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**April 12, 2018**

The Daily Mississippian

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#### Recommended Citation

The Daily Mississippian, "April 12, 2018" (2018). *Daily Mississippian (all digitized issues)*. 275.  
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# UNspoken.

One in 4 people between the ages of 18 and 24 has a diagnosable mental illness. On Ole Miss' Oxford campus alone, that would be 5,113 students. Of the students who have been diagnosed with a mental illness, 40 percent do not seek help. This is something that affects every single one of us. The Ole Miss community has the opportunity to prioritize and amplify this conversation. These pages contain personal perspectives on mental health in today's world, insights into how emerging trends have manifested on campus and a look at what is being done to achieve a healthier student body.



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**STAFF EDITORIAL**

# Breaking the silence

For a long time, people struggling with mental health issues have been stigmatized. Whether they struggle with suicidal thoughts, drug addictions or mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety, the stigma can keep them silent.

Often, we only recognize this silence when we lose someone and don't know why.

The stigma makes it hard to talk about mental health, but it also makes it difficult to write about.

Today's edition of *The Daily Mississippian*, which focuses on how mental health issues relate to campus life, is the product of time and care dedicated to effectively and accurately writing about the issues at hand.

The stories you'll read document the actions of those who are working to fix this problem, but acknowledge the shortcomings of our campus's resources and culture in regard to helping students.

Mostly, though, the pages that follow are an attempt to break the silence, recognize and normalize the struggles of our fellow students and make public the tough yet necessary conversations about mental health, suicide and drug abuse.

The prevalence of mental health issues among college students should not be as shocking as it seems, nor should the issues' prevalence on Ole Miss' campus seem abnormal.

Statistics from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the American College Health Association and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention show that mental illness affects college students now more than ever before.

More than 25 percent of college students have sought professional treatment or been diagnosed with a mental health condition in the last year.

Suicide rates among young people ages 15-24 have tripled over the last 50 years.

One in 12 U.S. college students says he or she has made a suicide plan. In terms of Ole Miss' student body in 2017, that translates to nearly 2,000 students.

As experts in the field point out, the college-aged years are a time of developmental changes, second in significance only to the first five years of one's life. Most college students are living away from home for the first time. Even those who don't move from home transition from a structured environment to an unstructured one in which they take on the responsibilities of school, social life and self-care.

These changes often come rapidly and dramatically, causing stress for students that sometimes manifests itself as mental illnesses, which often go unmentioned because of the shame associated with them. These feelings are normal.

For this stigma to fade, we must recognize how common these issues are. Our university's administration must also recognize this and choose to act on it.

**1. Make the mental health of your students a priority.**

**2. Provide the necessary funding and hire the necessary people to staff a counseling center that can assess and treat anyone who needs to walk through its doors.**

**3. Work to erase the barriers that prevent students from seeking help, whether that is providing free emergency parking near the counseling center or working with faculty to allow absences for mental health care.**

**4. Fund campaigns to validate those who deal with mental health concerns and better educate students about the options they have for treatment.**

Until changes like these come, it's up to us as the campus community to develop this conversation, normalize the topic of mental health and break the silence.

The most significant part of building an infrastructure to properly treat mental health issues comes on the professional side – in allocating resources for counseling services and creating opportunities for anyone with concerns to talk to someone – but part of it comes on the personal side.

In our personal lives, we should make an effort to build support systems for our friends, whether they are struggling silently, openly or not at all.

There should be an expectation that people will listen and truly hear what their friends are talking to them about, whether this involves coping with the loss of a family member or having suicidal thoughts.

By learning about the facts of mental health and how common many of the issues are among college students, we shouldn't be taken aback when friends come to us with their struggles. We shouldn't be surprised or act like there is something wrong with people when they open up to us.

We should commit to keeping up with our friends and be willing to talk about trauma and other factors that can contribute to the development of mental health issues.

Read these stories with the hope that positive changes are on the way. Learn about what this campus needs to do differently when it comes to mental health care. Let those working to shape our future inspire you to speak up and reach out.

**RESOURCES TO KNOW:**
**The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

A free, 24/7 confidential service that can provide people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress, or those around them, with support, information and local resources.

**Crisis Text Line: 741-741**

This free text message service provides 24/7 support to those in crisis. Text "HOME" to 741-741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor right away.

**The Veterans Crisis Line and Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)**

Both of these lines connect veterans and service members in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat or text.

**UM Counseling Center: 662-915-3784, located on the third floor of Lester Hall**

The UM Counseling Center provides students, faculty and staff with a place to work with a counselor confidentially and free of cost. The center is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Walk-in visits are welcome from noon to 4:15 p.m.

**The University Police Department after-hours number: 662-915-7234**

the event that someone is in danger of hurting him- or herself or others and it is outside of the Counseling Center's usual business hours, UPD will connect the caller to a crisis counselor who is on call for after-hours emergencies.

**UMatter [www.umatter.olemiss.edu](http://www.umatter.olemiss.edu)**

UMatter is an online resource put together by the university that provides resources for students in distress. Through the site, students, parents, faculty and staff may take action to connect students or colleagues with the needed resources.

**THE DAILY  
MISSISSIPPIAN**

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ISSN 1077-8667

The Daily Mississippian is published Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays in print during the academic year, on days when classes are scheduled. New content is published online seven days a week.

Columns do not represent the official opinions of The University of Mississippi or *The Daily Mississippian* unless specifically indicated.

The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be e-mailed to [dmlatters@olemiss.edu](mailto:dmlatters@olemiss.edu).

Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.



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MEMBER NEWSPAPER

COLUMN

# LGBTQ students face dual mental health, identity stigmas



**DEVNA BOSE**  
LIFESTYLES EDITOR

I didn't want to admit it for a long time.

In fact, it wasn't until I saw her that I was sure I was bisexual. I was even surer in the months following, as our relationship blossomed, and I fell in love for the first time.

We happened easily, napping in hammocks, cooking dinners together and going on drives with all of the windows down on warm afternoons.

Though falling in love with her was easy, coming to terms with what I thought was our reality was hard. As my love for her grew, I began to love myself less.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, LGBTQ individuals are almost three times more likely than others to experience a mental health condition such as major depression or generalized anxiety disorder as a result of anxieties associated with being members of the LGBTQ community, including but not limited to coming out, being bullied or ostracized and facing daily discrimination. Individuals who identify as bisexual or questioning or fear revealing their sexual orientation or gender identity

have particularly high rates of mental health issues.

Almost every time I thought about coming out publicly, my chest would constrict, my heart would start racing and my palms would sweat. The thought of losing my friends and facing public humiliation sent me into panic attacks, and the aftermath of these left me crying in bed for the rest of the day, unable to concentrate on anything else.

I wondered what my mother would think if I brought my girlfriend home and how we would never be able to spend time together outside of the confines of our houses. Our relationship, our sexuality, our homes began to feel like a prison, and we were both trapped, relegated to the punishment of constant self-hatred.

Family support plays a significant role in affecting the likelihood of suicide. People who faced rejection after coming out to their families are more than eight times more likely to have attempted suicide than people who were accepted by their families after revealing their sexual orientation.

Members of the LGBTQ community are at a higher risk for suicide because they often lack peer support and face harassment, mental health conditions and substance abuse. The NAMI also reports that the LGBTQ community reports higher rates of drug, alcohol and tobacco use than straight people. In fact, for LGBTQ people between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is one of the leading causes of death.

