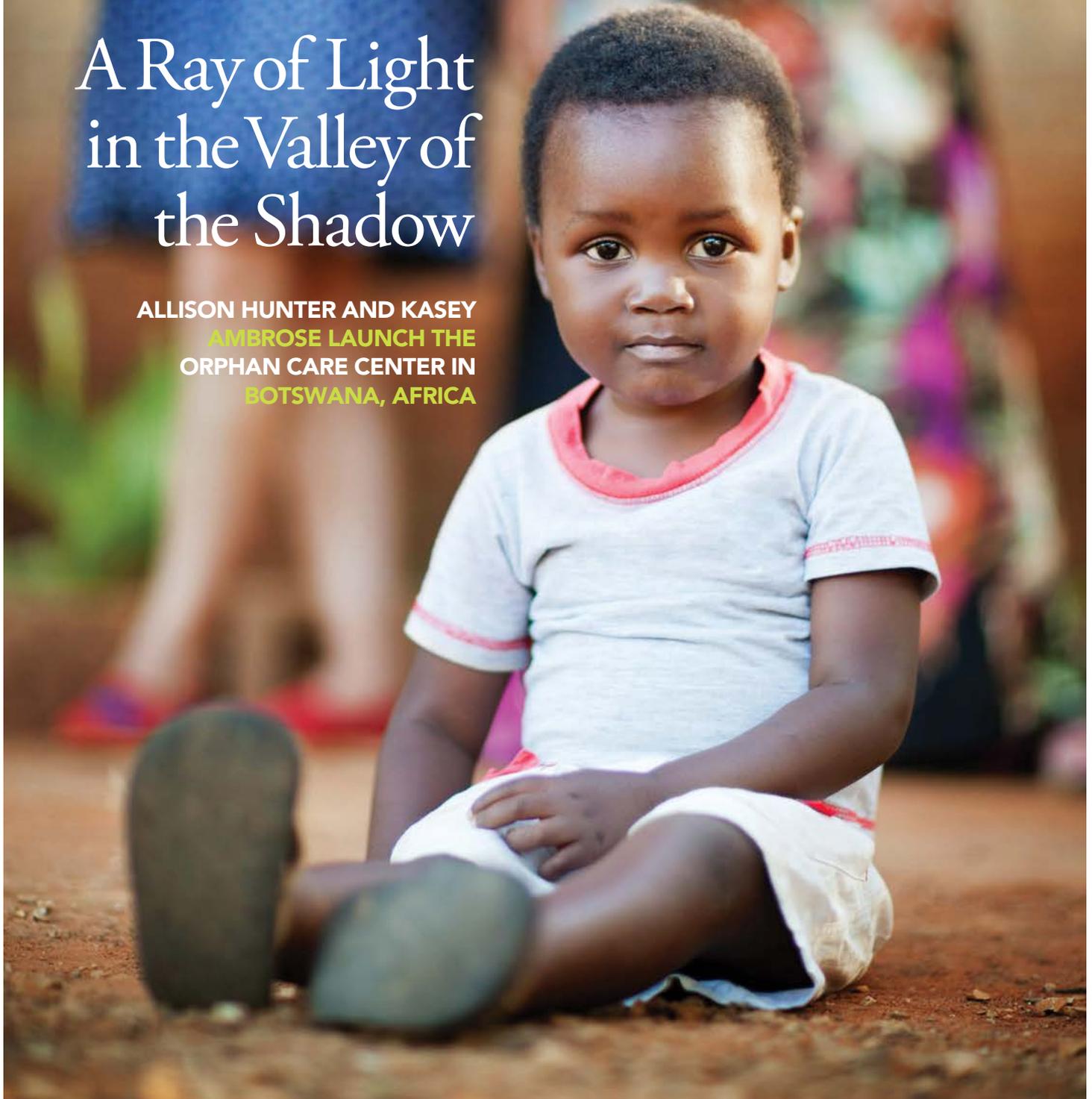


MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE | SUMMER 2012

beacon

A Ray of Light in the Valley of the Shadow

ALLISON HUNTER AND KASEY
AMBROSE LAUNCH THE
ORPHAN CARE CENTER IN
BOTSWANA, AFRICA





FROM THE PRESIDENT

LEE GARDNER ROYCE

When I was a junior at Vanderbilt, I signed up for a class on the writings of John Milton, the great 17th century poet. On the first day of class, the professor asked us to introduce ourselves and explain why we were taking the course. Student after student identified themselves as graduate students taking the course as part of a master's degree or doctoral degree in English. You can imagine how I felt introducing myself as an undergraduate history major and confessing that I had enrolled because "I thought it might be interesting."

