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## UM Administrators Say Thank You to Donors

Staff Report

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## UM Administrators Say Thank You to Donors

More than 480 alumni and friends receive calls of gratitude

JUNE 2, 2016 BY STAFF REPORT

**FaTvLiErCtSMPrSt**



E.J. Jackson, project center manager for the UM Call Center, helps Chancellor Jeffrey S. Vitter navigate the system as he begins to make calls, personally thanking donors for their recent contributions. Photo by Bill Dabney

OXFORD, Miss. – University of Mississippi Chancellor Jeffrey S. Vitter surprised a number of alumni and friends recently, when he called to personally thank them for their financial support.

Vitter participated in UM's fourth annual "Thank You Power Hour" along with academic deans, faculty and staff members who volunteered to spend an hour calling more than 480 university supporters to express their appreciation. The event was sponsored by the [Office of University Development](#) and the [University of Mississippi Foundation](#).

"This year's event was a bit of a contest," said Angie Avery, the foundation's annual giving coordinator. "The chancellor was in the lead for the most calls until he had to step away to attend to other university business. Nevertheless, the Power Hour was a fantastic opportunity for the Ole Miss leadership to personally experience our Call Center environment."

Cobie Watkins, director of programs and alumni affairs at the [Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#), thanked the most donors, followed by Denson Hollis, senior director of development for the [College of Liberal Arts](#), and Brooke Barnes, director of development for the [Patterson School of Accountancy](#). Lionel Maten, assistant vice chancellor for [student affairs](#), took home this year's spirit award, which is given to the most enthusiastic caller.

"Can you imagine former students receiving a call from the chancellor or from their favorite professors to thank them for recent contributions?" said Suzanne Thigpen, director of annual giving. "It really sends a powerful message to our donors. We have such involved and generous alumni and friends, so our message is always one of deep gratitude for this continued support."

Private giving helps fund student scholarships, faculty needs, academic programs and external educational opportunities.

Typically, the [Call Center](#) is staffed by students who are paid to call donors each evening.

"We employ student callers to give alumni and friends the opportunity to hear about their experiences as students at Ole Miss today," Thigpen said. "The students, in turn, benefit from career advice from alumni who have been passionate about improving experiences for current students and future generations."

Individuals and organizations interested in supporting any area of the university can contact Thigpen at 662-915-6625, [sthigpen@olemiss.edu](mailto:sthigpen@olemiss.edu) or by visiting <http://www.umfoundation.com>.

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### 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

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### 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

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### 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.

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

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