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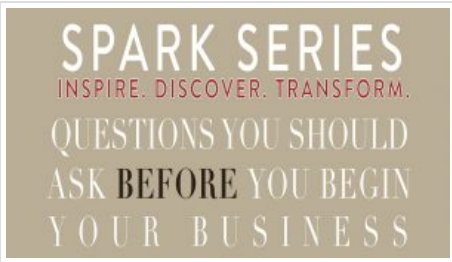
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UM to Host Discussion Aimed at Business Beginners

Spark Series is intended to inspire, discover and transform

FEBRUARY 26, 2018 BY SHEA STEWART



OXFORD, Miss. – Business experts from the **University of Mississippi** and the local community will lead a Wednesday (Feb. 28) discussion about questions potential business owners need to investigate before forming a limited liability company.

Part of the Spark Series, the panel discussion is titled “Questions You Should Ask Before You Begin Your Business.” The event, set for 4 p.m.

in the Jackson Avenue Center, Auditorium A, is free and open to the public with no registration necessary.

The panel includes Marie Saliba Cope, UM assistant dean for **student affairs**, assistant clinical professor at the **UM School of Law** and director of the Transactional Clinic; Neil Olson, former general counsel with mortgage technology company FNC Inc., and startup and tech business consultant; Will Wilkins, director of the **Mississippi Law Research Institute**; and Allyson Best, director of the **UM Division of Technology Management**.

Following the presentation, the panel will be available for individual conversations during an ask-the-expert reception.

“The local community is fortunate to have so many resources for entrepreneurs and technology commercialization efforts, but if you’re new to this world, it can be a little daunting,” Best said. “We have noticed there are critical points in the process where it’s valuable to stop and consider your options. This series is intended to spark those conversations.”

The event will attempt to answer a number of questions and cover scenarios aspiring owners should investigate before proceeding. Topics for the Wednesday panel include ownership rights and control, independent contractors vs. employees, intellectual property ownership, investor funding and tax issues.

“(This event) has been created to educate entrepreneurs about legal issues,” Cope said. “For our first event, our hope is that attendees will begin to address the issues that arise when one begins a business.”

“We have found that people begin working and jump into business relationships without defining the ownership interest or roles that the members or partners will hold. Our goal is to assist people in planning before they start so that they can avoid conflicts that may arise from misunderstandings.”

Another Spark Series event is scheduled for March, time and place to be announced. The event will focus on e-commerce, with topics including legal considerations, digital marketing and more.

The Spark Series – intended to inspire, discover and transform – is not intended to be a typical training session, Best said. And Wednesday’s event is important for anyone interested in forming a business entity, even if they have already filed with the Mississippi Secretary of State.



Allyson Best

Sponsors of the Spark Series include the Division of Technology Management, School of Law, the Mississippi Law Research Institute, Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, **Insight Park**, the **Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation** and the Mid-South Intellectual Property Institute.

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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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