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6-4-2022

Gift Provides UM Honors Scholarships

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Recommended Citation

Dabney, Bill, "Gift Provides UM Honors Scholarships" (2022). *University of Mississippi News*. 2084.
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Gift Provides UM Honors Scholarships

Leading surgeon credits university for success and hopes to help others succeed

JUNE 4, 2022 BY **BILL DABNEY**



Dr. Marc Walker (left) goes with his wife, Dr. Caroline Aldridge Walker, and daughter, Catherine, into The Inn at Ole Miss before his induction into the Alumni Association's 40 Under 40 inaugural class. The Walkers have given \$150,000 to establish a scholarship fund for students in the UM Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Photo by Bill Dabney/UM Foundation

OXFORD, Miss. – Dr. Marc E. Walker, a plastic surgeon and Mississippi's only pediatric and congenital hand surgeon, is the founder and clinical director of the Congenital Hand Clinic at **Children's of Mississippi**, the pediatric hospital at the **University of Mississippi Medical Center** in Jackson.

Walker's road to success is impressive: after graduating summa cum laude and Phi Kappa Phi in 2006 with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences from the **University of Mississippi**, he earned his MBA and M.D. from Harvard University. He then completed his residency in plastic and reconstructive surgery as well as fellowship training in hand and microsurgery at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

"If it weren't for the generosity of donors before us, my college experience would have been very different," said Walker, a Carrier Scholar and student in the university's **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College**. "Without the additional worry of navigating financial hardship, I was able to focus on my education and pursue my dreams of becoming a surgeon."

He and his wife, Dr. Caroline Aldridge Walker, cardiac anesthesiology and director of structural heart anesthesiology at UMMC, want to support his alma mater by establishing the Walker Family Endowment with a \$150,000 gift.

The couple's gift, established to provide scholarships for Honors College students, also honors former Dean Douglass Sullivan-González.

"I am extremely honored by the Walkers' gift and I'm equally proud of Marc, who was one of our most exceptional students," Sullivan-González said. "His extraordinary success stands as a tribute to the quality of education we strive to give our citizen-scholars every day."

"This family's generous gift will help us continue to attract some of the nation's hardest working students and enrich their experiences."

The Walkers' support will go toward Now & Ever: The Campaign for Ole Miss, a fundraising initiative to secure \$1.5 billion in private gifts to strengthen the university for generations to come.

"We chose to make this gift now because we wanted to capture the momentum of the Now & Ever

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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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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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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

Campaign with the hope of inspiring other young Honors College alumni to consider also giving back, however big or small, to support the future of honors education at Ole Miss,” Walker said.

An added incentive, Walker said, is that the gift can be made payable in annual increments over time.

“We hope other young alumni and friends will take advantage of this feature and consider giving back to the university however they can,” he said.

Walker serves the Honor’s College as a member of its Koi Society, alumni mentorship program and NOW & Ever Campaign committee. In 2017, he was invited to speak at its building dedication and, in 2021, he served on the national search committee for a new Honor’s College dean.

“The Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College had an immeasurable impact on my life,” Walker said. “From Day 1, I felt that I was part of a community of students and teachers who valued the pursuit of academic enrichment as well as lived by their commitment to the concept of being citizen scholars.

“The Honors College believed in me and never once wavered in supporting and encouraging me to pursue my biggest dreams.”

At Ole Miss, Walker was a Taylor Medalist, Phi Kappa Phi honor vice president and Phi Beta Kappa member. He served as an Ole Miss Ambassador, attorney general for the Associated Student Body and UM Mission Statement committee chairman on the Provost’s Task Force for Undergraduate Education. He was named Senator of the Year and inducted into the student Hall of Fame.

After completing his education at Harvard, where he was student body president, and Yale, where he was chief resident, Walker returned to his home state to join its largest academic teaching hospital and only Level 1 trauma center. At UMMC, the double board-certified surgeon is tenure-track assistant professor of plastic surgery and orthopedic surgery, division director of adult and pediatric hand and upper extremity surgery and fellowship program director of surgery of the hand.

“My passion for providing care to underserved populations in large part informed my decision to return to my home state as a plastic surgeon and hand surgeon, treating my fellow Mississippians and training the next generation of young surgeons whom I hope will be inspired to do the same,” said Walker, whose work extends far beyond state lines.

For more than 16 years, he has traveled throughout Central and South America volunteering his expertise. He serves on the executive leadership board of the pediatric hand surgery mission organization Hand Help Inc., through which he provides free surgery to children in need.

And as a researcher, author and journal reviewer, he designs clinical studies to discover and deliver the highest quality care to patients around the globe.

“I experience great fulfillment from service to others,” he said. “This remains a primary driving force behind my work.”

The first member of his family to graduate from college, Walker has received numerous regional, national and international awards for his work. Most recently, he was inducted into the Ole Miss Alumni Association’s inaugural 40 Under 40.

Walker enjoys traveling, cooking and spending time outdoors with his wife, their 9-month-old daughter, Catherine, and their Great Dane, Blue.

The Walker Family Endowment is open to support from organizations and individuals. Gifts can be made by sending a check, with the fund’s name noted on the memo line, to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655, or by giving online at <https://give.olemiss.edu>.

For more information about supporting the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, contact Brady Bramlett, director of development, at bradyb@olemiss.edu or 662-915-3081.



Dr. Marc Walker shows off his plaque after being inducted into the Ole Miss Alumni Association’s 40 Under 40 inaugural class. Photo by Bill Dabney/UM Foundation

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