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1-19-2021

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Recommended Citation

Smith, Edwin B., "Doctoral Student Receives Prominent Future Leaders Award" (2021). *University of Mississippi News*. 1427.

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Doctoral Student Receives Prominent Future Leaders Award

Ashleen Williams recognized for showing exemplary promise as higher education leader

JANUARY 19, 2021 BY EDWIN B. SMITH



Ashleen Williams (center), a UM doctoral student in history, welcomes a group of first-generation transfer students to campus. Williams, who teaches in the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, has been honored as a future leader in higher education. Photo by Logan Kirkland/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – A doctoral student in history at the **University of Mississippi** has been awarded a prestigious honor for future leaders in higher education.

Ashleen Williams, who also teaches in the university's **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College**, is among nine recipients of the **Association of American Colleges and Universities'** annual K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award. The award recognizes graduate students who show exemplary promise as future leaders of higher education and who are committed to academic innovation in the areas of equity, community engagement, and teaching and learning.

The awards honor the work of K. Patricia Cross, professor emerita of higher education at the University of California at Berkeley.

"This award is particularly meaningful because of who the award is named for and the example K. Patricia Cross set for young educators for excellence in teaching and learning," Williams said. "This award is also a chance to connect with other graduate students and scholars across the nation who are committed to questions of equity and community engagement, and I've felt very inspired by learning from the work they are doing."

Among other activities, Williams' award recognizes her involvement in the Honors College First-Gen Student Network, which helps first-generation students navigate the college experience. She created a lecture series given by successful first-generation Mitchell, Truman and Fulbright scholars.

Williams came to the Honors College from Montana, following excursions to Northern Ireland and the Middle East. As a 2013 Mitchell Scholar, Williams travelled to the University of Ulster to earn her master's degree in applied peace and conflict studies.

Her dissertation focused on "Writing on the Walls: Examination of the Contestation of Space in Bahrain through Graffiti and Social Media," a study she began while holding a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Bahrain.

The 2021 Cross recipients were chosen from a pool of 200 nominees from 121 institutions who have demonstrated the potential for leadership in teaching, academic innovation and community engagement.

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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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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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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



Ashleen Williams

The award is open to all doctoral-level graduate students who are planning careers in higher education, regardless of academic department, and have been nominated by a faculty member or administrator.

Graduate students in fields where a master's degree is the terminal degree are also eligible.

The 2021 winners will be recognized at AAC&U's virtual annual meeting, "Revolutionizing Higher Education after COVID-19," set for Jan. 20-23. They will be honored and introduced to the AAC&U community during the opening plenary session.

The recipients also will participate in the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Session, which will be moderated by José Antonio Bowen.

"I plan to use that opportunity to learn more from the other recipients, to attend sessions that will help transform my thinking, and participate in conversations about innovation and equity in education," Williams said.

Williams' recognition is well-deserved, said Douglass Sullivan-González, dean of the Honors College.

"As our senior Barksdale fellow, she leads by example how to engage our large academic community with the key questions of the day," he said. "Ashleen has poured herself into working with first-generation students and has been recognized for these accomplishments both in our college and by the university administration.

"She simply practices what she preaches, and we are honored that she has garnered a coveted spot with the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award foundation."

As an undergraduate at the University of Montana, Williams was president of the Associated Students and a student/student mentor in the Davidson Honors College. She completed a bachelor's degree in political science and history, and also studied Arabic as a Georgetown-Qatar Fellow at Qatar University and at the Yemen College for Middle East Studies in Sana'a.

For more information about AAC&U, its annual meeting or the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award, visit <http://www.aacu.org>.

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