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A Legacy of Support and Inspiration

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A Legacy of Support and Inspiration

UM student Tommy Tosh helping others 20 years after death

OCTOBER 10, 2021 BY JONATHAN SCOTT

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Tommy Tosh (left) and two of his best friends, Jason Bailey (middle) and Jonathan Walker, spend time in the Grove for the Ole Miss-Arkansas State football game on Sept. 11, 1999. Photo courtesy the Tosh family

OXFORD, Miss. – Family and friends of the late Tommy Tosh in Oxford and throughout the country recently marked the 20th anniversary of the young man's untimely death.

Tosh, a **University of Mississippi** senior and dedicated Rebel fan, died Sept. 29, 2001, from injuries sustained in a car wreck near Nashville, Tennessee. He and friends were involved in what was determined to be an unavoidable accident as they drove to Lexington, Kentucky, for an Ole Miss-Kentucky football game.

An Oxford native, the 21-year-old Tosh touched the lives of hundreds of community members and Ole Miss alumni and continues to have a positive impact.

Through the generosity of family and friends, Tosh's joyous spirit lives on through the Tommy Tosh Memorial Scholarship at Ole Miss. As a way to celebrate his life, honor his memory, promote his supportive attitude toward others and cherish his kind nature, the scholarship was established in 2004.

Over the years, the endowment has grown, providing more assistance to more students. It offers \$5,000 a year for four years to four students at any given time.

The scholarship's goal remains the same: to assist Oxford High School graduates who are passionate about the community and Ole Miss.

Kyle Gordon, of Oxford, was only 7 months old when Tosh died. Yet today, this Tommy Tosh Scholar and sophomore in the UM **School of Applied Sciences** is learning the skills he needs to help others who have speech, language or hearing disabilities.

"I want to thank the late Mr. Tosh, and his family, friends and supporters who created this scholarship," Gordon said. "I hope they know how much I appreciate all they have done to provide me and so many others with the opportunity to obtain an education and provide us with a path to a rewarding career."

Mary Sloan Thompson, one of Tosh's Oxford classmates and friends, spoke to the person he was.

"Tommy had the best smile," she said. "He just lit up the room and instantly made you feel good. You wanted to be where he was because he was so very genuine."

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Campus Briefs

Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

"He would be so humbled to know that so many people who loved him came together to establish a scholarship in his name that provides a way to assist Ole Miss students like Kyle achieve their academic and professional dreams."

After his death, friends established the Tommy Tosh Golf Classic to raise money in his memory because golf was Tosh's favorite sport. Though the tournament has been discontinued, the scholarship endowment continues to grow with gifts from friends and Tommy's family, including his parents, retired UM real estate professor Dennis Tosh and his wife, Beth, and their children, Christine Tosh Rayburn and Denny Tosh, all of Oxford.



Ben Peeler, a Tosh Scholar and UM business student, has his eyes on a career as a lawyer.

"I'm enormously grateful for the Tommy Tosh Memorial Scholarship and those who provided me with this academic opportunity," Peeler said. "What is equally important, if not more so, is that the members of the Tosh family are the kindest people I've ever met."

"This scholarship is one of the greatest honors I've ever had, and nothing makes my day like being able to talk with the Tosh family and know I have their support and encouragement."

Rayburn said her brother is greatly missed.

Business student Ben Peeler said that the Tommy Tosh Memorial Scholarship is one of the greatest honors he's ever received. Submitted photo

"We are forever grateful for Tommy's smile, his humor and his deep love for his God, family and friends," she said. "Even after 20 years, the very best of Tommy can still be seen and felt through those who knew him."

Our family continues to be blessed by acts of kindness and sweet remembrances from those who loved Tommy so well."

Individuals and organizations interested in contributing to the Tommy Tosh Memorial Scholarship can send checks, with the fund noted in the memo line, to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655, or give online at <https://give.olemiss.edu>.

For more information, contact Charlotte Parks, vice chancellor of development, at cpparks@olemiss.edu or 662-915-3120.

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Kyle Gordon, a sophomore in the School of Applied Sciences, said he is grateful for the Tommy Tosh Memorial Scholarship as he learns the skills he needs to help others who have speech, language or hearing disabilities. Submitted photo

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