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University of Mississippi News

3-10-2020

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Recommended Citation

Smith, Edwin B., "Annual Awards Program Honors Faculty and Students" (2020). *University of Mississippi News*. 361.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/361>

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Annual Awards Program Honors Faculty and Students

HEADWAE recognizes academic achievement, contributions to higher learning

MARCH 10, 2020 BY EDWIN B. SMITH

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Jared Akers (right), a dental student at the UM Medical Center, and Jennifer Bain (second from right), associate professor and chair of periodontics at the Medical Center, attend a recognition ceremony for all the 2020 HEADWAE Awards recipients at the state Capitol in Jackson. Photo by Tammi Bowles/Hinds Community College

OXFORD, Miss. – **University of Mississippi** students and faculty were among the honorees at the 33rd annual Higher Education Appreciation Day-Working for Academic Excellence, or HEADWAE, awards program this month in Jackson.

Barron Charles Mayfield, a senior from Lubbock, Texas, majoring in **public policy leadership**, and Jared Michael Akers, D4 **dental** student at the **UM Medical Center**, are the student honorees. John Young, UM associate professor of **psychology**, and Jennifer Craft Bain, associate professor and chair of **periodontics** and assistant dean of curriculum and innovative teaching methods at the Medical Center, are the faculty representatives at the awards program.



Barron Charles Mayfield, a senior public policy leadership major, is the student recipient of a 2020 Higher Education Appreciation Day-Working for Academic Excellence Award for the Oxford campus. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

"More than anything, this award shows that the hard work my team has put in over the last year has been noticed and appreciated," said Mayfield, Associated Student Body president. "I could not have done this without some incredible people by my side, from my chief of staff, Bethany Downs, to the rest of our executive team to our advisers Kendrick Wallace and Will Takewell. This award is a testament to their hard work as much as it is mine."

Young said it was a meaningful and humbling experience to represent the university.

"If external recognition of teaching as a valuable activity stimulates greater attention to what hundreds of talented people are doing on campus every day, then I will perceive this as extremely beneficial," said Young, who also was UM's 2019 Elsie M. Hood Award recipient for excellence in teaching. "Similarly, if students seeing that I won an award facilitates taking my class and then learning something that changes their world view, it will be very positive."

Akers received his bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Ole Miss in 2015. He earned a master's degree in biomedical sciences from UMMC in 2016.

"Receiving this honor will serve as a daily reminder to continue to do

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Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children's play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith's Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school's first African-American student.

my best every day,” Akers said. “It will also encourage me to continue working toward my career goals as I graduate dental school and transition into my oral maxillofacial surgery residency.”

After earning her bachelor’s degree in biology at Belhaven College in 2004, Bain received her Doctor of Dental Medicine from UMMC in 2009 and a doctorate in pathobiology and molecular medicine from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2014. She completed her certificate in residency training in periodontology from UAB in 2014. Bain joined the UMMC faculty as an assistant professor in 2014.

“As faculty, we often work long hours burning the candle at both ends,” Bain said. “This recognition validates all this hard work and lets us know we are truly making a difference.”

HEADWAE was established by legislative resolution to honor students and faculty from the state’s public and private institutions of higher learning who have made outstanding contributions in promoting academic excellence. Students and faculty from Mississippi’s 34 public and private universities and colleges were honored this year.

The winners toured the state Capitol, where they were welcomed by Lt. Gov. Delbert Hoseman, and attended an awards luncheon.



John Young, UM associate professor of psychology, is the faculty recipient of a 2020 Higher Education Appreciation Day-Working for Academic Excellence Award for the Oxford campus. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

“James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier,” a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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