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Edwin Smith

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Bennetts Benefit from Ole Miss Engineering

Alumni couple finds love, marriage and careers while earning degrees

MARCH 31, 2017 BY EDWIN SMITH

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Arlidia Bennett likes spending time with her Chihuahua, Sadie.

David and Arledia Bennett, like many other couples before and after them, found love and happiness through their connections to Ole Miss engineering.

"They have an interesting story to tell," said Kevin Gardner, development officer for the UM School of Engineering.

Their tale began when David Bennett (BA 74, BE 83) came from Ripley to the university on a football scholarship. Arledia Bush (BA 75, BSCS 83) came from Jackson to campus to study journalism. As fate would have it, the two met each other in their senior year through a mutual friend. Following graduation, Bennett married Bush, and they began pursuing careers in Oxford.

The rest, as they say, is history.

David Bennett initially earned his bachelor's degree in general science with an emphasis in biology and chemistry. He later returned to the university after he was hired by the City of Oxford.

"I realized that I needed to further my studies in general engineering, so I went back to school for my engineering degree," he said. "I served for 15 years until my retirement. My engineering degree enabled me to enjoy a professional career, serving the public in a work environment that I truly loved with the City of Oxford."

Although Arledia Bennett earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism, when her husband went back to engineering school, she decided to do so also.

"That is when I got a B.S. in Computer Science from the School of Engineering," she said. "I have to admit that I have not used my computer science degree, as I did not change careers after I graduated. I loved what I was doing professionally as director of the Lafayette County Foster Grandparent Program, a volunteer program for seniors working with children with special or exceptional needs."

The families of both Bennetts have strong ties to the university.

"My family had close ties as Rebels, as both my mom and dad graduated from here," David Bennett said. "I had many offers for football scholarships, but I had always been a Rebel fan so coming to Ole Miss was an easy choice for me."

Arlidia Bennett's father earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from UMI. And her mother was an R.N. and worked on campus at the University Hospital before it was moved to Jackson.



David Bennett enjoys duck hunting.

"My dad always jokingly told me I could go to school anywhere I wanted, but he was only going to pay for me to come to Ole Miss," she said. "So Ole Miss has always been a special place for both of our families, and I never considered any other school."

David Bennett said his favorite engineering course was hydraulics. His favorite professors were M.S. Abdulrahman, professor emeritus of civil engineering, and Sam Deleeuw, chair emeritus and professor emeritus of civil engineering. Arledia Bennett said she most enjoyed the classes of Tobin Maginnis, associate professor of computer science.

The Bennetts' degrees have allowed both of them to pursue careers they have enjoyed and have kept them involved in the Oxford and Lafayette County community.

"Both of us were offered jobs in other places after we graduated from engineering school, but Oxford was

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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

home, and we chose to stay here," he said. "We enjoyed the jobs we already had here."

The alumni couple makes an annual donation to the School of Engineering, and David Bennett assisted engineering students with senior projects when he worked for the City of Oxford.

"We do it so that other students will have the opportunity to pursue their career in engineering as we did," Arledia Bennett said. "Giving back has always been important to us and has been an important part of my professional career."

David Bennett has a son, Bryan; a brother, Dan, who graduated from UM with a degree in mechanical engineering; and a sister, Betty. He enjoys hunting, fishing and working in the yard.

Arledia Bennett has a brother, Sonny, and a sister, Denise. She enjoys sitting in the sunroom, reading a good book when not at work.

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