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Scoring a Net Profit

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Scoring a Net Profit

UM business school helps alumnus realize 'hoops' dream

SEPTEMBER 17, 2021 BY [RABRIA MOORE](#)



OXFORD, Miss. — **University of Mississippi** alumnus Jordan Wyton grew up playing basketball and became a walk-on for the Ole Miss Rebels. These days, he has turned his love for the game into a business that helps others enjoy it as well.

Wyton, originally from Grayson, Georgia, began **HoopAtlanta** in 2020 to provide fun, organized and fast-paced basketball sessions for people to play with no long-term commitment. For a fee, participants sign up online to play and then have access to a gym, referee, jersey and other players.

Wyton has expanded the business to include **HoopCharlotte** and **HoopNashville** and has plans to start **HoopTexas** and **HoopColorado**.

"The game has given a lot to me, and I want to make sure that I'm able to give back to the game and help grow that passion for basketball for other people," he said.

Wyton's passion for basketball inspired him to start the business, but it was funding from the UM **School of Business Administration** and its **Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship** that helped him expand it.

"The (business school and CIE) have been very instrumental in helping develop my plans further," said Wyton, who graduated from UM with a bachelor's degree in multidisciplinary studies in May 2021. "They've taken a lot of my ideas and helped me create actionable steps to improve my business and take it to the next level."



While in college, Wyton successfully pitched to the Rebel Venture Capital Fund, an alumni-established nonprofit that supports student startup businesses with seed money grants. He was also a winner of the LandShark Tank Pitch Competition, which provides funding to individuals with successful pitches.

Wyton also received the Stephen E. Rowell Entrepreneur Award, which grants a \$5,000 prize annually to selected students in the CIE's Gillespie Business Plan Competition.

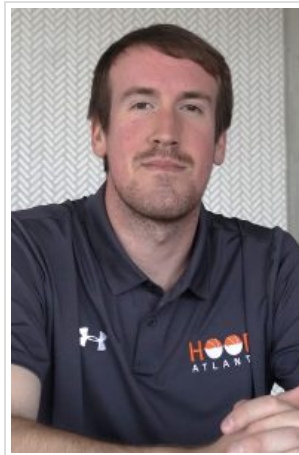
Rowell attributes Wyton's success to his ability to explore the "red zone" and said his interaction with Wyton reminded him of an article, "Quit Getting Comfortable," by organizational psychologist and CEO adviser Lee Colan, who wrote "It's pretty safe in the comfort zone. There is little or no risk; a misstep here or there is not very costly. But like the football team that's trapped between the 20-yard lines, we cannot win in the comfort zone."

"Because the risk is small, so is the reward. Learning and growth occur when we are uncomfortable. Think of the defining moments of learning and growth in your life. Were you hanging out in your comfort zone? No, you were hanging over the edge."

"After my conversation with Jordan about his business, it's safe to say he is definitely hanging over the edge!" Rowell said.

The CIE and business school hope to help more people like Wyton by giving them resources they need to expand their businesses.

"Jordan has done an amazing job taking his passion for basketball and turning it into a viable startup with exponential market growth throughout the Southeast," said Clay Dibrell, co-director of the CIE and



Jordan Wyton, a UM alumnus from Grayson, Georgia, is the inaugural recipient of the Stephen E. Rowell Entrepreneur Award for his business, HoopAtlanta, which hosts organized pickup basketball games in the Atlanta area. The organization has grown and expanded into new markets across the Southeast. Submitted photo

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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

professor of management.

"He took advantage of the opportunities presented to him at Ole Miss and has made entrepreneurial magic. We can't wait to see what is next for Jordan and his HoopAtlanta venture."

As far as next steps, Wyton does not only want to continue expanding, but he also wants to do so in a way that will build a respectable brand.

"I want to help grow the basketball community in a positive and inclusive way, where everyone can be involved, not just the elite," he said. "I want to be able to give anyone who loves the game an outlet to participate and fall in love with it again."



Launched in 2020, HoopAtlanta has helped connect people who love basketball. Participants sign up online to play and then have access to a gym, referee, jersey and other players. Photo courtesy Joelan Howes

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