The professor pulled me aside after class to confirm my suspicion that I "would not survive the course" without his help. And help me he did. That professor met with me every day after class to review the material and to offer additional assignments. Thanks to his help, I made a B in the course and Milton became one of my favorite poets.

This issue of the *Beacon* focuses on compassion, and on people who have sacrificed their resources and their comfort, traveled to distant lands, pursued careers, and made lifestyle changes all so they could minister to others in need. While my example of the professor who gave me 15 minutes of his time each day might seem to pale in comparison, I offer it as a reminder that compassion does not have to take the form of a grand gesture in order to make a real difference.

Every day at Mississippi College, I see students, faculty, and staff demonstrating compassion to others in large ways and in small ways. Some of these efforts incorporate evangelism and others are simply acts of kindness, but all follow the model of compassion established by Christ.

There is an old saying that goes, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." The fact is the majority of us will not be called to minister to AIDS orphans, heal the sick, or serve in distant mission fields. But as Christians, I hope the stories in the following pages will inspire each of us to look for the many ways, big and small, that we can demonstrate the compassion of Christ to others.

Lee Royce

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BY THE BEACON'S LIGHT

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. — 2 Corinthians 1: 3-4

This issue of the *Beacon* focuses on compassion.

Jesus provided the ultimate examples of compassion during His life on earth and in His teachings for the ages. He showed great compassion to those in need; many of His miracles involved healing the sick and ministering to the outcast. But Jesus showed compassion not only to those suffering from illness or circumstances beyond their control. He also showed tender mercy to those who had sinned – in other words, to all of mankind.

When we are sick, when we grieve, when we're misunderstood and mistreated, and yes, even when we sin, Jesus has compassion for us.

In the following pages, you'll meet people who seek to emulate Christ's compassion for the sick, the weak, and the lost. Their stories serve as a reminder that when we see another who is in need, we would do well to model our response upon the great compassion that Christ has shown to us all.



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Allison Hunter and Kasey Ambrose have established a ministry for AIDS orphans in Botswana, Africa.



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The *Beacon* is available online with videos, on-camera interviews, in-depth details, and more web-exclusive content. Look for the **b** symbol, which indicates an article with online content, then visit www.mc.edu/beacon for the rest of the story.



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ALONG COLLEGE STREET



ACCREDITATION

Where Accreditation is Due

DESIGNED FOR RECOGNITION

Following a rigorous qualification process, the Michigan-based Council for Interior Design Accreditation granted a six-year accreditation to the Mississippi College interior design program. MC is one of only three accredited interior design programs in the state of Mississippi and one of less than 200 programs accredited nationwide.

"Our faculty, students, and administrators are excited and very proud to have our program recognized at this level," says Mandy Pickett Berdani, the MC interior design coordinator. "Gaining national accreditation will help with recruiting efforts and will make our current students' degrees even more valuable."

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

In May, the MC School of Business saw its accreditation reaffirmed by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, confirming the School of Business's status as one of the premier business programs in the United States. The Kansas-based council recognized MC as upholding the council's stringent standards of teaching excellence, faculty involvement with the business world, and balance between teaching and research.

"Our caring instruction sets the MC School of Business apart," says Dr. Marcelo Eduardo, dean of the School of Business. "That level of caring might not be an item on the reaccreditation check list, but it's what distinguishes us from other schools and it supports everything we do at MC."



A New Professional in the House

MC'S DOCTOR OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING PROGRAM IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE NATION

THIS FALL, MC WILL OFFER THE FIRST CLASSES IN A doctor of professional counseling program created for licensed counselors who wish to concentrate in a specialty. Designed for counselors who plan to practice rather than teach, the program is the first of its kind in the United States.

Professional counselors are eligible to be licensed to practice after earning a master's degree and performing clinical hours in counseling. While counselors may complete coursework in marriage and family counseling, mental health, or other specific areas and choose to emphasize those areas in their practices, they are still recognized as "general" counselors in terms of their academic credentials. The only doctoral programs currently offered in the field are designed for those who plan to teach; the MC program is the first designed specifically for those who wish to practice.