Members of this community face not only the general stigma

regarding mental health but also a sort of dual or double stigma because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and this can be especially harmful. When combined with the climate of a college campus and the general stress associated with adjusting to college, the statistics get particularly frightening.

and help improve the mental health conditions of LGBTQ students on campus.

"I get stared at going to class every day. Some people tell me I don't belong in the bathroom, or people will stand on the bus before they sit in the open seat next to me," he said. "I know I'm not the only LGBTQ person to experience feeling like

and has resulted in a number of self-harming and risky behaviors on my end because I was ashamed and afraid of not being accepted.

"As a community, LGBTQ individuals do not often talk about mental health and may lack awareness about mental health conditions. This sometimes prevents people from seeking

" I get stared at going to class every day. Some people tell me I don't belong in the bathroom, or people will stand on the bus before they sit in the open seat next to me."

- Regan Willis  
UM Pride Network

According to a survey conducted in 2015 by the Association of American Universities, 3 in 4 LGBTQ college students report experiencing sexual harassment, and most college presidents are under the impression that sexual assault and harassment are not issues on their own campuses, according to an article from The Atlantic. This is especially problematic because it shows that this problem, along with other forms of harassment and discrimination, is not going away.

In October 2017, students on Cleveland State University's campus in Ohio found flyers encouraging LGBTQ students to commit suicide. The flyers illustrated a person hanging from a noose and included statistics on LGBTQ suicide rates.

UM Pride Network President Regan Willis, who identifies as male, believes that acceptance is needed at Ole Miss to help foster a more inclusive envi-

an outsider. Education is needed to show people that LGBTQ members are just normal students trying to make it through finals, too."

Though the University of Mississippi offers many programs and organizations that encourage inclusivity, such as the Center for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Engagement's annual Pride Camp, the UM Gay-Straight Alliance and UM Pride Network, more efforts need to be taken to make LGBTQ students feel welcome on campus and in Oxford.

While at Ole Miss, I began skipping class, slacking on homework and staying in bed for days at a time. My fear of coming out, combined with adjusting to college, kept me in a state of constant anxiety and depression. This state of mind has continued for months past our relationship's conclusion

the treatment and support that they need to get better," according to NAMI.

Though you may feel hesitant to access care because you fear being discriminated against, it is important to seek help. Early intervention, support and treatment are vital to recovery from mental health conditions, and there are many resources in place that are specifically equipped to help LGBTQ people deal with these conditions.

Recovery is not a painless process - it takes time and effort, and it hurts. However, it is important to remember that you are not alone. It took me a long time to realize that being a member of the LGBTQ community isn't something to be ashamed of - it just means you have more love in your heart for others. Take the time to share some of that love with yourself.

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# ASB president calls for students to address mental health

**SLADE RAND**  
MANAGING EDITOR

As he entered his first full semester as president of the Associated Student Body, Dion Kevin began to experience what can happen when mental health concerns are left out of the campus conversation. A member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity, Kevin has seen the potential consequences of leaving feelings such as depression and anxiety unattended: He said three of his friends have died by suicide in the last 18 months. Two of the students were active members of Kevin's fraternity.

"At least three (close friends), and they all fall in that same demographic," Kevin said. "They're all white men about 20, 22 years old, were involved in Greek life or had lots of friends involved in Greek life and were victims to substance abuse. They had the same friends."

Truett Primos, a 22-year-old Ole Miss student and member of Phi Delta Theta, killed himself Oct. 6, 2017. Around that same time, Kevin was struggling with his own mental health issues. Kevin credited the emerging discussion regarding mental health on campus with causing him to notice early signs that he needed help, but he said accessing care on campus did not seem like an option.

to do was take time out of my day and go to a counseling center on campus," he said.

He silently dealt with his feelings of anxiety, depression and eventual substance abuse early last fall in lieu of seeking counseling. Kevin's first step toward help came thanks to a friend's advice. The friend approached Kevin with concerns about his health and an offer to pay for counseling services off campus. Kevin accepted, and he began attending counseling sessions that fall.

"I recognized, man, I have an issue right now with substance abuse and sort of being anxious all the time and being depressed and really just wanting to cut off relationships," Kevin said. "It sort of led me towards the path of self-harm."

Kevin said Primos' death came in the middle of his time attending these counseling sessions and gave him a new perspective on his own struggles.

"It really was like, 'Wow, that could have been me if someone hadn't reached out to me,'" Kevin said.

Before his friend intervened, Kevin hadn't been open to talking about other people's feelings, let alone his own. Now, he holds a newfound sense of responsibility to "pay it forward" by reaching out to friends.

"That's where I think students and student leaders ought to step up and really



ASB President Dion Kevin hangs out in the Phi Delta Theta fraternity house Tuesday afternoon.

bring this conversation to everyone's table," he said.

Kevin's experiences with counseling and open conversation helped him identify how his mental health concerns affected his everyday life.

"Last semester, I kind of got into a really dark place, and, luckily, I had someone reach out to me that they saw I wasn't doing so well," Kevin said.

The concerns Kevin faced this past year are not uncommon among Ole Miss students. Anxiety and depression are the leading issues students present to the counseling center, and the center sees more "intense cases" of student distress than it did 30 years ago,



PHOTOS BY: JOHN SCOTT

Dion Kevin stands in front of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity house.

according to Bud Edwards, the director of the University Counseling Center.

Kevin calls it luck, but fostering this open and direct approach to mental health has been the motivation behind a handful of on-campus efforts. Most recently, student group Active Minds hosted its Mental Health Week at the end of March to amplify this conversation, and the University Counseling Center has developed an outreach program to bring stress management and suicide prevention strategies to students across campus.

"There's both an in-house, direct, clinical service need but also an out-on-campus education and prevention need," Edwards said.

Edwards said the counseling center is limited in the people it can reach by the number of people who utilize its services. Though he said this past year marked the center's busiest fall on record, Edwards believes people of college age are still reluctant to seek help because of the existing stigma and a desire to handle problems on their own.

"That's why I think they don't come in for these services until they get an 'F' on a test or a significant oth-

er breaks up with them or it happens in other ways," Edwards said. "Then the reality of their situation has finally overcome that sense of invulnerability."

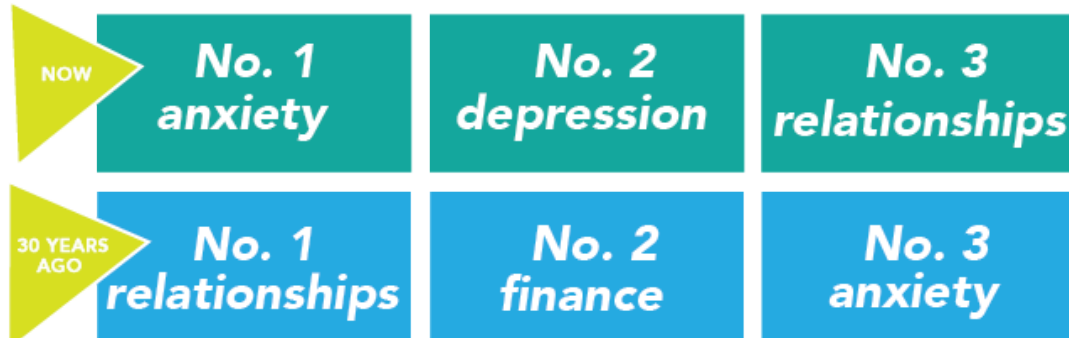
Studies show that "concern of stigma" is the leading reason students refrain from getting help. Kevin said the stigma attached to those who seek mental healthcare played a role in his own hesitation to engage in counseling.

