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Alumna Begins Endowment to Rename Magazine Innovation Center

Amy Lyles Wilson seeks to name the unit after journalism professor Samir Husni

 JUNE 4, 2018 BY [CHRISTINA STEUBE](#)

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UM journalism professor Samir Husni launched the Magazine Innovation Center in 2009. In honor of his years of work, former student Amy Lyles Wilson has started an endowment to rename the center for her mentor and friend. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – University of Mississippi alumna Amy Lyles Wilson is working to raise \$100,000 to rename the **Magazine Innovation Center** at the **Meek School of Journalism and New Media** for the center's longtime director and journalism professor Samir Husni.

A former student of Husni's, Wilson wants to rename the foundation of the university's magazine program to the Samir "Mr. Magazine" Husni Magazine Innovation Center in honor of the professor's years of service and dedication to his students.

Wilson's family donated an initial \$55,000 gift to support the effort, and she's inviting others to contribute through the Ignite Ole Miss crowdfunding platform to reach a \$100,000 goal. Just over \$76,000 has been contributed thus far, and Wilson is hoping more of Husni's friends, colleagues, and current and former students will pay tribute to his legacy on campus.

Wilson earned an M.A. in journalism in 1986 after enrolling in the program following a discouraging semester in another field.

"I dragged myself across the parking lot to Farley Hall and, thankfully, Will Norton took pity on me and the department granted me provisional admission, as I needed to take the GRE," she said. "He told me to check out a class with 'the new guy,' who turned out to be Samir Husni. At that point, everything shifted."

Husni joined the UM journalism faculty in 1984 and has become known as the world's leading magazine expert. Besides teaching, he continues to be a practitioner in the magazine industry by offering consultation and insight to new magazines.

In 2009, he created the Magazine Innovation Center to link the greatest minds in the industry with future industry leaders: Ole Miss students.

"I am humbled and honored," Husni said. "I am thankful to Amy Lyles Wilson for starting this, and I'm proud to be serving Ole Miss magazine students since 1984."

Since Wilson's time in his classroom, she and Husni have become friends and peers, working together to publish his "Launch Your Own Magazine" book and supporting young people who dream of careers in magazine journalism.

"The magazine program has come a long way since a handful of us gathered in Samir's classroom for his inaugural semester back in 1984, unsure of who he was or just what he was offering," she said. "Even then, though, before he became world-renowned and tagged as 'Mr. Magazine,' it was obvious that Samir had an abiding interest in his students."

Husni set the foundation for Wilson's career, she said. Since earning her degree from Ole Miss, she has written for magazines, published books and developed communications materials for nonprofits. Wilson has co-authored or contributed to eight books, and her work has appeared in a variety of publications as well as on National Public Radio.

Wilson earned a master's degree in theology from Vanderbilt University's Divinity School and works as a story coach and spiritual director in Nashville, Tennessee. She teaches throughout the South and at the

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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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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

Chautauqua Institution in New York, and has served as adjunct professor and writer-in-residence at the Earlham School of Religion in Indiana.

"I couldn't have crafted a better life for myself," she said. "And I couldn't have done it as readily without Samir and the journalism folks opening up such a versatile world to me. And I know they've done it for many others as well."

Wilson said she believes society will always need talented, skilled communicators, whether online or off, in print or digital, and she wants to help Husni prepare them for years to come with this endowment.

Individuals and organizations can contribute to the fund at <https://ignite.olemiss.edu/samir>. Checks can be mailed to the University of Mississippi Foundation, with the name of the fund noted in the check's memo line, at 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655.

For more information, contact Jason McCormick, development director for the journalism school, at jason@olemiss.edu or 662-915-1757.



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