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Generous Donations Smash Record During Ole Miss Giving Day 2021

University family gives \$2.485 million to soar past fundraising goals

APRIL 15, 2021 BY TINA H. HAHN



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

\$2,485,425 RAISED | **1,575 GIFTS**

OXFORD, Miss. – When the last online donation was made this week for Giving Day 2021, **University of Mississippi** faithful had shattered the fundraising record for the annual event.

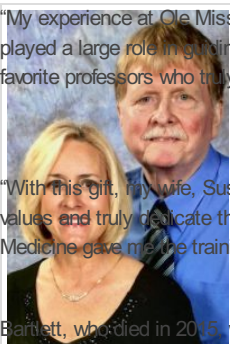
This year, Ole Miss alumni, students, parents, alumni, friends, faculty and staff contributed 1,575 gifts (1,328 unique donors), totaling more than \$2.485 million – gifts dedicated to strengthening 109 funds at the university by building vital resources.

“The Ole Miss family responded with great enthusiasm to Giving Day, and we are grateful for the outpouring of support that will enhance our academic and athletic programs and the student experience,” Chancellor Glenn Boyce said. “We also are elated to receive a remarkable \$1.5 million gift commitment from Susan and Dr. Joe Sentef to strengthen our dynamic Department of Modern Languages.

“We thank all those who made important challenge gifts to fuel the energy and momentum of Giving Day and for every single dollar given to propel our university forward. The collective impact will be felt for years to come.”

The capstone contribution of \$1.5 million from the Sentefs, of Signal Mountain, Tennessee, will create a faculty chair in their names in the UM **Department of Modern Languages**. The department, within the **College of Liberal Arts**, is home to **Chinese** and **Arabic** language flagship programs – two of only a few such federally funded critical language programs in the nation.

“My experience at Ole Miss was really special,” said Joe Sentef, a 1978 alumnus. “My professors played a large role in guiding me toward success. German professor Dr. Ron Bartlett was one of my favorite professors who truly cared about his students and urged them to work to their unseemly potential.



I think that’s the role of a good professor: to set their students on a path to success.

“With this gift, my wife, Susan, and I hope to attract or retain and reward professors who share those values and truly dedicate themselves to their students. Although the University of Mississippi School of Medicine gave me the training to succeed in my medical career, I never would have been there without the Department of Modern Languages.”

Bartlett, who died in 2015, won the coveted Elsie M. Hood Outstanding Teacher Award in 1983, the highest honor a UM faculty member can receive for teaching.

Susan and Joe Sentef

The social media-driven Giving Day 2021, with a theme of “Better Together,” launched on April 13 and continued 1 day, 8 hours and 48 minutes in honor of the university’s

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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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Thank You To Our Donors

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.

founding year of 1848. In addition to attracting gifts of all sizes for the 25 participating schools, colleges and programs, the event encouraged alumni and friends to become engaged in developments at Ole Miss.

Besides the Sentef's gift, other notable contributions included \$112,000 from Rhonda and Dr. Ralf Zapata, of Niceville, Florida, to College of Liberal Arts students from the Florida Panhandle. Nancy Stames, of Charleston, South Carolina, gave \$50,000 to support the **Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts**.

Donors Linda and Alvin Craig Sartin, of Gulfport, contributed \$30,000 to the **School of Pharmacy** to establish a scholarship for a student from Harrison County. Chancellor Boyce and his wife, Emily, both alumni, added \$15,000 to their existing endowment supporting student teachers in the **School of Education**.

Fifty-seven challenge gifts from alumni and friends kept the momentum running high throughout the campaign. Included in this group was alumnus Jesse L. White Jr., of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, who provided \$15,000 to the **Center for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Engagement**, when 15 others made gifts to the program. Neil Forbes, of Madison; Charles White, of Birmingham, Alabama; and three anonymous donors gave notable gifts to Ole Miss athletics programs.

Alumni Audra and Phillip Bowman, of Ridgeland, contributed \$15,000 to the Ole Miss First Scholarship program, when 15 others stepped up with gifts. UM Dean Emeritus of Students Sparky Reardon, of Taylor, gave \$10,000 to the School of Education, after 60 others made gifts to the school.

Top performers in the campaign, in order, were the College of Liberal Arts, **Ole Miss Athletics Foundation**, School of Education, Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts and School of Pharmacy. The **School of Law** won two cash prizes totaling \$4,000 offered during Giving Day, and the School of Education and the **Pride of the South Band** each won cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$1,100, respectively, based on participation during timed challenges.

"We are thrilled that the Ole Miss family came together and supported our university," said Maura Langhart, director of annual giving in the Office of University Development. "Our deepest thanks go to all those who responded, once more illustrating the great passion and commitment alumni and friends have for giving back to this place that they love.

"Throughout the event, people were so engaged and very competitive, using social media to spread the word and helping unlock challenge gifts. This campaign gave us the opportunity to be together online and in spirit, and look at the results of our collective giving – amazing!"


The generous support received during Giving Day extends beyond classrooms to various stadiums and playing fields across campus.

"The goals of Giving Day included securing support for all areas on campus, and Ole Miss athletics was a big part of that," said Keith Carter, vice chancellor for intercollegiate athletics. "Despite our student-athletes' success in competition, the ultimate goal is always to earn a degree, so it's very encouraging to see Rebel Nation come together on Giving Day in a way that directly supports their higher education and success in life."

This was the second Giving Day hosted by Ole Miss; the first, in 2019, secured almost \$550,000. The event planned for spring 2020 was quickly changed to a campaign to help Ole Miss students with challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Ole Miss family appreciates our vision and responsibility as the flagship university," said Charlotte Parks, vice chancellor for development. "Our ambitious goals to expand scholarships, faculty support, technology, facilities and service opportunities will be met because our incredible alumni and friends provide the resources."

For more information on ways of supporting the university, go to <https://give.olemiss.edu>.

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"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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