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UM Social Work Student Wins Leadership in Health Care Scholarship

State professional organization recognizes Ashleigh Jones

DECEMBER 4, 2017 BY SARAH SAPP



Ashleigh Jones (left), a graduate student in social work at the University of Mississippi, receives the Mississippi Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care scholarship at the organization's annual conference in Tupelo. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – The Mississippi Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care has awarded Ashleigh Jones, a graduate student in social work at the **University of Mississippi**, its annual scholarship in recognition of her academic excellence and community engagement.

The scholarship was established to provide financial assistance to those students interested in pursuing social work careers in health care. Three recipients were selected based on several criteria, including academic standing, community involvement, awards and aspirations.

After Jones was admitted to the competitive master's program in the UM **Department of Social Work**, she became one of two graduate assistants in the department's Child Welfare Academy, which provides training for all new child welfare workers and existing supervisors in the state.

"She possesses rare, yet much-needed, strengths and abilities that are crucial for training workers employed in child protective services – the workers that ensure safety, well-being, as well as mental and physical health for Mississippi's children," said Viktor Burlaka, assistant professor of social work.

"Ashleigh's work for my class was always of the highest quality, and through my conversations with her during office hours, it quickly became apparent that she is a well-rounded student with a genuine interest in social work with medical patients suffering from chemical addictions," Burlaka said.

After graduation, Jones wants to become a counselor for an adolescent residential treatment program for girls and, eventually, a clinical director.

"Because of my experience and education, I am the perfect candidate to crush the stigma and educate those suffering, their families and society about the epidemic that is drug addiction," Jones said.

Jones is close to the issue of substance abuse and mental health, having overcome addiction at age 19 after losing her father to suicide, a result of untreated bipolar disorder. After seeking treatment, she dedicated herself to living a lifestyle of recovery.

"The therapists I encountered challenged me along the way, and there was one in particular that I felt just understood me," she said.

"I knew I had to become one of those people. Very few people get clean at the age that I did, and I just want to help others in this age group realize that their potential is truly limitless. I feel called to give those people a voice that would otherwise have none."

Jones attributes much of her success to faculty in the Ole Miss social work department.

"The social work classes at Ole Miss talked about the good, bad and the ugly," Jones said. "Each instructor highlighted the importance of ethics and practice principles, but the most important thing that each one did was talk about self-care. I have to constantly remind myself how important that is.

"They also made themselves available and worked with me, despite my circumstances. I was pregnant and due during finals week last fall and had multiple doctors' appointments. They worked with me, asked me how I was doing and made sure that I was taking care of myself. The social work department is unique. We are all a family, and I am honored to be a part of it."

The UM Master of Social Work program has a clinical concentration. Students gain the advanced

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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'

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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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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

knowledge, values and skills to work in a variety of clinical settings, such as health, mental health, aging, child welfare and administrative fields of practice.

The department also offers a bachelor's degree in social work and a doctoral program in social welfare. For more information about social work at Ole Miss, visit <http://sw.olemiss.edu/> or email socialwork@olemiss.edu.

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