"Prior to the creation of this program at MC, there was not a degree professional counselors could earn that would allow them to add doctoral level specialization that would recognize them as a specialist in marriage and family coun-

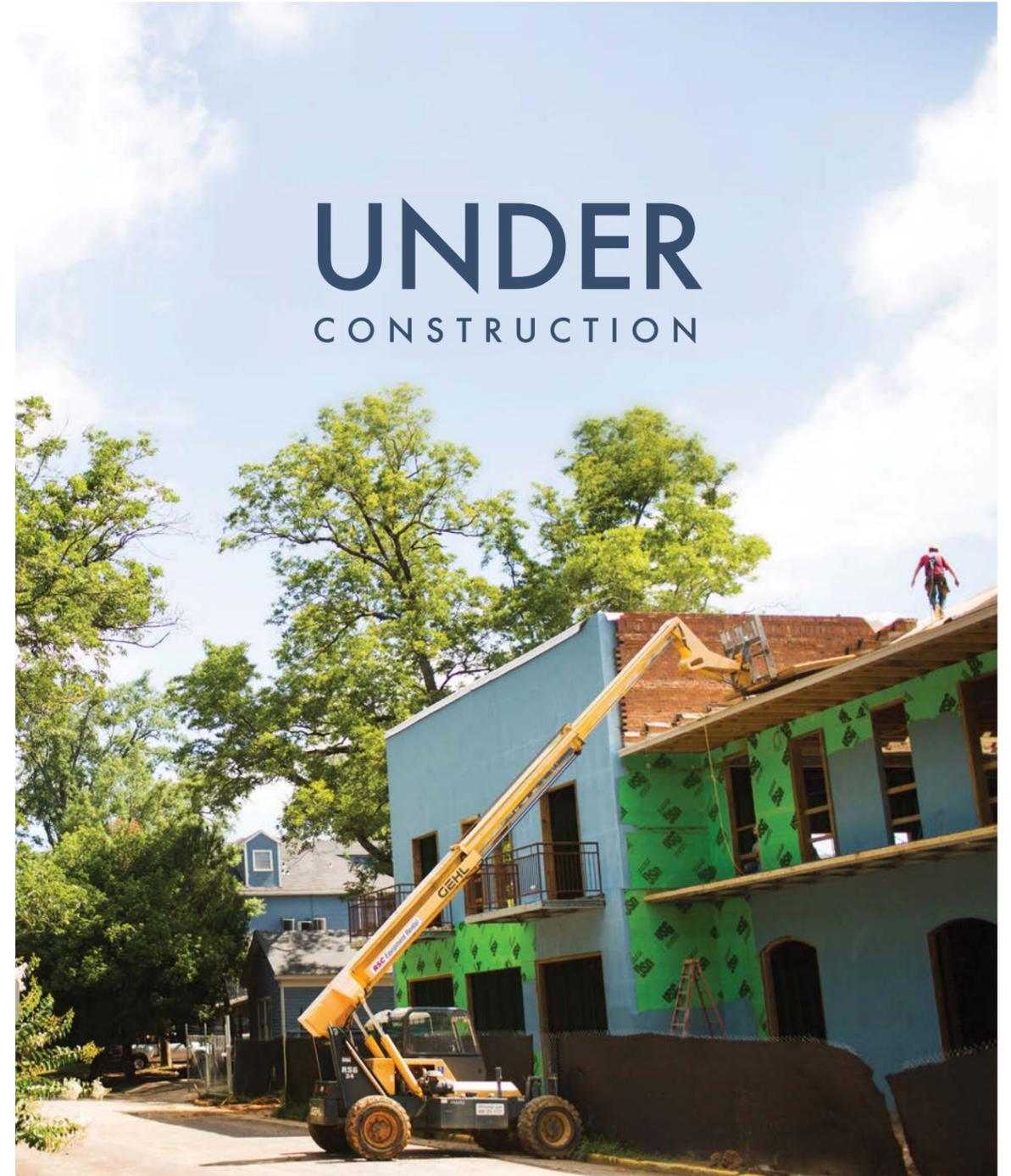
seling, mental health counseling, or other specific areas," says Don W. Locke, dean of the School of Education. "This degree program offers specific coursework and clinical experience in those areas, and will allow practicing counselors to hold a doctoral level degree."



Locke, who served as president of the 50,000-member American Counseling Association for 2011-2012, announced the launch of the MC program at the organization's national conference held last March in San Francisco. Twenty-four students have already enrolled.

"The MC program is already receiving national attention," Locke says.

