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University of Mississippi News

5-5-2019

Student Wellness a Priority for School of Law

Staff Report

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Recommended Citation

Staff Report, "Student Wellness a Priority for School of Law" (2019). *University of Mississippi News*. 5006.
<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/5006>

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Student Wellness a Priority for School of Law

School signed a national wellness pledge and hosts programming throughout the year

MAY 5, 2019 BY STAFF REPORT



Students participate in a financial literacy program organized by the UM School of Law to learn about managing budgets. Photos by Christina Steube/School of Law

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi School of Law** not only provides students with a premier legal education, but it is also taking steps to improve the overall well-being of law students.

The school recently signed on with the American Bar Association’s Well-Being Pledge Campaign, which focuses on the improved mental health of law students.

“Signing this pledge exhibits the law school’s seriousness in providing well-being access to law students,” said Macey Edmondson, the school’s assistant dean for student affairs.

“We plan on using this pledge as a framework to research more ways to provide well-being resources, such as self-assessment tools that can be used by students as a preventative measure, collaborative efforts for physical fitness and providing training for staff and faculty to recognize when a student might need help and how to interact with a student in distress.”

Throughout this academic year, the law school has developed a wellness committee chaired by Kris Gilliland, law library director. The committee is composed of faculty members, administrators and a clinical professor to ensure that wellness initiatives are considered from all angles.

“The diversity of the group is important so that wellness initiatives are discussed from a wide perspective,” Edmondson said. “Wellness needs to be implemented in the classroom, in extracurricular activities and in service to the community.

“These members bring resources to the table that can result in more robust programming.”

During the 2018-19 academic year, the school has introduced a variety of wellness initiatives.

Shilpa Boppana, a graduate assistant at the school who is seeking a doctorate in clinical psychology, serves as the school’s wellness counselor. Boppana has walk-in hours for law students three days a week and provides free counseling on a range of issues including stress, sleep, anxiety, depression, time management, study strategies, and campus and community mental health resources.

Additionally, the school hosts a weekly yoga class throughout the semester and events on improving sleep for better memory, mood and concentration.

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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



Wealth adviser and UM School of Law alumnus David McPhail speaks to law students during a financial literacy program about managing budgets. Photo by Christina Steube/School of Law

“Recent research has demonstrated an elevated risk in the legal community for these issues,” said Bob Carlson, American Bar Association president, and immediate past-president Hilarie Bass in an email. “These problems are not new, but an increased willingness to acknowledge and address them head-on is essential to reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and substance use disorders in the profession.”

The school also wants to reduce stress for students, even when they leave law school. Throughout the spring semester, the school has provided financial literacy pop-up classes for students. Topics covered include how to budget and how to manage student loans.

“We want to be proactive at Ole Miss law and provide our students plenty of resources to manage their well-being, time, energy and even finances,” said Susan Duncan, UM law dean. “I am thrilled with the programs we’ve implemented thus far, and I look forward to the growth of our wellness initiative.”

Partnerships with other entities, including the university’s **Counseling Center**, **Department of Psychology** and **Clinic for Outreach and Personal Enrichment**, have made these programs possible.

“For example, we have a mandatory session for all first-year students where the director of the Mississippi Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program, our wellness counselor and students who are willing to share challenges of mental illness come together to help students recognize warning signs and know where to seek help, if needed,” Edmondson said.

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