

University of Mississippi

eGrove

University of Mississippi News

10-12-2018

M Partner Deploying Volunteers Across Mississippi

Michael Newsom

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews>

Recommended Citation

Newsom, Michael, "M Partner Deploying Volunteers Across Mississippi" (2018). *University of Mississippi News*. 3208.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/3208>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Mississippi News by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

M Partner Deploying Volunteers Across Mississippi

Charleston, Lexington, New Albany focus of ambitious initiative

OCTOBER 12, 2018 BY MICHAEL NEWSOM

[Fa](#) [Tv](#) [Li](#) [Er](#) [Cc](#) [Sl](#) [Pr](#) [St](#)



UM Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter speaks at the M Partner announcement in March 2018. The university will send 150 M Partner volunteers to work Saturday (Oct. 13) in Lexington, Charleston and New Albany. Photo by Photo by Thomas Graning/ Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – More than 150 volunteers will work Saturday in Charleston, Lexington and New Albany during **M Partner** Community Day to tackle some of each city’s major priorities. M Partner is the University of Mississippi’s hands-on new approach to addressing community needs in the state.

M Partner, which was unveiled in March, was outlined in the university’s comprehensive strategic plan, **Flagship Forward**. It is the result of a meeting of leaders from all UM campuses to create an ambitious new approach to the university’s longstanding commitment to improving quality of life in Mississippi.

M Partner Community Day engages students in the three partner cities through volunteer projects.

“This Community Day of Service embodies the tenets of M Partner and gets to the core of our university’s commitment to building healthy and vibrant communities,” Chancellor Jeffrey S. Vitter said. “It is extremely rewarding to see our students so overwhelmingly and enthusiastically embrace this tremendous opportunity.

“I am excited about this community collaboration and the experiences our students will gain as well as the measurable impact this M Partner event will have upon our partner communities.”

Besides the day of service on Saturday, business development forums are set for Tuesday and Wednesday (Oct. 16 and 17) in New Albany and Charleston. These forums are hosted in partnership with the Entrepreneur Center at the Mississippi Development Authority, as well as the university’s Insight Park and **McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement**.

Transportation and lunch will be provided at the business forums. To register, email mclean@olemiss.edu or mlcoope4@olemiss.edu.

Vitter laid out the vision for M Partner in his November 2016 inaugural address, noting the considerable potential in channeling the talents of the university to support towns and cities as they work together to improve community life. Service efforts such as M Partner Community Day will be complemented by faculty members teaching academic courses that align with priority projects identified by community members.

The work to this point is only the beginning. M Partner will act as a pilot program for up to two years. **The Division of Diversity and Community Engagement** has a lead role in M Partner, and administrators have been working to find community goals for the program through ongoing discussions in each of the three cities.

Follow us on social



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

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

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

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

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.

M Partner programs began over the summer, when students in the **McLean Institute's Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development** initiative worked with youth from each M Partner city to help them understand how the entrepreneurial mindset can be used to address challenges. Faculty members from the Ole Miss departments of **Sociology and Anthropology** and **Management**; the **School of Law**; and the **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College** worked with those students.

Community partners including the James C. Kennedy Wellness Center, Mississippi Development Authority – The Entrepreneur Center and the Mississippi Main Street Association have pitched in as well.

Locals have spoken passionately about what they love about their cities, as well as their economic development, education, community well-being and beautification ideas in meetings the institute has conducted with partner cities over the last few months, said Laura Martin, M Partner director and associate director of the McLean Institute.

"We are thrilled that M Partner Community Day will be an opportunity to contribute to the beautification projects identified by each community," Martin said. "And we are excited for our student volunteers to see how their efforts in this day of service are connected to a much larger community-university initiative."

Volunteers will be sent to each community to help with beautification and landscaping, and they will even work Charleston's Gateway to the Delta Festival, said Michaela Cooper, the AmeriCorps VISTA supporting M Partner.

Some Ole Miss students from these towns will talk with volunteers and leaders about life in their towns and the importance of this day to them personally to provide perspective to the helpers, Cooper said.

"On days of service, it is vital that we constantly think about how to maintain the sustainability of these partnerships and how to bring lessons learned from our partner communities back to our campus," Cooper said. "We plan to accomplish this by making this not just a day of community service, but also a day of reflection and a call to action."

More information about the M Partner program is available at <http://mpartner.olemiss.edu/>.

 FILED UNDER: **COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS, FEATURED NEWS, M PARTNER, NEWS RELEASES, SALLY MCDONNELL BARKSDALE HONORS COLLEGE, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)