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Attractive from Coast to Coast

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Attractive from Coast to Coast

Engineering freshmen make UM connections

NOVEMBER 21, 2014 BY RYAN UPSHAW, UM SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

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David Thomas

Over the past five years, the **University of Mississippi School of Engineering's** undergraduate population has doubled from roughly 700 to more than 1,400 students. While a significant number of those come from Mississippi, many others come from long distances to pursue engineering education here.

Two such students are David Thomas of Brooklyn, New York, and Richard Jaramillo of San Diego. Thomas, who was accepted into the **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College**, is pursuing a degree in mechanical

engineering and hopes to become a student in the Center for Manufacturing Excellence to earn an emphasis in manufacturing. A graduate of LaGuardia High School, he was drawn to Oxford and the university because of personal connections to the region as well as the academic programs available.

"I have always liked the South and have been visiting my entire life," Thomas said. "I have family nearby who really encouraged me to consider Ole Miss. I was definitely drawn in because of the combination of the School of Engineering and the Honors College along with the strong athletics and social scene. My official campus visit helped seal the deal!"

Although Thomas was a member of the Brooklyn Youth Chorus and participated in theater productions in high school, the AP Scholar and Eagle Scout found that engineering was a great match for his interests.

"I've always loved solving problems and thinking of better ways to do things," he said. "That's exactly what an engineer does." His favorite courses this semester are calculus and psychology.

So far, he has had a positive transition to the university because faculty and staff have been very supportive. He has decided to become a member of a Greek organization and has joined the Ultimate Frisbee team. He hopes to get involved with Engineers Without Borders.

Jaramillo, a member of the Provost Scholars program, has also enjoyed his first few months on campus. Although he admits to missing family and the weather back home in California, he has found the adjustment to Ole Miss easy.

"People are really nice, and it has been easy to make new friends here," Jaramillo said. "Also, the staff at the Center for Manufacturing Excellence are willing to help you in any way that they can. The CME provides a one-on-one experience stronger than any of my other classes."

He has started discussing cooperative education program opportunities (co-ops) for a future semester.

A graduate of Scripps Ranch High School, Jaramillo visited campus before a home football game and was introduced to the CME by a current engineering student. He believes the emphasis in manufacturing will allow him to engage in his areas of interest, since he has always considered a career in engineering.

"From a young age, I liked to fix things," he said. "I have rewired rotary phones and worked on classic cars. I love to make things work, better them or create something new."

Jaramillo's favorite course this semester is Manufacturing 250, which involves Creo 3D modeling. He has become involved in a Greek organization and spends free time playing intramural sports. Jaramillo hopes to become involved with the internal combustion industry.

Both Thomas and Jaramillo encourage any high school students who are considering engineering to take time to visit the university.

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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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