"There's been a need for this degree for years, and I believe most people in the field expected it to be offered first by a large state university focused on clinical research. The fact that the program was launched by a small, private university in Mississippi has attracted even more attention. Other universities will attempt to replicate the degree, but that may take a year or more. Until then, MC is the first to offer this degree for counselors and the clients they serve."



THE HOTTEST FASHION LOOK ON THE MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE campus this summer might be the hard hat. Temporary construction workers sometimes seem to outnumber MC students and staff as they work to complete a new parking garage, bookstore, and state-of-the-art science building.

A three-level, 557-spot parking garage is under construction just east of the A.E. Wood Coliseum and south of Robinson-Hale Football Stadium. Equipped with security cameras, lighting, and emergency telephones, the garage will be open 24/7. Construction should be finished in mid-August, just in time to accommodate students, staff,

and visitors arriving on campus for the fall 2012 semester.

Work on a new bookstore, café, and residential lofts for graduate students near Olde Towne Clinton is also expected to be complete in the fall, while the new science building and laboratory should open in the spring of 2013.

"All of the construction underway is the result of increased enrollment and activity at MC," says MC President Dr. Lee Royce. "Dodging the construction can be a little inconvenient while it's going on, but when you see those hard hats, just think of them as a positive sign of all the growth and progress we're experiencing right now at Mississippi College."

STOPPING TRAFFIC

MISS MC TAYLOR TOWNSEND'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Miss Mississippi College Taylor Townsend is using her yearlong reign to increase awareness of the worldwide tragedy of human trafficking.

"There are millions of modern-day slaves in the world," Townsend, an MC sophomore, says. "People may have heard of human trafficking, but many people don't realize it's not just a problem far away. It's also going on right here in Mississippi. The first step toward ending this tragedy is making people aware that it's happening."

Human trafficking is the world's second-most lucrative illegal business, second only to drug trafficking. Townsend has made it her mission to educate others on the scope of the problem and how to recognize and help rescue its victims.

Townsend has launched a website promoting the United Nation's Blue Heart Campaign against human trafficking (www.awaresharecare.org), and is working to localize the international campaign in Mississippi. Townsend speaks to civic, school, community, and church groups statewide on the topic; she was also a featured speaker at the spring 2012 Mississippi's Prosecutors' Conference. Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, Attorney General Jim Hood, and U.S. Congressman Gregg Harper have all endorsed Townsend's campaign.

"It's my goal to make the blue heart campaign against human trafficking as pronounced and recognizable to Mississippians as the pink ribbon is for breast cancer," Townsend says.

Townsend has also taken her cause beyond state lines; in 2011, she was one of six women who led a national conference on human trafficking awareness at Disney World for more than 3,000 teenage attendees. She also made the issue her platform when she represented MC in the 2012 Miss Mississippi pageant.

The daughter of MC Vice President for Advancement Dr. Bill Townsend and his wife, Dr. Cindy Townsend, Taylor Townsend credits her parents for instilling in her a deep compassion for others.

"My parents have always told me they named me 'Taylor' because they believed I was 'Taylor-made' to make a significant impact in the world," Townsend says. "Fighting human trafficking is part of my effort to live up to that challenge."

THE DARK WORLD OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Women and girls account for 80 percent of trafficking victims. The remaining 20 percent are children.

Sexual exploitation is involved in 80 percent of cases.

The United Nations' Blue Heart Campaign estimates the total market value of illicit human trafficking worldwide at \$32 billion.

For more information, visit Taylor Townsend's website at www.awaresharecare.org or www.unodc.org/blueheart



CLOTHED IN TRADITION Taylor Townsend made her first appearance in the Miss Mississippi pageant in June 2012, but it wasn't her evening gown's first trip down the runway. Townsend competed in the same dress that her mother, Dr. Cindy Townsend '81, '83, wore in the pageant as Miss Mississippi College 1980. The dress, originally designed by a friend of Cindy Townsend's who worked for renowned fashion designer Bob Mackey, was updated for its second Miss Mississippi appearance. "It was exciting to see Taylor compete in that dress, but it's been so much more rewarding to see the kind of young woman she's become," Dr. Cindy Townsend says. "We tried to teach Taylor to clothe herself in integrity, compassion, and a passion to make a positive difference in the world. The work Taylor is doing to fight human trafficking is evidence that she's grown up to be a woman of dignity, courage, and strength."



CONDOLEEZZA RICE

KEYNOTES SCHOLARSHIP DINNER



FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE delivered fresh insights on everything from the immigration reform to global terrorism, from the importance of education to the status of NFL football during Mississippi College's 2012 spring scholarship banquet in April.