"There's obviously sort of a stigma, for men at least. You know, 'Don't go to a counselor. Don't talk about your feelings. Just hang out with your buddies. Get over it,'" Kevin said.

He said people on campus often deal with mental health in their own ways, but student leaders need to come to terms with and address the issues prevalent in their individual communities. Across the board, however, Kevin said there needs to be a bigger conversation regarding the role substance abuse plays in mental health at Ole Miss.

"We've done a really good job addressing some of our other demons that make us who we are at Ole Miss and transforming them into something positive," Kevin said.

## MOST COMMON ISSUES STUDENTS PRESENT



## UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER STAFFING

**2** LICENSED PSYCHOLOGISTS

**3** LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

**43**

Students on the waitlist for appointments as of April 3

## IACS STANDARD

**1** COUNSELOR

FOR EVERY

**1500** STUDENTS

# Families, friends affected by suicide hope to help others

**MAGGIE CROUCH**  
STAFF WRITER

"I'm going to make sure that his life will not be in vain," Betsy Primos said in the wake of her son's death.

Truett Primos, a former student at the University of Mississippi, killed himself in October 2017, and Mrs. Primos hopes other students can learn from his struggle and her heartache to better understand suicide.

"I'm going to fight with everything I have to try and reach any of his friends, hoping they can reach more friends, telling them that suicide is not an option ever, even if it means they get in trouble by some mistake or stupid decision they make," Primos said.

Primos has turned to her Facebook page to share the story of Truett and to provide support in the form of encouraging words or virtual hugs for college students who are overcoming grief or

are struggling themselves.

"It does hurt to talk about, but it needs to be addressed," Primos said. "Truett's death was a shock for all of us, and it left us with something that can't be erased. You can adapt to the loss, but you can never erase it."

Primos hopes that being open about her son's death may prevent other suicides.

"In Truett's case, this was not what he would have done had he known the heartache of so many friends," Betsy Primos wrote. "I have many boys at the University of Mississippi that I love dearly, and girls as well. I would never want them to commit suicide because it impacts so many."

The Ole Miss community has certainly felt this impact in the past. According to the Clery Daily Crime Log, the University Police Department has responded to 39 reports of attempted suicide since the beginning of 2013. Within the Phi Delta Theta

Fraternity alone, two active members have died of suicide in the past year and a half.

Lauren McGraw, mother of former student Rivers McGraw, has also shared her son's story in the two years since his death from suicide. Earlier this month, she brought Rivers' backpack to the Send Silence Packing demonstration, which displayed 1,100 empty bags in the Grove to represent the number of college students lost to suicide each year.

"He shot himself after receiving his second DUI in 2016," McGraw said in the Grove. "He got scared and didn't think there was a way out, which is why it is so important to raise awareness at events like this. We need to talk. We need kids to be more open so they can know there is a way out."

She said in her experience, people used to not often talk about suicide or mental health.

"Especially boys, who are taught to be tough and rough since they're born. But I believe that things are going to change," McGraw said. "That's why I worked to have Rivers' Law passed."

Rivers' Law is a law requiring parents be alerted if their child under 21 is arrested for drug or alcohol charges. It passed the House unanimously in February 2017 and was signed into law by Gov. Phil Bryant that April.

Although they are beneficial, laws and exhibits do not cure mental illness, nor do they bring children back to their mothers.

Both McGraw and Primos continue to deal with their own grief, as does the Ole Miss campus every time a student dies.

Darby Johnson, a community assistant working in Residence Hall 1, still remembers the day she was



PHOTO COURTESY: BETSY PRIMOS

Betsy Primos and her son, Truett.

told one of her residents died by suicide in his dorm room two years ago.

She had seen the resident just days before his death but hadn't noticed any warning signs.

"I don't know how the other CAs and I would've caught it unless he was personally talking to us about his (struggles)," Johnson said. "He was a quiet kid, and I just remember he had headphones on and was coming back from a workout."

Johnson said she feels like people are supposed to be able to recognize signs when someone needs help, but the signs weren't evident in this case.

"He had no roommate, so it's not like someone living with him could've helped us know sooner or to prevent it altogether," Johnson said. "His mom called in a wellness check in the middle of

the night, and then the police came, and that's when we found out. The whole staff was so broken up about it."

These aren't isolated cases, though. Nearly 4,000 people age 15-24 die by suicide each year in the United States, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and 1 in 12 U.S. college students makes a suicide plan.

Resources on campus are continuing to grow. The counseling center is working toward accreditation, student groups such as Active Minds are raising awareness and students and faculty alike are beginning to speak more openly about issues of mental health and suicide. Mental wellness for everyone cannot be attained overnight, but the Ole Miss community is working toward that future.

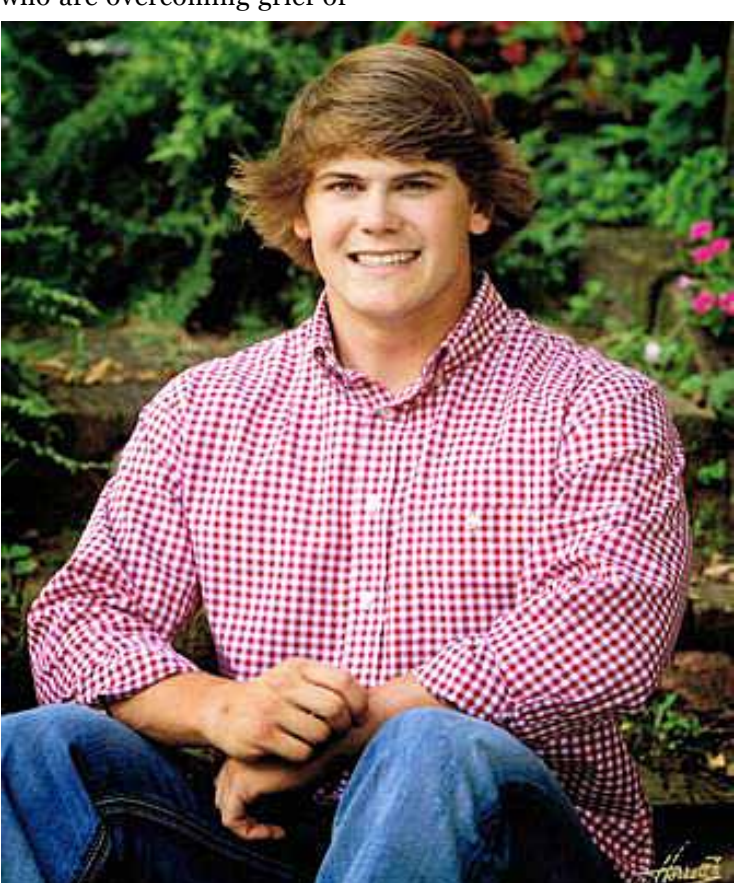


PHOTO COURTESY: LEGACY.COM

Rivers McGraw.

