

University of Mississippi

eGrove

University of Mississippi News

4-28-2021

Alumni Offer Wise Words to New Graduates

Emily Howorth

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

Recommended Citation

Howorth, Emily, "Alumni Offer Wise Words to New Graduates" (2021). *University of Mississippi News*. 5402.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/5402>

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.

Alumni Offer Wise Words to New Graduates

Ahead of Commencement exercises, eight Ole Miss alumni share guidance and encouragement

APRIL 28, 2021 BY **EMILY HOWORTH**



OXFORD, Miss. – As the Classes of 2020 and 2021 celebrate **Commencement** in early May, they'll complete an exciting journey, begin their next chapters and join the good company of distinguished alumni.

The **University of Mississippi** is a place where legacies begin, and the following alumni have shown that the greatest achievements are possible when building on the strengths cultivated at Ole Miss.

Whether they've surprised us, entertained us, changed the world through discovery or served the better good, all these outstanding Ole Miss alumni illustrate what it means to make a difference. Check out the advice they're offering the newest graduates:

Sly Lee



Lee (BSPH 10, MS 12), co-founder and CEO of Emerge, is a Forbes "30 Under 30" recipient and a World Economic Forum Global Future Council Member for AR/VR. He encourages graduates to be curious and to strive to be "infinite learners" because social norms and institutions are changing at a pace faster than any era before.

"How we will work, play, create and communicate will be very different in just five years, or even next year, from how they are today. The one skill that will serve you well in this next phase of life is curiosity. Take what you've learned and ask the right questions as you enter a completely different workforce than that which existed even a decade ago."

Sly Lee



Javon Patterson (No. 79) celebrates a big play Oct. 14, 2017 against Vanderbilt at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium. Photo by Marlee Crawford/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

A center for the Cleveland Browns, Patterson (BBA 18) knows what it means to perform under pressure and balance strength, skill and power – qualities that benefit anyone pursuing a big dream. Patterson began his football career at Ole Miss, where he was also known for his kind-hearted contributions to the community. He recommends that students believe in themselves and move forward with persistence.

"As you end a great milestone in your career and begin a new one, I say to you: you are not done yet. The best is yet to come. Wake up every day with a new mindset of positive energy to attack anything that comes your way. Understand life is full of trials and tribulations, but take a step back and take a

Follow us on social



Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

Thank You To Our Donors

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

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

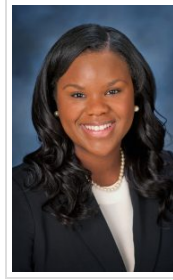
U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

deep breath, then go at it again. Also, it's never fun at the top by yourself – bring someone with you so that they grow as well.”

Kimbrely Dandridge

Dandridge (BA 13) is associate corporate counsel at Amazon. Dandridge served as president of the Black Student Union and went on to become the first Black woman to be elected president of the Ole Miss Associated Student Body. Dandridge advises new graduates to follow the inner compass they've developed as undergraduates when they begin to navigate the real world.

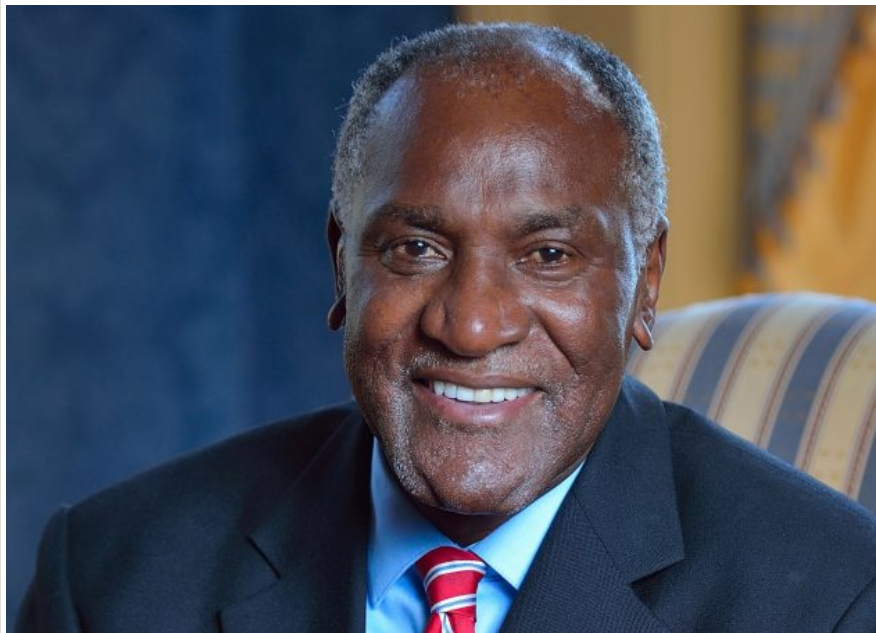
“The traits you learned at the University of Mississippi will follow you throughout your career. When you started at the university, you set the foundation for the road ahead. As you graduate, continue to build upon that foundation. Use the leadership skills and the principles you learned at the university and before to guide you. Remember that kindness, respect, empathy and decency will take you far.”



