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Alumnus Expands Legacy at UM Business School

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Alumnus Expands Legacy at UM Business School

Lyt Harris designates estate gift to support student scholarships

JULY 15, 2019 BY BILL DABNEY

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UM alumnus Lyt Harris has committed a \$2.5 million planned gift to the existing Lyttleton T. Harris IV Scholarship Endowment, which supports students in the School of Business Administration. The Harris Scholarship is available to juniors or seniors who are marketing majors and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – A longtime mentor to students of all ages, Lyt Harris has expanded his legacy by committing a major estate gift to support **University of Mississippi** students in the **School of Business Administration**.

The estimated \$2.5 million planned gift will be added to the existing Lyttleton T. Harris IV Scholarship Endowment after his lifetime. With this planned gift, Harris is awarded membership in the 1848 Society, which is named for the year the university opened and recognizes those who provide for UM through deferred gifts.

Harris has served as a mentor for MBA students at Ole Miss and was named an Otho Smith fellow in 2008. He also has served as a mentor for middle and high school students in the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas, where he lives.

But first, he was a student.

"I enjoyed the whole college experience and being in such a beautiful setting as Ole Miss and the Oxford area," said Harris, a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and 1962 graduate of the School of Business Administration. "It was a great environment for learning, going to school and enjoying a large variety of activities."

He hopes his gift will help future generations of business students have a similar positive experience at Ole Miss. The Harris Scholarship is available to full-time juniors or seniors who are marketing majors in the business school and maintain a minimum 3.0 grade-point average.

"Mr. Harris' generous gifts encompass the scope of work we do here by meeting the financial needs of students who want to pursue an education in business," business Dean Ken Cyree said. "We are very grateful to Mr. Harris for his commitment to the school."

Harris originally established his endowment in August 2016 with a \$27,000 gift. He later pledged to increase the endowment to \$100,000, allowing the business school to award scholarships from it in perpetuity.

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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

About 12 years ago, Harris funded a similar scholarship program at Northwood University in Michigan, an all-business education university, where he received an honorary Doctor of Laws and served on the board of trustees. He and his late wife, Venita, contributed to the fund regularly.

"Really, that was such a good program and I received such positive feedback from the students selected for the scholarship that I thought, 'Why not set up a similar scholarship at the University of Colorado, where Venita went to school, and also at Ole Miss and LSU, where I went to school?'"

After completing graduate school at LSU in 1963, Harris rose through the ranks of Scott Paper Co., where he became project manager for the first disposable diapers, taking them from test market to national distribution. Later, he joined a large division of Hunt Wesson Foods as director of marketing and was instrumental in propelling the Orville Redenbacher popcorn brand to its leading U.S. status.

Harris, a master at recognizing the potential in people like Redenbacher, hopes his scholarships will help students fulfill their own potential, building on their higher educational foundations to become successful in business.

"I'm looking forward to hearing from, and hopefully meeting, some of the students who receive the scholarships," he said.

After Hunt Wesson, Harris worked several years as a senior executive in the banking and finance industry before moving to Houston in 1982 to become president and eventually CEO of Southwest Management and Marketing Co. There, he met his wife in 1984 at an art exhibition; both were avid collectors.

Harris sold his company and retired in 2004. He serves as managing partner of the Harris Investment Partnership, specializing in venture capital investments including specialty foods, residential real estate, senior living facilities, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers.

Always active in civic and charitable activities, Harris has served on the boards of a number of nonprofit organizations, including The Kidney Foundation, Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts of America, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and St. Luke's United Methodist Church. During his business career, he was listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in Finance and Industry*, and *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*.

Harris enjoys spectator sports, swimming, hiking, biking and traveling by cruise ship; he plans to celebrate his 100th voyage early in 2020 with a cruise from Bangkok to Hong Kong.

At Ole Miss, he was a member of the University Players theater company, Delta Sigma Pi business fraternity and Sigma Alpha Epsilon social fraternity.

The Lyttleton T. Harris IV Endowed Scholarship is open to gifts from individuals and organizations. To contribute, send checks, with the endowment name noted in the memo line, to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., University, MS 38655; visit <https://give.olemiss.edu>; or contact Tim Noss, business school development officer, at tnoss@olemiss.edu or 662-915-5932.

For information on including Ole Miss in estate planning, contact Byron Liles, senior director of gift planning, at byron@olemiss.edu or 662-915-7601.

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Tim Noss (left), development director for the UM School of Business Administration, visits with donor Lyt Harris in Houston, Texas. Photo courtesy Tim Noss/UM Development