## Student Alumni Council Congratulates and Welcomes Their New Members!

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Jeremiah Andrews  
Hunter Berry  
Miles Bolin  
Sasha Briggs  
Madeline "Maddie" Brocato  
Cameron Brown  
Holman Buchanan  
Kendall Causey  
Keely Cox  
Nicholas Crasta  
Alison Dabney  
Brannan Davis  
McClellan Davis  
Mary Reid Dixon  
Camaryn Donaldson

Claire Dutreix  
Emily Ervin  
Olivia Fox  
Mary Beth Gillespie  
Carly Hiniker  
Sally Jordan  
Chessie "Jane" Kay  
Coleman Killorin  
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Libby Law  
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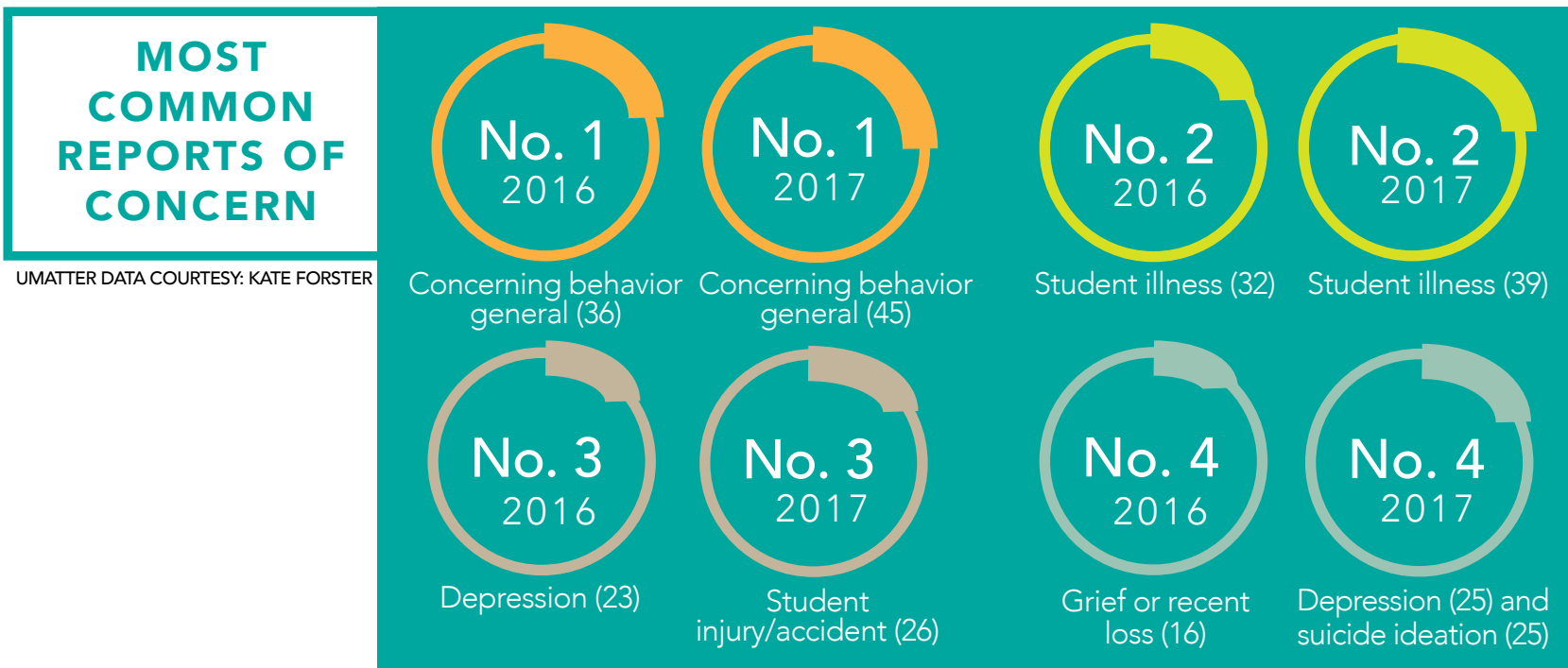
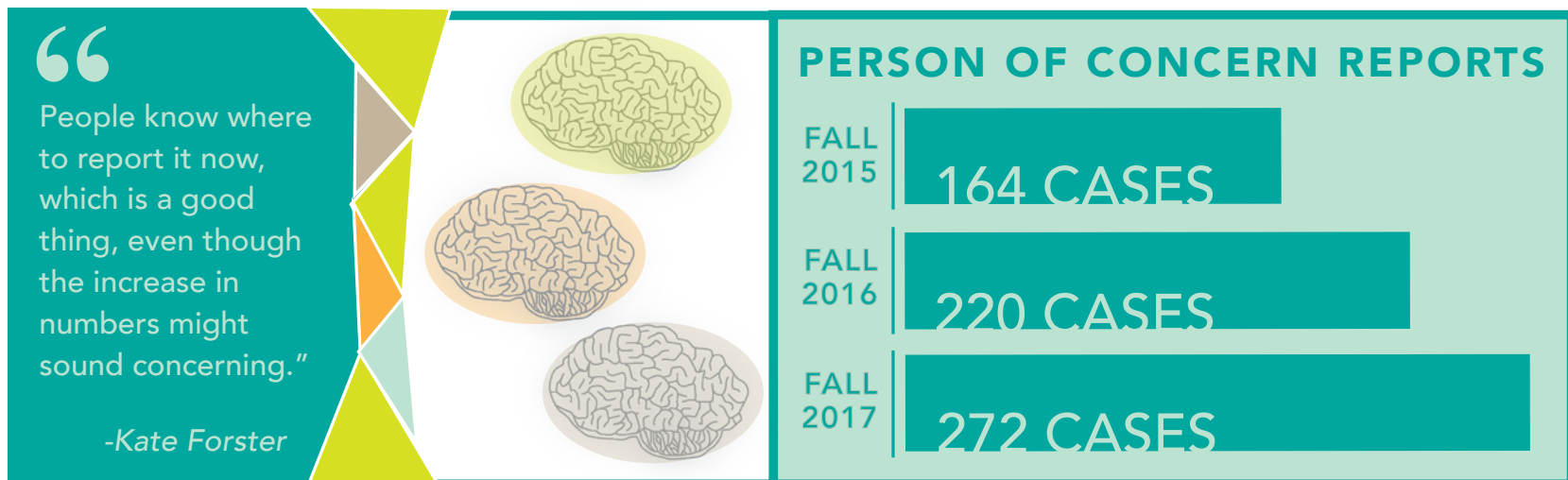
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Vanessa Smowton  
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Edward Thompson  
Nickie Tiwari  
Ukwuoma Ukairo  
Addison Vaugier  
Rhodes Walker  
Jayme Whittington  
Tyler Yarbrough



# Modern mental health needs challenge university

Ole Miss knows its counseling center is understaffed. It knows many of its students are suffering every day from symptoms of anxiety or depression disorders and substance abuse. Over the past few years, however, administrators have taken strides to address the growing problems the student body faces.

**SLADE RAND**  
MANAGING EDITOR



UMATTER DATA COURTESY: KATE FORSTER

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY: HAYDEN BENGE

The last four years have marked a shift in the university's approach to providing mental healthcare on campus. If new hires are any indication of where the school's priorities lie, it seems that mental health education and student services have recently garnered more attention.

Bud Edwards was hired to direct the counseling center in October 2014. Earlier that same year, Melinda Sutton Noss became the first new dean of students hired in nearly 40 years. She brought Kate Forster to campus in 2016 to serve in a newly created position meant to better intervene and connect with struggling students.

This increased administrative focus on mental health is not something unique to Ole Miss, according to Forster, the university's first and only case manager in the Office of Leadership and Advocacy.

She said many universities had created "case manager" positions around the time Forster herself was hired in order to better link students with the resources they

need to be successful.

"It kind of goes back to origins around the Virginia Tech tragedy, when folks realized that there needed to be people in place that are really tracking students that are in distress, students that are facing challenges during their time at the university," Forster said.