Kimbrely Dandridge

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)



Beloved UM administrator Don Cole overcame several obstacles to lead positive change across the university
Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

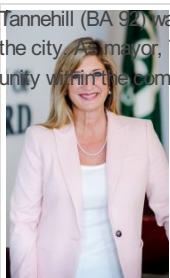
Don Cole

Legendary for leading positive change, Cole (PhD 85) served as a UM administrator and mentor for decades before retiring in 2019. Expelled after involvement in student activism as an undergraduate in 1970, Cole returned to earn a doctorate in mathematics in 1985. As an administrator, Cole helped shape a more diverse and inclusive culture on campus – an achievement recognized in the recent renaming of the Martindale-Cole Student Services Center. Cole hopes students will see that the most powerful force for transformation comes from within.

“Live, work and portray the change that you desire to see in others so that they can see that change within you. Change begins within, and be patient because change can result in working against innate instincts. After yourself, start with your sphere of influence before tackling the world.”

Robyn Tannehill

Tannehill (BA 92) was elected as mayor of Oxford in 2017 and is the second woman to hold that role in the city. As mayor, Tannehill has overseen continued growth and sustained a spirit of confidence and unity within the community during the coronavirus pandemic. Tannehill assures new graduates they will find their niche, just as they have in Oxford.



“It's OK if you don't know exactly what your future holds. Keep searching until you find something that motivates you every single day. Always remember that every person has a role to play in serving their community. You have been an important part of one of the best communities in America for the past four years, and we hope you will always come home to Oxford as often as you can.”

Robyn Tannehill

Austin Powell

President of the Associated Student Body in 2016-17 and a Rhodes scholar finalist, Powell (BA 17) is a global escalation specialist at Facebook. In that role, he helps mitigate risks to maintain a safe environment for users to connect with one another and share their stories. Powell believes new

graduates can benefit from accepting that it is a normal part of life.



Austin Powell helps mitigate risks to maintain a safe environment for Facebook users to connect with one another. Submitted photo

"No matter where you are in your post-grad life, your situation will often look different from your initial expectations. Don't let comparison be the thief of joy. Instead, with a resilient mindset, learn to be confident when navigating uncomfortable and difficult moments. Your resiliency sets the stage for personal and professional growth, and you'll be ready for whatever comes your way."



Olivia Manning (center) with husband Archie Manning (left) and UM Chancellor Emeritus Robert Khayat. Submitted photo

Olivia Williams Manning

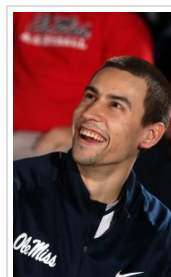
Manning (BA 71) is celebrated for her commitment to charitable causes, her elegant charm and for being the pillar and guiding force behind America's most beloved football family. A homecoming queen, she and quarterback Archie Manning began their path to countless achievements at Ole Miss, yet always kept kindness at the center of their purpose. She recommends students embrace hope and optimism.

"Congratulations on your graduation from Ole Miss. You have shown patience and courage in fighting through an unprecedented year. Cherish your Ole Miss memories and never let go of your close friends. As you leap into the next chapter, maintain a strong faith and start each day with a smile and a positive attitude. Trust in the magic of new beginnings. God bless and Hotty Toddy!"

Marshall Henderson

Ole Miss basketball guard Henderson (BUS 14) drew widespread renown for his record-breaking three-point shots, feisty attitude and for popularizing the "Fins Up" salute. Henderson recommends staying flexible and open-minded while pursuing new opportunities after graduation.

"A recent graduate has to be OK with broadening their job search location. Jobs we want might not be where we grew up or where our friends are. If one is self-confident enough to take a job in a place they have never been or even know anybody, I would say, 'Take it!' You will learn so much about yourself, what you value, and you will create new relationships that will only help expand your



network.”

Marshall Henderson

 FILED UNDER: [ALUMNI NEWS](#), [ATHLETICS](#), [FEATURED NEWS](#), [NEWS RELEASES](#)

[Return to top of page](#)

Copyright © 2023 · [The University of Mississippi](#)
