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Gift Supports Third-Year Law Students

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Gift Supports Third-Year Law Students

First recipient named for new scholarship that honors alumnus, telecommunications attorney

NOVEMBER 28, 2020 BY [BILL DABNEY](#)

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Jonathon Hoskins is the first recipient of a new scholarship established by the Henry L. and Grace Doherty Foundation specifically for third-year UM law students. Photo by Bill Dabney/UM Foundation

OXFORD, Miss. – A \$100,000 gift created the James R. Billingsley Third-Year Law Scholarship Fund, which gives each recipient \$10,000 toward tuition for their final year at the [University of Mississippi School of Law](#).

The first recipient, Jonathon Hoskins, of Banks, Arkansas, said the award comes at an opportune time.

"I've exhausted my GI benefits, so this scholarship will really help me continue to pursue my dreams of working in civil or criminal litigation," said Hoskins, who served in the Arkansas National Guard in 2007-13 and on active duty at Fort Hood, Texas, from 2013 to '16. "I feel really honored and surprised by this generous gift."

Given by the Henry L. and Grace Doherty Charitable Foundation, the new scholarship fund honors the late James R. Billingsley, who led AT&T as chief regulatory counsel through cellular and antitrust negotiations with the federal government.

"My father was a rabid Ole Miss fan in the broadest sense," said Jim Billingsley, an attorney in the greater New York area. "Football aside, he loved the university and was very proud of what the university had achieved in many disciplines.

"He could go on and on about the various programs, as well as the quality education he received that benefited him throughout his life. He was passionate about Ole Miss, so we wanted to give something back that would reflect his passion."

Billingsley died at his Rye, New York, home in June 2019, having served 40 years as trustee, vice president and treasurer of the Doherty Charitable Foundation, which was founded by his wife's family primarily to fund marine research and education. In fact, in 2015, the foundation made a major gift to the [UM Center for Water and Wetland Resources](#).

Billingsley, a 1950 law graduate, was a consistent member of the Lamar Order, the giving society for the School of Law. He also made gifts to [Ole Miss First](#) and Ole Miss athletics.

"He loved Ole Miss football, and I had the pleasure of accompanying him many times to the Grove on game days," Billingsley recalled. "It's a passion we all share now. In fact, at his memorial service, we

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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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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

had all the children and grandchildren yell 'Hotty Toddy.'

Like Hoskins, recipients of the Billingsley Scholarship will be full-time, third-year law students in the top 25% of their class, with preference given to students who are not receiving other substantial financial aid.

"We are so grateful to the Doherty Charitable Foundation for this generous gift because historically, the number of scholarships we've been able to award to third-year students has been very limited," Dean Susan Duncan said. "This will be a great benefit to our students and, ultimately, to the school itself.

"Additionally, we are thrilled to be able to reward students who have shown great dedication to academic achievement during their time here."

Born in Rome, Georgia, in 1927, Billingsley helped support his family during the Great Depression, starting with a paper route on foot at age 7. He continued to work through his teen years and became his family's primary source of income when he took over management of the Keesler Air Force Base post exchange in Biloxi.

In high school, he was voted "Most Likely to Succeed" and his yearbook photo caption read, "No Coward Soul is Mine." Afterwards, he entered the Army Specialized Training Program at Ole Miss and then New York University, where he studied electrical engineering.

During World War II, he was a sergeant in the U.S. Army, and from 1950 to 1965, he was a major in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. After his honorable discharge, he returned to Ole Miss to study law under the GI Bill.

At the university, Billingsley served on the Mississippi Law Journal and was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and the Phi Alpha Delta law honor society.

He began a 33-year career with the Bell System in 1956 in the Western Electric Co. Legal Department, and in 1958, he married Lee Brown, daughter of Walter L. Brown, then general counsel for Western Electric.

In 1960, Billingsley moved to New York Telephone as a patent attorney, and in 1970 became a vice president. In 1973, he returned to Western Electric as vice president for regulatory matters and became an AT&T senior officer the following year – a position he held until his 1989 retirement as senior vice president for federal regulatory matters.

During his tenure with AT&T, Billingsley obtained FCC approval to offer the Advanced Mobile Phone Service, the technological precursor to today's cellular communications networks. He also persuaded the FCC to allow AT&T to enter new markets through a separate, largely unregulated subsidiary.

He represented AT&T in negotiations with the FCC that established the framework for regulating the telecommunications industry following the 1982 consent decree that broke up the Bell System into seven regional systems.

Billingsley retired from AT&T in 1990 and devoted his time to family and travel. He was active in the lives of his children and eight grandchildren, skiing in Vermont and Colorado, sailing the Caribbean and Long Island Sound, going to baseball, football and lacrosse games, dance performances and school events.

An involved community member during his 55 years in Rye, Billingsley served on the boards of the Rye Free Reading Room and United Hospital and was a governor of Manursing Island Club and a trustee of Salisbury School.

To make a gift to the James R. Billingsley Third-Year Law Scholarship Fund, send a check, with the scholarship name written in the memo line, to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655; or online at <https://give.olemiss.edu>.

For more information on supporting the **School of Law**, contact Suzette Matthews, senior director of development, at suzette@olemiss.edu or 601-937-1497.



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