Forster said she had only heard of two case managers in the entire country before the 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech, during which a student with a history of mental health concerns shot and killed 32 people and injured dozens more. Now, case managers are common on college campuses, and the profession has its own national organization.

Sutton Noss, assistant vice chancellor and dean of students, had previously worked with positions similar to Forster's on other campuses. She said Forster's work is helpful to the university because her office is not bound by the same confidentiality the counseling center is.

"She can make sure to connect the appropriate resources, whereas the counseling center cannot share information," Sutton Noss said. "It allows us to help a student more proactively."

## UNDERSTAFFED AND OVERWORKED

Ask some University Counseling Center employees about the biggest challenge they face today, and they'll start with their inadequate number of licensed counselors.



I think that a lot of us would acknowledge that we need more staff in the counseling center because there's often a wait to see staff. We don't want that to be the case, but I think that's, sadly, a challenge on a lot of campuses."

- Melinda Sutton Noss  
Assistant Vice  
Chancellor and Dean of  
Students

The counseling center on this campus is well understaffed, and director Bud Edwards knows it.

Edwards has been a psychologist since 1995 and had been involved on college campuses long before then. He earned his undergraduate degree from Ole Miss in the '70s and has seen the university's mental healthcare needs change dramatically since that time.

"We see more intense cases now of student distress than we did even when I first started in this field," Edwards said.

The International Association of Counseling Services acts as a leading accreditation association for counseling centers on college campuses. Edwards said Ole Miss is working to become an IACS-accredited campus within the next couple of years, but it would need to double the number of licensed counselors currently on staff.

Edwards said the association's ideal standard is a 1 to 1,500 ratio of counselors to students on campus. On a campus the size of Ole Miss, a counseling center is expected to have somewhere around 12 professionally licensed counselors. Currently, it per-

manently employs five.

"We have two people licensed as psychologists and three people licensed as licensed professional counselors on our permanent staff," Edwards said.

One of those professionals took her final exam just last week to earn her full license.

The full set of IACS accreditation standards is a 17-page document outlining ideal qualities of a university counseling center. Mississippi State University is home to the only IACS-accredited counseling center in the state.

Edwards said that because the needs of university counseling centers have evolved so drastically since their inception, the association should be one year away from implementing a new formula for determining its standards.

"I think that a lot of us would acknowledge that we need more staff in the counseling center because there's often a wait to see staff," Sutton Noss said. "We don't want that to be the case, but I think that's, sadly, a challenge on a lot of campuses."

The most noticeable change in the campus

## MENTAL HEALTH

*continued from page 6*

culture surrounding mental health care is the increased use of student counseling services. Across the board, counseling centers are becoming busier than their staffs are equipped to handle. “We had probably the busiest fall we’ve had on record,” Edwards said about fall 2017.

Edwards said the center’s fall workload increased so much from the year before that he requested additional money from the Office of the Provost to hire a temporary staffer, which Provost Noel Wilkin approved.

That busy semester carried over into the spring, and the student waitlist for counseling sessions now extends into the summer months. With a waitlist of 43 people as of April 3, it’s highly unlikely that the counseling center will be able to see everyone before summer vacation.

“Over the past couple of years, we’ve gotten to a point after Spring Break where, if a student isn’t going to be here in summer, our ability to provide counseling services is compromised,” Edwards said.

### A MODERN APPROACH TO SELF-HARM PREVENTION

When mental health care services first arrived on college campuses, there was no focus on outreach efforts such as suicide prevention education. There was no Mental Health Week. There was also no internet.

Kate Forster’s position in the mental health care system relies on the use

of technology and widespread communication to identify and support students struggling with psychological or medical concerns on campus.

Forster’s main project in her two years here has been promoting the U Matter system for reporting persons of concern. She’s the only staff member on campus permanently acting as a case manager, which means she’s in charge of reaching out to students who have been reported through the system.

Most universities have one case manager for every 10,000 students, according to Forster. On the Oxford campus, the ratio is 1 to 20,000.

Forster said she is interested both in seeing whether the university’s reporting numbers continue to increase and, potentially, in hiring another full-time case manager. As for now, the responsibility of managing most cases in the U Matter system falls on her and a graduate assistant.

U Matter allows anyone to digitally submit a report on “a member of any UM constituency (faculty, staff or student).” Anonymous reports are accepted, but Forster said that including as many details as possible, even the reporter’s name, is helpful in adding context to the situation.

“Our intervention, hopefully, can be the thing to get that student connected with psychiatric services on campus or with mental health or with the food bank or whatever it may be,” Forster said.

She said that because students are affected by such a diverse set of needs, her office intentionally tries to

keep the reporting system as broad as possible. On the person of concern form, users have the option to categorize their report under an array of “Concerning Behavior” and “Medical Issues” from depression to vandalism, and much more.

Forster said that though she has only monitored U Matter data for two years now, numbers across the system have increased significantly. Her office recorded a 24 percent rise in total cases from fall 2016 to fall 2017 and a 68 percent rise between fall 2015 and fall 2017.

“I think it’s probably that people know where to report it now, which is a good thing, even though the increase in numbers might sound concerning,” Forster said.

Forster often refers people to visit the University Counseling Center, but she said she’s aware of the staffing deficit that has come to define campus counseling.

“I know they’re highly utilized, very highly utilized, and there are different points in the semester with waiting times for students, but they always have walk-ins available,” Forster said.

In an attempt to reach more students in the last few years, Ole Miss has begun offering treatment options besides those offered by the counseling center.

One of these options, the UM Counselor Education Clinic for Outreach and Personal Enrichment, was introduced in 2015 to expand existing child therapy resources to college students and adults.

Forster acknowledged that campus counselors can become “really busy, really

quick” and said the counseling center can also refer students to campus options including the clinic, if needed.

“I think, overall, across the country, there’s just a trend of increasing concerns with mental health on campuses,” Forster said. “There’s more access; more and more students are coming to college campuses with more complicated diagnoses, histories or situations, so there’s more of a need.”

### NORMALIZING THE MENTAL HEALTH TALK

The common message coming from both Forster and Edwards is that it’s natural for college students to struggle with their mental health. Many new students are adjusting to life on their own for the first time while simultaneously experiencing new mental conditions.

“From a developmental standpoint, this time frame is probably second in significance to the first five years of a person’s life in terms of the dramatic developmental processes,” Edwards said.

He said if students do not learn the skills needed to manage anxiety, stress or depression after arriving on campus, they will likely need somebody to help them hone those skills.

Edwards said acknowledging that students are going to be feel more anxiety in the weeks before midterms and more depression before the holidays is a step forward.

“The folks I know and talk to, they know this is a problem, and they want to do good for their students,” he said.

Sutton Noss receives reports whenever any current student or student who recently left the university dies. She has the responsibility of making an effort to reach out to these students’ families.

“A lot of time, people don’t think of college students passing away, but, sadly, that is part of our work in dealing with some of that, but we don’t want

that to happen, so we try to be preventative when we can be,” Sutton Noss said.

Edwards said the Ole Miss community must become comfortable talking about the factors that often lead to mental health concerns or suicide. He said being good at suicide prevention means also being good at helping students make healthy decisions about substance abuse.

“Our Ole Miss students tend to drink differently than other students. Our own research through health promotions tells us that,” he said. “So addressing some of the unique pieces of that and getting students to have buy-in (helps) those of us who are trained professionals get access to and reinforce our efforts.”

He said the Ole Miss trends of mental health concerns and suicide rates aren’t unusual among university populations and the social nature of a college campus lends itself to students feeling more connected to others who have died of suicide.