Rice addressed a packed Anderson Hall, where the nearly 600 guests included Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant '88, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, Mississippi Treasurer Lynn Fitch, and Mississippi Supreme Court Justice William Waller, Jr. The event raised a record \$333,000 for student scholarships to Mississippi College.

Prior to her keynote speech, Rice made time to meet with MC students in Self Hall, concluding the session by

encouraging students to stay positive despite entering a tough job market.

"While you may not find the job you want right away, you can gain valuable experience, and opportunities will open up," Rice said. "Focus on finding that first job. Don't worry about the next 10 years."

"I think it was amazing for Condoleezza Rice to come to MC to talk to us and inspire us," said senior Camie Crowe. "She's very knowledgeable – an amazing woman."

Rice was already familiar with MC; in 2003, she served as the guest speaker at the MC Law commencement. Now a professor at Stanford University, Rice told the crowd that Mississippi College remained in her eyes "a very special

place" due to its caring faculty and Christian focus.

In addition to a keen knowledge of global politics, Rice revealed a passion for sports, fielding questions about the NFL's "Bounty Gate" scandal and harsh penalties imposed on the New Orleans Saints. But when asked to name which

quarterback she prefers, Tim Tebow or Peyton Manning, Rice answered with the diplomatic savvy one would expect from a former Secretary of State.

"I'd say Tim Tebow, Peyton Manning, and Peyton's younger brother, Eli, are all my favorites," Rice responded with a smile.

The 2012 spring scholarship banquet raised a record \$333,000 for student scholarships at MC. Held since 2008, MC's annual scholarship banquets have raised more than \$1.3 million to help academically talented students with financial need receive a Mississippi College education. Previous keynote speakers have included former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, publisher Steve Forbes, and former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee.



Choctaw
SPORTS
ROUND-UP

DOCUMENTING THE BACKYARD BRAWL

Backyard Brawl fans can count on another fight to the finish when Mississippi College meets Millsaps College in one of Mississippi's biggest annual football grudge matches. Millsaps is sure to enter the 2012 Brawl with revenge on their minds after dropping three straight to the Choctaws, including 2011's nail biting, 33-27 overtime finish.

This year's Brawl will be part of a documentary called "Grudge Match." Coordinated by the Mississippi Sports Council, the documentary will include interviews with current coaches and players as well as former Backyard Brawlers.

The Backyard Brawl is set for 7:00 p.m. on August 30 at Millsaps' Harper Davis Field. Tickets are on sale now for Choctaw fans who wish to be a part of yet another Backyard Brawl, and perhaps make documentary history in the process.

BE THERE TO CHEER ON THE BLUE & GOLD

Based on spring workouts, Choctaw Coach Norman Joseph is optimistic about the 2012 football season. With fleet-footed sophomore Jacob Becker at running back, punter Craig McCraney transferring in from Hinds Community College, and talented players Beaux Gipson, Jonathan Redd, and Tyler Kirkindoll all competing for the job of quarterback, MC is poised for a strong season.

**CHOCTAW HOME GAME
 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE**

- September 8 • Webber International
- October 6 • Sul Ross State
- October 27 • East Texas Baptist
- November 3 • Louisiana College

LEARNING THE VITAL SIGNS

The MC School of Nursing focuses on physical and spiritual wellbeing.



LEFT TO RIGHT: SUSAN RICHARDSON, MARY JEAN PADGETT AND MARY ANN HENRIQUES

“Students are taught the importance of the person outweighing the importance of the specific nursing task at hand. People have deeper needs than just physical needs. MC’s Christian caring focus has guided me to bring the love of Christ into the lives of many needy patients.”

HANNAH GRIFFIN ’12
Nurse, pediatric intensive care unit,
University Medical Center

A GLASS DISPLAY CASE IN THE LOBBY OF COCKROFT HALL holds treasured memorabilia from the first days of the MC School of Nursing. Front and center among the photos, well-thumbed textbooks, and other keepsakes is a uniform originally worn by MC student nurses when they visited local hospitals for clinical rotations. The uniform includes a blue dress – a *short* blue dress, in keeping with the fashion of 1969, when the school was founded – topped by a crisp white apron and a distinctive white nurse’s cap. It’s the very uniform once worn by Susan Richardson, associate professor of nursing, when she was a member of the class of 1973, the School of Nursing’s first graduating class.

“I can still wear that uniform today,” Richardson says with a smile.

