UM Museum.







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