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Payne Donation Strengthens Ole Miss Athletics

Bill Dabney

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Payne Donation Strengthens Ole Miss Athletics

UM graduate's gift will name Pavilion's Hill Drive entrance

AUGUST 15, 2020 BY BILL DABNEY



Abb and Jennifer Payne with their children (from left) Arden, Ford and Duke. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Abb Payne's **University of Mississippi** roots go way back. In fact, his grandfather played football for Ole Miss in the late '20s, worked with the campus grounds crew to pay tuition and even planted many of the trees in the historic Grove.

And just as those mighty oaks have grown from saplings to stanchions of strength, Payne hopes his gift to Ole Miss athletics will help its programs grow into national powerhouses.

"We also hope it solidifies our appreciation to the Ole Miss family as a whole," said Payne, of Hattiesburg. "Several generations of Paynes have attended Ole Miss, and we all reconnect around our love of the university and the great memories we have.

"Athletics plays such a crucial role in the love you have for a school and provides a great reason to stay engaged over decades. Ole Miss athletics does that for our family."

For his generosity, the Payne name will adorn the Hill Drive entrance of **The Pavilion at Ole Miss**, the university's basketball arena. But to Payne, a member of the UM Foundation and Ole Miss Alumni Association boards, the honor goes beyond sports.

"Of course, the Pavilion is state-of-the-art and should be a wonderful facility for the university for decades in sports as well as for so many other events, like commencements or concerts, so it was a great fit for us because we're Ole Miss fans in all respects," he said.

A 1998 graduate of the **School of Business Administration**, Payne is president and CEO of The Payne Companies, employing thousands nationwide in various entities including home health, private duty, infusion pharmacies, assisted living facilities, hotels, apartments and industrial corporate real estate.

From 2003 to 2018, he was president and CEO of Camellia Home Health and Hospice of Hattiesburg, for which he was instrumental in expanding the company through a number of mergers and acquisitions and ultimately overseeing its sale to Encompass Health, the nation's fourth-largest health care company.

He also is the founder of InfusionPlus, a company that administers complex intravenous therapies across Mississippi and was ranked by Inc. magazine as the nation's ninth-fastest growing health care company.

Payne and Keith Carter, UM vice chancellor for intercollegiate athletics, are contemporaries, having

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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

attended Ole Miss together. While Payne said he appreciates Carter's "great momentum," Carter expressed gratitude for Payne's support.

"For generations, the Paynes have been prominent on this campus," Carter said. "I'm proud to see that the Payne name now has a permanent home here. We greatly appreciate Abb's longtime support of our programs and we look forward to the achievements his gift will help us win."

Payne holds master's and Juris Doctor degrees from Florida State University and is an attorney, real estate developer, property manager and forester.

"As an established and highly respected leader, Abb understands what it takes to build sustained success at the highest level," said Jordie Kindervater, UM director of development/major gifts. "His investment will play a pivotal role in shaping and enhancing our competitive excellence across the board for Ole Miss student-athletes."

In his spare time, Payne enjoys spending time with his wife, Jennifer, and children: Ford, 9; Arden, 6; and Duke, 2.

Five years ago, he and his dad began a mission to see a game in every SEC football stadium.

"Ole Miss has really been our conduit to accomplish most of that, and it's been a great way for us to share that together," Payne said. "We've got one stadium to go."

For more information on supporting Ole Miss athletics, visit <http://givetoathletics.com> or contact Fowler Staines, chief executive officer and chief financial officer of the Ole Miss Athletics Foundation, at 662-915-1143 or fowler@olemiss.edu.

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