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Alumni Offer Advice to New Graduates

Eight Ole Miss graduates share wisdom and encouragement

APRIL 29, 2022 BY EMILY HOWORTH



On May 7, the Class of 2022 will celebrate **Commencement**: a moment of achievement that is at once joyous, bittersweet and exhilarating.

At the turn of their tassels, the 2022 graduates will become Ole Miss alumni. They join thousands in sharing an affectionate and everlasting bond with the **University of Mississippi**. Among those alumni are the eight below who have generously offered their advice to the graduating class.

Whether they are business leaders, athletics champions, professionals or nurturing providers, these alumni all share one defining characteristic: a legacy of excellence that began at Ole Miss.



Brittney Reese celebrates with an American flag after winning the women's long jump final during the 2012 London Olympic Games at Olympic Stadium. Photo by Kirby/Lee-USA Today Sports

Brittney Reese

Track and field star Brittney Reese (BA 11) is a four-time Olympian and the third woman in history to win three Olympic medals in the long jump. Reese recommends that students adopt a growth mindset to explore life and find their unique strengths.

"Be humble and be willing to continue to learn. Education is a never-ending endeavor. There will be challenges along the way; remember that the purpose is to grow as a human being and discover what you are good at, what you love to do and what you dislike. Every day is a new opportunity to chase something you love. Hotty Toddy!"

Leigh Anne Tuohy

Leigh Anne Tuohy (BS 82) is dubbed a "warrior princess" in Michael Lewis' bestselling book "The Blind Side." She is the inspirational matriarch of the Tuohy family and a businesswoman, interior designer, philanthropist, motivational speaker, adoption advocate and New York Times bestselling author. Dedicated to inspiring hope and genuine acts of generosity and kindness to all deserving yet underserved members of our communities, she encourages graduates to do good and believe in themselves.

"Congratulations on your graduation from Ole Miss. You are about to embark on an exciting new chapter in your life. It will be filled with new adventures, new challenges and new growth. I wish you every success. Control what you can control. Be prepared as possible and realize that everyone who has been successful has had failures, disappointments and

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Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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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 abate. The Federal Reserve's



Leigh Anne Tuohy

stumbled many times. Believe in yourself, and as Minor Myers Jr. said, 'Go into the world and do well. But more importantly, go into the world and do good.' God bless each and every one of you and God bless Ole Miss."

Bruce Ware

Bruce Ware (BBA 99) has built a career that has taken him from Ole Miss to some of Wall Street's most prominent financial institutions and beyond. A Harvard Business School graduate, he is an executive at DaVita Inc., a Fortune 500 company. He credits his time as an Ole Miss student for helping develop a penchant for solving important and complex problems. Besides serving on the board of two publicly traded



Bruce Ware

companies, Ware is a trustee of the University of Mississippi Foundation. He encourages new graduates to accept that good times and bad times may sometimes come, and that accepting both will build strength.

"Life is a voyage made up of many excursions. We are fortunate to be able to choose many of our excursions: graduate school, career paths, the causes we serve and the people that we give our hearts to. Some 'excursions' feel like impositions, distractions or deviations from realizing our goals: the loss of loved ones, poor economic cycles, broken hearts or busted dreams. Over the years, the 'good' and the 'bad,' when mixed together, can be catalysts for making us more powerful and effective than we might ever imagine. Be the captain of your journey by successfully navigating the rough and calm seas of life. On your voyage, I wish you fair winds and following seas."



Cellas Hayes, a doctoral student in pharmaceutical sciences, advises new graduates to focus on being genuine and advocating for themselves. Submitted photo

Cellas Hayes

Cellas Hayes (BA 19) is a student in the University of Mississippi's pharmaceutical sciences doctoral program. Hayes' recent proposal to his fiancée, Mweyeria Offord, involved a video-documented book hunt through the J.D. Williams Library. The **video** soon went viral and appeared on CNN's "Full Circle" with Anderson Cooper. Hayes suggests new graduates focus on being genuine and advocating for themselves.

