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Biloxi Teacher, UM Alum Named Teacher of the Year at Gulf Coast School

 MARCH 26, 2012 BY [ANDREW MARK ABERNATHY](#)

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Amber Watkins

OXFORD, Miss. – Amber Watkins, a 2009 elementary education graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Education, seems to be a natural teacher.

In fact, only a year-and-a-half into her teaching career, she's been honored as Teacher of the Year for Woolmarket Elementary School in Biloxi.

"There are so many reasons I love what I do," said Watkins, a native of D'Iberville who leads a class of 19 second-graders. "But I think seeing my students succeed is the most rewarding."

Chosen by her principal, Vickie Williams, Watkins will be honored April 30 at her school's board of directors meeting. She was chosen for the award after Williams observed Watkins' in-depth teaching style and commitment to help students throughout the school, not just the ones in her class.

"We selected Mrs. Watkins for her creativity, passion and willingness to go above and beyond," Williams explained. "She ensures all of her students meet her expectations and works well

with colleagues. She gives up her planning time to tutor at-risk students. I wish we had more like her."

For Watkins, the teaching profession has been a calling since childhood.

"I became interested in being a teacher because of my brother," she said. "He struggled with ADHD and I saw how much he worked to barely get by. I wanted to be there for students and help them regardless of their needs."

Watkins is working on a master's degree in elementary education at William Carey University in Gulfport and has plans to one day return to Ole Miss for doctoral work. Her dream job is to be an education professor, but in the meantime, she's focusing her energy on her students.

"Everyone needs someone who won't give up on them," she said.

For more information on the UM School of Education, go to <http://education.olemiss.edu/>.

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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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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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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

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