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A Gift that Honors

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A Gift that Honors

UM endowment pays tribute to former faculty members

JANUARY 30, 2021 BY BILL DABNEY

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Douglass Sullivan-Gonzalez (right), dean of the UM Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, congratulates Vaughn Grisham (left) and John Winkle on having their names attached to facilities and programs at the Honors College by a recent donation. Both retired professors significantly influenced an anonymous donor through their teaching and mentoring. Photo by Anthony Heaven/UM Development

OXFORD, Miss. – A \$100,000 gift to the **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College** pays tribute to two former **University of Mississippi** faculty members – one for his innovative approach to instruction and the other for his impact on the donor’s education and career path.

The gift, made by an Honors Program graduate who preferred to remain anonymous, establishes the Dr. Vaughn Grisham Experiential Learning Endowment while also naming an Honors College study room in honor of John Winkle, professor emeritus of political science and affiliate faculty in the **School of Law**.

The endowment will support experiential learning courses – classes in which a complicated problem confronting the community is placed on the academic table where professors, students and community stakeholders come together to hash out questions, research similar dilemmas confronting communities throughout the nation and world, and pose possible solutions.

“Professor Grisham’s classes are the basis for experiential-style learning, which I feel is important for the students,” the donor said. “And Professor Winkle was pivotal in my academic career and the direction I took in my professional life.”

Winkle, who retired in 2013 but continues to teach at least one course per semester, said he is honored and humbled by the designation.

“Never had I considered that a space on campus would bear my name,” he said. “I often list that I have been teaching in the Barksdale Honors College each year since it opened in 1998, so this honor is particularly special for me.

“Naming a room in honor of a faculty member is unique. I hope students will notice this distinction and someday make a significant contribution to the Honors College to honor a professor who made a difference in their lives.”

While the room that bears his name is designed as a space for students to study, read and discuss material, it also will house the bound volumes of honors theses that serve as the research capstone to the Honors College experience.

It’s that student experience that the donor credits for much of his success:

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Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

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

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Thank You To Our Donors

Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

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

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith’s Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school’s first African-American student.

"It provided me with lifelong memories and academics that both engaged me and challenged me as never before."

Grisham is professor emeritus of sociology and founding director of the **McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement**, housed on the Oxford campus. He taught more than 30,000 students in the **Department of Sociology and Anthropology** and in the Honors College before retiring in 2016.

The McLean Institute collaborates with students, faculty and staff around volunteerism, service learning, community-based research, community development and social entrepreneurship. It then works to apply its collective knowledge to solve problems related to poverty in communities across the state. Under Grisham's direction, it became a national leader in the field of community development.

"It is very, very gratifying to be recognized for my work in developing the experiential learning method at Ole Miss and it's especially heartening that this honor came from a graduate who felt that the Honors Program helped shape his future," Grisham said. "The success of this approach is also due to all the fine, dedicated students who participated."

Private gifts like the donor's help enhance excellence within the Honors College, Dean Douglass Sullivan-Gonzalez said.

"I am extremely grateful to this donor who has recognized and appreciated excellence in two of our most esteemed former faculty members," he said. "This gift will not only serve as a tribute to these outstanding individuals, but also greatly benefit our students."

To make a gift to the Dr. Vaughn Grisham Experiential Learning Endowment, click [here](#). For more information about supporting the Honors College, click [here](#) or contact Anthony Heaven, associate director of development, at 662-915-3613 or alheaven@olemiss.edu.

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"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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