"Invest in yourself while being genuine, relatable and different. You are, and forever will be, the only you. As you go throughout life, you can either be your biggest enemy or your greatest advocate, so why not choose yourself? Choosing yourself – while maintaining your values and realizing that you are only one piece in a larger scheme – will guarantee your success and the success of those you choose to invest in."

Elizabeth Randall

Elizabeth Johnson Randall (BBA 03, MBA 05) is president of Randall Commercial Group LLC, a commercial real estate investment advisory and brokerage firm. Randall has twice been named one of the Top 50 Leading Women in Business by Mississippi Business Journal and serves as chair of the Ole Miss Women's Council for Philanthropy. She advises new graduates that prioritizing relationships will yield stability, fulfillment and genuine happiness.

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Elizabeth Randall

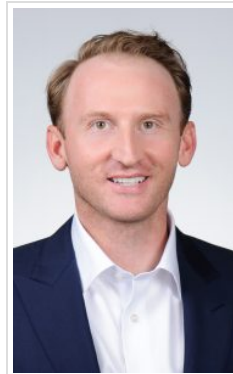
many Ole Miss graduates at Cloudmed, which was just acquired for \$4.1B. A frequent visitor to Oxford, Scala is an Oxford High School graduate ('01) and his parents live in town. His wish for new graduates is that they embrace opportunities and enjoy the roller coaster.

"You've had the fortunate opportunity to spend the last four (or five) years making memories and forming relationships at the university that will last a lifetime. You now have the opportunity to use your experiences, your learning and your relationships for goodness and greatness. My hope for each of you is to dream big; acknowledge and be open about your weaknesses; surround yourself with strengths – people; fail fast, as you'll learn the most from failures; celebrate each meaningful milestone win; and, most importantly, always be the first person to smile and say hello to someone."

"Investing your time to build meaningful, strong relationships and engaging in philanthropic work will be the two most consistent and proven means to achieve 'success,' regardless of how you define it. Philanthropy and strong relationships will carry you through every season of your life, especially the challenging seasons. At the end of the day, the 'human capital' on your balance sheet will prove to be the most enjoyable and valuable capital of all."

Jon Scala

Jon Scala (BA 05, MA 06) is an executive vice president with health care revenue intelligence firm Cloudmed and an entrepreneur with investments in health care, commercial real estate, hospitality and electric vehicle businesses. He has hired



Jon Scala



Keith Carter, UM vice chancellor for intercollegiate athletics, has overseen phenomenal successes across athletics programs at Ole Miss, including football's first-ever 10-win regular season and a national championship for women's golf. Photo by Josh McCoy/Department of Intercollegiate Athletics

Keith Carter

Keith Carter (BBA 99, MBA 16) is the University of Mississippi's vice chancellor for intercollegiate athletics. In his role, Carter has overseen phenomenal successes across athletics programs at Ole Miss, including the university's first NCAA team championship by women's golf, a record-breaking 10-win season in football and historic postseason participation by every varsity team. Carter advises that the most rewarding kind of greatness results from helping others.

"A legacy starts with something you are passionate about and ends with using that to help others. While you can be great *at* something, you ultimately want people to remember you as just being great. Usually this happens by impacting other people and helping them achieve their hopes and dreams."

Bradford Cobb

Bradford Cobb (BA 96) is a partner at Direct Management Group, a Los Angeles-based music management company, and the university's 2022 Commencement speaker. During 25 years in the music business, Cobb has managed some of America's most beloved popular music artists, including Katy Perry, the Go-Go's, Tracy Chapman, k.d. lang, Steve Perry and the B-52's. Cobb encourages new graduates to believe in themselves and seize



"It can be daunting to think that you don't know what's next or where you'll end up. You have to grab the moment. This is an opportunity to set yourself on the right path by taking some smart chances. You're prepared. It's hard to believe it sometimes, but you're the lucky ones: you get to graduate from Ole Miss and you have the world at your fingertips."

Bradford Cobb

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