“On a college campus, we kind of feel that little more intensely, but I don’t think our numbers are any different. We’re seeing a little bit of a rise in suicides among traditional college-aged people. I think a lot of that is driven by suicides among the LGBT population,” Edwards said.

He said part of the counseling center’s efforts this fall will involve reaching the LGBT population on campus. The counseling center currently offers both a trans student support group and LGBT support group.

“The university could not hire enough staff members to have a huge impact on suicide prevention and reduction,” Edwards said. “That’s going to take the students themselves taking up a pretty big role, a strong role, in helping identify people who are at risk.”



PHOTO BY: HANNAH HURDLE

Kate Forster is the case manager for the Behavioral Intervention Team in the Office of Leadership and Advocacy.

## SEC SCHOOLS WITH IACS ACCREDITATION

SEVEN OUT OF 14:  
 University of Alabama  
 University of Arkansas  
 Auburn University  
 University of Florida  
 University of Kentucky  
 Mississippi State  
 University of Tennessee



# VOICES ON CAMPUS

COMPILED BY JACQUELINE SCHLICK

## "HOW DO YOU DECOMPRESS?"



**JADE ORELLANA**

"I listen to music, and I'll watch a show that's my favorite or that means a lot to me, something that's close to me. I'll watch my favorite comedy show or whatever to kind of make myself feel better."

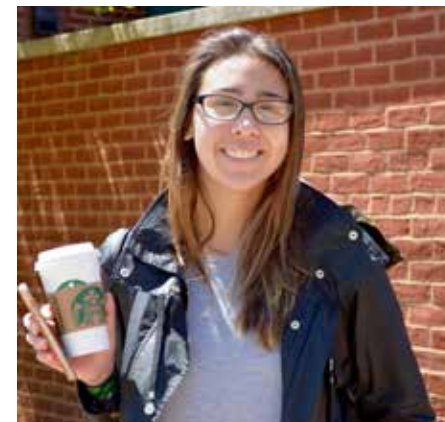
*Jade Orellana, a junior integrated marketing communications major from Brandon*



**ALEXIS THOMAS**

"I like to meditate just by listening to music, getting away from the world and letting my mind run free."

*Alexis Thomas, a senior exercise science major from Waterford*



**MADISON MORROW**

"I will paint different things that I've seen around campus. I really enjoy painting the Grove during the sunset period. That helps me get in tune with nature and ground myself when I'm having a really bad day."

*Madison Morrow, a sophomore theater arts and business double major from Oklahoma City*

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- ACROSS**
- 1 \_\_\_ having fun yet?
  - 6 Iowa State city
  - 10 Cool \_\_\_ cucumber
  - 13 Perjurers
  - 14 World's longest river
  - 15 Strip of wood
  - 16 Caper
  - 17 Took a blood sample
  - 18 White House staffer
  - 19 \_\_\_ soup yet?
  - 20 Keep from occurring
  - 22 Dinner course
  - 24 Dual
  - 28 More spine-tingling
  - 31 Old English coin
  - 32 Actress Beulah
  - 34 Lawyer's org.
  - 36 Japan's first capital
  - 37 Cutting tool
  - 38 Flightless bird
  - 41 Cpl.'s superior
  - 42 Sicilian spewer
  - 44 Boater or bowler
  - 45 Sensation provided by buds on the tongue
  - 47 Unit of heat
  - 49 Small crustacean
  - 51 Throughout this document
  - 53 Reverence
  - 56 Capital of New Jersey
- DOWN**
- 1 Jai \_\_\_
  - 2 Washer cycle
  - 3 Kind of kitchen
  - 4 Expressed in writing
  - 5 PC panic button
  - 6 Peace Nobelist Sakharov
  - 7 Bog down
  - 8 Mtn. stat
  - 9 Stitched
  - 10 Boxing legend
  - 11 Pathetic
  - 12 Bolted down
  - 15 Sixth planet
  - 20 Suffer destruction
  - 21 Holiday quaff
  - 23 Overhaul
  - 25 Brag

SOLUTION TO 4.11.2018 PUZZLE



- 59 Resting place
- 61 Do \_\_\_ others...
- 64 Threadbare
- 65 Michelangelo masterpiece
- 66 Fair
- 67 Lost traction
- 68 German industrial city
- 69 Uncommon sense
- 70 Indian exercise method
- 71 Jowl
- 26 Big
- 27 Coup d'\_\_\_
- 29 71% is under water
- 30 Slugger's stat
- 32 Get into hot water?
- 33 Holder
- 35 Director's shout
- 37 Adam's third son
- 39 Univ. aides
- 40 Soccer star Mia
- 43 "Am not!" rejoinder
- 46 Class where you learn ser, estar, and haber
- 48 Russian space station
- 50 Girl in a Beach Boys song
- 52 Informative
- 54 Gaggle members
- 55 First name in cosmetics
- 57 \_\_\_ contendere
- 58 Math subject
- 60 Liquid container
- 61 Employ
- 62 Rejections
- 63 Cookbook abbr.
- 65 Chest muscle, for short

### SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

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**ZACH HOLLINGSWORTH**

"I do free-writing. I always find that writing whatever is on the top of my head helps clear my thoughts. I get everything out there, especially if it's something negative. I'll just crumple up the paper and throw it away or delete the document that I'm working on – just to get it out of my head, on paper, and then throw it out. That always helps me."

*Zach Hollingsworth, a senior English and integrated marketing communications double major from Brandon*

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Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL  
**TOUGH**

	3		4	6				9			
	4			2						5	
				9						4	
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	7								5		
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2	4	8	7	9	5	1	6	3
6	5	1	8	3	2	9	7	4
7	6	3	4	9	1	8	5	2
4	3	9	5	7	9	2	8	1
5	8	7	1	2	3	9	4	6
9	1	2	6	4	8	5	3	7

# Mobile apps to use to decrease stress, anxiety

**MARY LIZ KING**  
ASSISTANT LIFESTYLES EDITOR

With all the stress that comes along with being in college, maintaining your mental health is crucial. Nowadays, everything is at our fingertips, including apps that can be incredibly beneficial for dealing with stress and anxiety. Most people always have their phones in their hands or somewhere nearby, and these apps can be used as immediate resources to take a moment to breathe, relax and destress.

## HEADSPACE

Probably one of the most popular apps for decreasing stress, Headspace allows users to practice meditation and mindfulness. Meditation has been proven to have a positive impact on mental health. According to a study by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, “participants suggest that mindfulness meditation programs show moderate evidence of improving anxiety and depression.”

Headspace is extremely versatile. It includes different “meditation topics” including regret, anger, self-esteem, happiness and acceptance, and there are so many more that can be used as incredible tools to cope. There is even a student section that features a “Leaving Home” meditation series as well as a “Distractions” meditation series that trains users to better ignore common distractions that decrease productivity.

The app can also be personalized to track progress, including how much time is

spent meditating and how many sessions the user has completed. There are also mini-meditation exercises for a quick pause during a busy, stressful day. The app is user-friendly and can be adjusted to meet the needs of anyone, from the least experienced meditator to the most experienced. Headspace is an excellent avenue for those looking to take a time-out.

## MOODNOTES

Moodnotes features a way to create new journal entries. When creating a new entry, the app begins by asking, “How are you?” Then, users can alter a face to smile or frown to different degrees based on their current mood.