Further down the hall is a group photo of the class of ’73. Among the 17 women smiling broadly from the portrait are Richardson, Mary Ann Henriques, associate professor of nursing, and Mary Jean Padgett, dean and professor of the School of Nursing.

Richardson, Henriques, and Padgett met as students in that first class more than four decades ago. As they’ve moved from classmates to nurses to teaching colleagues, the three

have shared a calling to nursing, a 40-plus-year friendship, and a commitment to Christian caring that’s become the hallmark of the Mississippi College School of Nursing.

THE FIRST SHIFT

Mary Jean Padgett was the first prospective student interviewed for the MC nursing program.

“Dr. Marian Bassett, the first dean of the School of Nursing, was already on staff, but there was no furniture in her office,” Padgett recalls. “They brought in a chair for my mother, and Dr. Bassett and I sat on the floor and talked.” Joining Padgett in the inaugural class of all-female students were Mary Ann Henriques and Susan Richardson.

“We were blazing the way for everyone who has come since,” Henriques recalls. “Looking back, almost everything in that first year was makeshift, but that just made it more exciting.”

The fourth floor of Lowrey Hall served as the nursing program’s classroom and laboratory. The students shared a limited number of textbooks, and the course syllabus changed on a day-to-day basis. Faculty members from other departments pitched in to teach courses in chemistry

and other sciences. When the nursing students reached the section on pediatrics, one of the instructors brought her children to class to serve as the “patients.”

“We were the guinea pigs for the nursing program,” Padgett recalls with a smile.

In the years following their graduation, Padgett, Richardson, and Henriques worked in various hospitals and medical offices throughout the South; Padgett and Richardson also taught at community colleges and universities. Eventually all three found their way back to Mississippi College.

“There is something special here that pulled us all back,” Padgett says. “I think it’s the Christian caring we experienced and shared at MC as students, and that we’re now sharing with our own students today.”

INTENSIVE CARE FOR THE BODY and THE SPIRIT

In the spring semester of 2012, MC was home to 148 students in the clinical level of the nursing program and 250-

300 students pursuing a pre-nursing curriculum. While the program has become one of the largest majors at MC, the concept of Christian caring that began with that first small class in 1969 still characterizes the program today. At MC, “Christian caring” isn’t just an abstract concept; it’s a unique approach to nursing that is woven through the curriculum.

“MC taught me that you can have all the skills in the world as a nurse, but if you don’t demonstrate Christian caring to each patient, family member, and co-worker... then what are you really doing?” says Laney Brock ’12, a nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at University Medical Center (UMC) in Jackson. “And we weren’t just *taught* Christian caring. Our instructors *demonstrated* it to us every step of the way. They showed us they cared about each of our journeys, not only our journey as nurses, but our spiritual journey as well. I’ve gained compassion from my own experience in the field, but also by seeing my instructors’ love and dedication to others.”

MC nursing students learn not only how to care for a patient's physical condition, but also to address the patient's spiritual needs. While the MC nursing program is grounded in the Christian faith, students are trained to assess the spiritual needs of every patient, regardless of his or her faith or beliefs.

"We are teaching spiritual care from a Christian perspective," Padgett explains. "Addressing a patient's spiritual needs might include praying with a Christian patient, asking a Jewish patient if he or she would like kosher meals, calling a priest for a Catholic patient, or making sure a patient has the opportunity to meditate. Other schools teach this to a limited extent, but I don't believe many other schools incorporate the idea of spiritual caring into the program the way MC does."

"On clinical days, we have a two-minute devotion to start the day," Henriques says. "One recent graduate told me that two minutes made the tough days easier."

"Beginning every clinical rotation with a devotion and prayer equipped us to take those jewels of God's insight into the patients' rooms and share God's love and compassion," says Joan Elliott '07, the clinic nurse manager for Baptist Medical Clinics in Jackson. "True compassion cannot be 'taught,' but it can be nurtured. The faculty and staff at MC lead by example. On several occasions, I witnessed my teachers pray directly with the patients I was taking care of. What a ministry!"

To increase their awareness of the importance of Christian caring in nursing, students are required to provide a written description of something they witnessed during each clinical rotation that served as an example of caring – or non-caring – behavior.

"We were told to write Christian caring journals, which would document our feelings about encounters with patients and families that allowed us to show Christian caring. We all thought this was a ridiculous assignment because writing about 'feelings' when you have a million things to do just can't be a priority," says Hailey Moore, who will graduate from the program in December. "But as I wrote, I realized I was encountering people who needed prayer or advocacy in a world where healthcare is becoming so efficient and streamlined that the spiritual needs of the person are being overlooked. Clients can tell when they are *being taken care of* versus truly *cared for*. Any nurse can perform skills, but love, compassion, and caring are attributes that are cultivated in MC students."

