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Lessons Learned Lead to Business Success for Pharmacy Alumna

Community Pharmacy owner Mollie Spencer's achievements recognized with 40 Under 40 honor

JUNE 16, 2022 BY WHITNEY TARPY



OXFORD, Miss. – **University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy** alumna Mollie Spencer has been tested a few times in her life.

From taking a personality test to find the best career fit to being challenged as a business owner, Spencer is finding the rewards in hard work, as she was recently named to the Ole Miss Alumni Association's inaugural 40 Under 40 class.

"I feel very honored to have been chosen for this award," said Spencer, owner and pharmacist of Community Pharmacy in Senatobia. "The past few years have been packed full of changes with buying a pharmacy, renovating a historic building to move my pharmacy to, as well as adding a boutique gift shop, soda shop and loft apartment to the pharmacy.



Pharmacist Mollie Spencer, of Senatobia, attends the Ole Miss Alumni Association's 40 Under 40 induction with her children. Submitted photo

"I have received several awards for all of these accomplishments, but this award was accepted with the most pride. Not pride in a conceited way, but one that I am the proudest of. I'm proud to be recognized alongside my peers from Ole Miss."

The 40 Under 40 honor recognizes the university's young alumni who have had significant personal, professional and philanthropic achievements. Spencer, who earned her Doctor of Pharmacy in 2011, joins fellow pharmacist Lauren Lyles-Stolz on the list.

"We are so proud of all that Mollie has accomplished and has done for her community," said Donna Strum, dean of the pharmacy school. "Renovating a building and owning your own business is no easy task, but Mollie has done this so successfully.

"It's great to see strong, female leadership and entrepreneurship in our profession."

One of Spencer's first tests may have been transitioning from her dream of being a professional artist. It was her mother, as someone who worked in the medical field, who guided her to see which

professions best fit her personality.

"I vividly remember us talking about how there were so many different paths with pharmacy you can take, how you can work as little or as much as you'd like with the profession, how it's a great job for working moms, all convincing me that it would be a great choice," Spencer said. "I also had my heart set on going to Ole Miss straight out of high school.

"Agreeing to major in pharmacy was the key to getting me to Oxford as soon as possible."

Spencer's career started in a major retail store before finding a position with the **University of Mississippi Medical Center's** Pavilion Pharmacy. Though based at the hospital, it was a retail setting that helped Spencer learn the daily operations critical for managing her own pharmacy.

The opportunity to buy an independent pharmacy came soon after, and Spencer never looked back.

"It gave me the ability to move home and serve the people that I've known my entire life," Spencer said. "So as for my career path, it wasn't really planned per se, but rather morphed as my personal life and priorities changed."

The tests and challenges haven't stopped for Spencer, but have turned into lessons along the way. Outside of learning the business side of running a store, Spencer said realizing you can't please everyone and saying no were some of the toughest to overcome.

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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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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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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

However, being able to call on former supervisors, her cousin and pharmacist Nelson Burford, and mentors, such as independent owners Cheryl Sudduth, of Funderburk's Pharmacy in Hernando, and Bob Lomenick, of Tyson Drugs and Right Way Meds in Holly Springs, G&M Pharmacy in Oxford and Potts Camp Pharmacy in Potts Camp, to answer any questions, Spencer has seen success in her store.

What lessons would Spencer pass on to student pharmacists? Not sweating the small stuff and branching out with different rotations and electives are a big part of her advice.

"Obviously, study hard, but the relationships that you make along the way and the experiences that you gain are far more important down the road than the grade you made on a test," Spencer said.

"And never say never to owning your own pharmacy!"

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