The app then prompts the user by asking, “What’s happening at the moment?” As users type their entries, Moodnotes analyzes the text and attempts to identify which emotions the user will relate to. This app is great to use throughout the day as a mini-journal, and I often use it when I need to get something off my chest quickly by typing how I’m thinking and feeling.

It also tracks mood trends day to day or hour to hour and provides mood insights to help users better understand how they usually feel and how different events can positively or negatively impact their mood.

## RELAX MELODIES

Trying to go to bed after a long day can sometimes seem impossible. Thoughts come creeping in and can

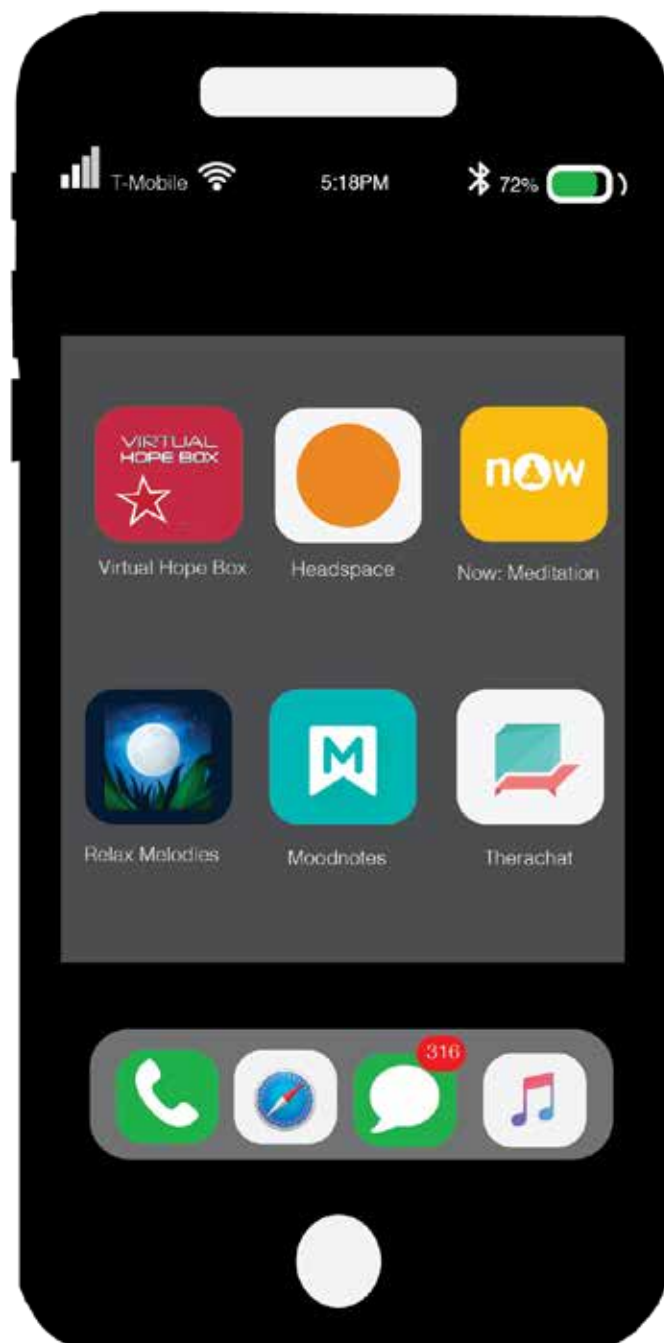
make it difficult to fall asleep. According to Sleep Health Foundation, “People who sleep poorly are much more likely to develop significant mental illness, including depression and anxiety, than those who sleep well.”

It is often difficult to fall asleep when stress or anxiety keeps tugging you awake, but Relax Melodies is beneficial for finding that little bit of relaxation that quiets the mind enough to sink into a deep sleep.

This app features many relaxing sounds from white noise to rain. It also features different meditation series that can improve users’ ability to fall asleep and stay asleep. The app also features a bedside alarm clock, and there is a setting to tell the phone when to close out of the app later in the night after the user falls asleep, so you don’t wake up with only 2 percent battery life. With everything going on in this busy world, it is important to find a quiet time to be able to reflect on the day, relax and sleep soundly.

## VIRTUAL HOPE BOX

Virtual Hope Box is one of the most versatile mental health apps. It has many different features that make the app quite useful. Upon opening the home screen, there are five options: remind me, distract me, inspire me, relax me and coping tools. Each section contains different activities users can utilize to reach their goals.



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY: ETHEL MWEDZEMENDIRA

In the “remind me” section, users are prompted to add positive media such as pictures, videos, screenshots and quotes. This is an awesome way to get a little dose of positivity during a stressful day. The “distract me” section contains puzzles and word searches that are great for, well, being distracted. The “inspire me” section contains a ton of dif-

ferent motivational quotes that are great for helping push through the day. The “relax me” section features controlled breathing exercises, relaxation techniques and guided meditation. This app is a great way to find a variety of activities to decompress and destress.

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COLUMN

# On screen: 'This Is Us' accurately portrays panic attacks

LEXI PURVIS  
STAFF WRITER

The problem with trying to describe anxiety is that it's completely and utterly indescribable.

It's that feeling when you're sitting a little too far back in a chair, and it begins to tip over but you catch yourself before you fall. Your heart is racing, but you can't seem to calm down, even though you never actually fell. That feeling of pure panic completely consuming your thoughts and entire body — that's what it's like to have a panic attack — sometimes lasts for hours or even days.

I was diagnosed with a generalized and social anxiety disorder when I was about 16, and at the time, I didn't really know what that meant. As I got older, the panic attacks began to increase, and I became familiar with the debilitating pattern. People often believe panic attacks are for individuals who have some kind of specific fear, whether it's heights or public speaking, but that's not always the case.

There have been many occasions when I would be going about my day, feeling completely normal, and all of a sudden, I'd feel as if my brain had completely disconnected from my body. My heart would begin to race, I'd start hyperventilating and I would be consumed with paralyzing fear, despite nothing scary actually happening. Basically, my brain goes into fight-or-flight mode for no reason, and I can't eat, sleep or talk. Sometimes I can't even walk when it gets bad enough. These random episodes of anxiety have resulted in me being un-



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY: EMILY HOFFMAN

able to leave my bed or even talk to anybody for hours or days at a time, which is something incredibly out of character for me. I've had to miss class because of these episodes, and this generally results in more anxiety — what teacher is going to believe I had to miss class for an anxiety disorder?

It's hard to explain anxiety to someone who doesn't have to deal with it. I've never been able to put into words exactly how it feels until I watched

an episode of NBC's hit show "This Is Us." One of the main characters of the show, a successful African-American man named Randall, was adopted into a white family after being left in a fire station as a newborn. Despite the rough start to his life, Randall becomes a brilliant man who eventually has his own family, a gorgeous house and his dream car. In one episode, Randall is attending his famous brother's play when he becomes completely discon-

nected and walks out of the theater. Randall's brother, Kevin, notices him leaving and knows what is about to happen. Kevin follows Randall to his office, where Randall, a tall, strong man, is curled up on the floor hyperventilating, crying and completely vulnerable. Kevin holds Randall as they wait out the panic attack together.

This moment in television was monumental — not only to me but also to the 40 million Americans who struggle with

anxiety disorders, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. Watching a capable, strong man like Randall become completely helpless in a state of utter terror was something that even I, a 21-year-old college student, can relate to all too well. This scene represented a moment that many who suffer from anxiety disorders have experience numerous times.