That love, compassion, and caring are clear when graduates enter the workplace.

"Many people who've been in the hospital or had family members in the hospital have told me that if they had a nurse who went to MC, they could tell a difference," Henriques says.

"At MC, students are taught the importance of the *person* outweighing the importance of the specific nursing task at hand," says Hannah Griffin '12, a nurse in the pediatric intensive care unit at UMC. "People have deeper needs than just physical needs. MC's Christian caring focus has guided me to bring the love of Christ into the lives of many needy patients."

"The MC School of Nursing equipped me with more than just the mechanics of nursing. It strengthened my ability to minister to my patients' spiritual wellbeing," Elliott says. "I'm so thankful that the program places such importance on compassion and the Christian caring aspect of healing. I especially draw

COMPASSION BEYOND HOSPITAL WALLS

FOR THE PAST 22 YEARS, many MC nursing students and faculty have participated in an annual mission trip, now offered in collaboration with Medical Ministry International. More than 400 patients were treated on a 2011 trip to the Dominican Republic.

THE SCHOOL OF NURSING has attracted several students who have been called to serve as missionaries and wish to use the nursing profession to help fulfill that calling.

MC IS PARTNERING WITH Mississippi Baptist Hospital and the Mississippi Baptist Convention to implement a congregational health nursing program. The program equips nurses to minister to their church congregations by coordinating mini-clinics to provide basic health screenings for church members.

MC NURSING STUDENTS are required to complete service hours at local charitable organizations.

"Clients can tell when they are *being taken care of* versus truly *cared for*. Any nurse can perform skills, but love, compassion, and caring are attributes that are cultivated in MC students." — Hailey Moore '12

on that teaching on difficult days."

Professor Mary Ann Henriques experienced one of those "difficult days" herself more than 40 years ago. The lesson she learned that day from her own MC instructor has shaped every aspect of her career since, and serves as a constant reminder of the importance of instilling compassion in her own students.

"I remember every detail of that day. One of our teachers was Professor Reita Keyes. She was brilliant and very intimidating," Henriques says. "I was in clinical at the old Baptist Hospital, and Professor Keyes had told me very firmly, 'I want you to *stay busy all day*.' I was taking care of a little old man in 2C and he was sitting in a chair while I changed the sheets on his bed. That little man started to cry. He told me that he knew he was going to die soon. I started crying, too. I stopped what I was doing and just sat with him for a minute.

"I looked up and Professor Keyes was standing in the doorway. I thought, 'Oh no, she's going to fail me because I haven't finished my work and I'm just sitting here, crying.'

"Instead, Professor Keyes told me I'd done the right thing. She said, 'The day you can't stop to shed a tear with a patient is the day you need to leave nursing.'"

NURSING BY THE NUMBERS

The School of Nursing's first graduating class in 1973 included 17 members.

In the spring semester of 2012, 148 students were enrolled in the clinical level of the nursing program and 250-300 students were pursuing a pre-nursing curriculum.

The School of Nursing's state licensing exam (NCLEX) passage rate is consistently high. The passage rate for December 2011 graduates was 97 percent.

The School of Nursing has graduated 1,800 students, including 1,500 in the traditional B.S. in nursing program and 300 in an RN to B.S.N. program for registered nurses who wish to earn a B.S.

Of the B.S. program's 1,500 graduates, 1,496 have passed the state licensing exam.

Between 95 and 100 percent of nursing school graduates are employed fulltime within one year of graduation.

NURSING, WITH A MINOR IN AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR

IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE MC nursing program, student nurses were provided the use of a pair of baby blue Volkswagen vans to get to and from their clinical rotations at local hospitals. While each van would leave campus loaded with as many as 12 young women in crisp white uniforms, only a handful of students who had been given driving lessons by the campus security staff were allowed to get behind the wheel. One of those lucky drivers was Mary Jean Padgett.

"WE HAD TO REPORT TO THE hospital at 6:45 a.m. sharp, and those vans didn't always want to start on the first try," Padgett recalls. "Fortunately, they were stick shifts. On winter mornings, it wasn't unusual to spot one of our vans on the hill behind Nelson Hall with five or six young women in nurses' uniforms pushing it to get enough momentum going for me to get started."