I remember watching the episode with my mom, who's spent countless hours holding me as I sob and hyperventilate during my anxiety attacks while my brain tears itself apart, and she was also brought to tears. The pain that was so accurately depicted in "This Is Us" is real, and we've lived through it too many times.

For anyone who knows what it's like to be completely helpless and have all the oxygen violently escape your lungs because your anxiety has completely taken over, I encourage you to watch this episode from "This Is Us." I encourage you to talk about these struggles, and I encourage you to keep going.

Though life is hard and having an anxiety disorder is extremely difficult to cope with, there are resources available to help you through it. It cannot be done alone. Having a support system to be there for you — like Kevin is there for Randall — is incredibly important for overcoming anxiety attacks. For me, my best friend and my family, especially my mom, have been my support through this never-ending battle. Even if they can't cure your anxiety, it's easier to survive the loneliness of having an anxiety attack when comforted by someone you love.

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# Athletics leaders focus on players' mental health

**SAM HARRES**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Classes, relationships and identity struggles fill the everyday lives of college students across the country. The American College Health Association found in 2013 that 57 percent of female college students and 40 percent of male college students reported feeling “overwhelming anxiety” within the previous year. That same study indicated that roughly 30 percent of college students reported symptoms of depression.

But there are students — those with all the aforementioned responsibilities — who also wake up early each morning for training and stay up late at night watching film. There are students who spend every weekend on the road or flying to their next match.

Student-athletes make up less than 2 percent of the roughly more than 20,000-person Ole Miss student body, but they have their own full-time sports psychology staff. It's no surprise why.

“[It's] the stress of time management,” Ole Miss Athletics Director Ross Bjork said. “Weight workouts, practice, nutrition, study hall, class, team travel.”

The stress on Ole Miss athletes, in particular, Bjork points out, tends to be greater than most.

“We have the SEC Network, and we have ESPN,” Bjork said. “There's a pressure to perform.”

Ole Miss sports psychologist Josie Nicholson agrees. Nicholson, who received her master's degree and doctor-

ate. in counseling psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi, has a long history of providing mental health care in a variety of settings.

“Typically, people don't understand that when [student-athletes] say, ‘I don't have an hour in my day,’ they honest-to-God mean it,” Nicholson said. “With athletes, the No. 1 issue is just coping with the pressure and the stress from the demands that are placed on them.”

That's why Ole Miss hired Nicholson in 2012. As a sports and counseling psychologist, she helps student-athletes deal with mental health concerns both related and unrelated to their sport. Nicholson provides a wide variety of services for student-athletes participating in any sport at Ole Miss.

“Athletes can come to me individually, they can shoot me a text, they can shoot me an email or they can go through an athletic trainer or coach,” Nicholson said. “I also do team stuff. That mainly comes through coaches, but sometimes the team will request it.”

When the Athletics Department transitioned Nicholson into a full-time position in 2013, Ole Miss was one of only three SEC schools with a full-time sports psychologist on staff.

“We get phone calls all the time — both within the SEC and across the country — about our health and sports performance model,” Bjork said. “I think we were on the cutting edge six years ago in creating that model.”

Now, as the spotlight on mental health care shifts to



FILE PHOTO: MARLEE CRAWFORD

Athletics Director Ross Bjork.

collegiate athletes, many schools are being forced to play catch-up.

“Each athletics department must be very explicit in the way that they are providing those resources to their athletes, and yet that's a huge challenge for Millsaps or Belhaven,” Nicholson said. “There's not enough of us. It's a very niche field.”

The Ole Miss sports psychology staff — currently composed of Nicholson and a doctoral fellow — are responsible for the mental healthcare of around 400 student-athletes at any given time.

Bjork understands not only the staffing crisis but also the difficulty in attaining further funding for the program. Still, he hopes the staff will continue to grow in number.

“Right now, I think it's safe to say we're short-handed,” Bjork said. “And so there needs to be more done, but that does take resources. I think everyone is trying to be creative and come up with new ways to fund this.”

Bjork will be the featured speaker at a fundraiser event for the William Magee Center for Wellness Education tomorrow night. The center plans to open its doors later this year and is hoping the dinner will provide a final funding push to meet its \$1.5 million goal.



PHOTO BY: ALEXIS T. RHODEN

UM Sports Psychologist Josie Nicholson stands in front of her office in the FedEx Center on Tuesday.

The center is named for former student William Magee, who died of an accidental drug overdose soon after graduating from the university. While in school at Ole Miss, Magee was a member of the Ole Miss Track and Field teams. Magee's parents, David and Kent, moved back to Oxford after his death and David began working as publisher of the Oxford Eagle.

“I reached out to David when he first got here working for the Oxford Eagle, just to get to know him and he told me the story,” Bjork said. “I didn't understand the

story until David had mentioned it.”

Magee died before Bjork stepped into his current position on campus, and the two never met, but Bjork said that didn't stop him from relating with the Magee family's story.

“The connection for me personally was through David, and William being a student athlete, so let's try and partner with this,” Bjork said. “This is a need on campus, for students and the university community.”



“There needs to be more done, but that does take resources. I think everyone is trying to be creative and come up with new ways to fund this.”

- Ross Bjork  
ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY: EMILY HOFFMAN

# Senior class leaders provide support for wellness center

**KIARA MANNING**  
STAFF WRITER

The university's Mr. and Miss Ole Miss, Tucker Fox and Savannah Smith, are using their platform on campus and partnership with the senior class to raise awareness for the William Magee Center for Wellness Education.

The center is set to open in September of this year, honoring the memory of William Magee, a former student and member of the Ole Miss Track and Field teams who died of an accidental drug overdose after he had graduated from the university.

Smith and Fox have worked in support of the center's development in the months since last November, meeting with the Ma-

gee family and other invested groups on campus such as Campus Recreation and the Ole Miss Foundation.

Fox, a banking and managerial finance double major, said wellness is important to everyone's daily lives, which makes the Magee Center such a need on campus.

"Whether it be substance abuse, alcohol, to mental health or anything in between, this place is going to be there directly for students for them to continue succeeding while here at Ole Miss," Fox said.

Fox said he and Smith immediately knew they wanted to do this service project because it would have an impact on the majority of Ole Miss students. While campaigning for Mr. and Miss Ole Miss, both candi-



PHOTO BY: TUCKER ROBBINS

Mr. and Miss Ole Miss Tucker Fox and Savannah Smith encourage students to take a button off the We Listen board in the Circle reflecting their mood in March as a part of Mental Health Week.

dates focused on supporting the Ole Miss family.

"We came to the conclusion that we wanted to start a student awareness campaign that was two-fold," said Smith, a senior journalism and public policy major. "The campaign would, most importantly, raise awareness of the general importance of wellness and the resources that the center is going to offer students."

A fundraising campaign for the center operates a page on Ignite Ole Miss, the university's crowdfunding website, with the goal of having at least 1,000 students donate \$5 to help the Magee Center reach its overall fundraising goal of \$1.5 million.

Smith and Fox have raised awareness for the campaign through social media and word of mouth. They have also partnered with senior class officers Guy Thornton, Andrew Glaze and Reid Patterson to increase senior class participation.

The officers plan to make the Class of 2018's Legacy Gift, a gift given by each graduating class to be remembered by, a donation to the William Magee Center.

Smith said plans for the Magee Center began long before she and Fox became involved, but they're excited to contribute.

"William's parents have been working with university officials to raise the money to bring the Wellness Center to our campus," Smith said. "We are just helping engage students with it. We want as many students as possible to take ownership of their own wellness and the wellness of other students around them."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

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