CAP IT OFF As members of the inaugural nursing school class, Mary Jean Padgett, Mary Ann Henriques, and Susan Richardson all had a hand in designing the school's uniform and cap. The caps student nurses wore to clinical rotations in the hospitals were all slightly different in design; hospital staff could tell which school by looking at the caps. The tradition of nursing students wearing caps ended in the mid-80s. While the caps inspire fond nostalgia today, no one actually seems to miss them in practice. "The caps were awful," Mary Jean Padgett says. "They were hot. They got caught up on everything and they were hard to keep clean. And your hair had to be pinned under them exactly right." According to Padgett, Henriques, and Richardson, getting their hair tucked under the caps properly proved such a chore that many of the student nurses began wearing wigs with the caps permanently attached.



PINS AND ROSES MC nursing students look forward to their combined commencement and pinning ceremony. Graduates are presented with the distinctive MC School of Nursing pin, which bears a cross and an image of Provine Chapel, where the first pinning ceremony was held in 1973. The ceremony also includes the presentation of a long-stemmed yellow rose or yellow rose boutonniere to each graduate, a tradition begun by Dr. Marian Bassett, the first dean of the School of Nursing, and now carried forward by Dean Mary Jean Padgett, a member of the original graduating class.



FORMING FAMILIES, *One Case* AT A TIME



IN 2011, JESSIE SUMMERS MADE THE LIFE-CHANGING DECISION
TO ADOPT FIVE SIBLINGS AGES NINE TO 16 YEARS OLD.

“I had promised those five children that I’d be there for them, that I wouldn’t let them go back into the system and I wouldn’t let them be separated from each other,” Summers, then the children’s foster mother, says. “I decided the only way to do that was to adopt them myself.” * For the help she needed to make her heartfelt commitment to the five children legal, Summers turned to the MC Law Adoption Legal Clinic. * The Adoption Legal Clinic provides free assistance to families who want to adopt children who are under the supervision of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (DHS). The work includes processing paperwork, coordinating court appearances, and handling legal details, but at its heart, the mission of the Adoption Legal Clinic is to make the dream of a family come true for parents and children. * “Adoption is the only legal proceeding that’s a win-win situation,” says Crystal Welch ’09, an MC Law adjunct professor and the staff attorney with the clinic. “Everyone involved in an adoption walks out of the courtroom with a smile on his or her face.”

LEFT: CRYSTAL WELCH AND SHIRLEY KENNEDY AT THE MISSISSIPPI CHILDREN’S MUSEUM

“EVERY CHILD DESERVES A FOREVER FAMILY.”

CRYSTAL WELCH – ATTORNEY, ADOPTION LEGAL CLINIC

The Adoption Legal Clinic was founded in 2004, when a representative of the Attorney General’s Office approached Shirley Kennedy ’91, director of the MC Law Child Advocacy Program, and asked if the law school would consider assisting the Department of Human Services with some pending adoption cases.

What began as a special project for a few law students quickly evolved into a full-fledged legal clinic. In the nine years since its founding, the Adoption Legal Clinic has helped hundreds of foster children become family members.

“The Adoption Legal Clinic represents a win-win-win situation,” Kennedy says. “Families who want to adopt receive free legal assistance to complete the process, DHS is able to provide children in its care with permanent, loving homes more quickly, and our law students gain valuable, real world experience.”

“Adoption is a beautiful thing, but the adoption *process* is purely a creature of statute,” Welch says. “The clinic is fortunate to have professors, attorneys, and law students who have both a heart for children and proficiency in adoption law.”

Working under the supervision of Kennedy and Welch, MC Law students handle adoption cases for foster parents who wish to adopt children in their care. The children are already living in the homes and have already bonded with

their soon-to-be-adoptive parents; the only thing preventing the parents and child from becoming a legal family is the paperwork.

In 2011, six law students working for the Adoption Legal Clinic finalized 71 adoptions. The clinic’s average time from obtaining the file from DHS to finalizing the adoption is just two weeks.

Positions in the legal clinic are open to law students who have completed more than half of their graduation requirements and are licensed to practice law under the limited practice act. An average of 15 students apply for the three clinic positions open each semester.

“The students chosen have to be compassionate and have great people skills,” Kennedy says. “They’ll be working directly with the prospective parents, many of whom have been waiting for a long time to adopt a child. For most of these parents, this is their first experience with the legal system, so there is some hand holding involved. The students handle legal issues, but they also answer basic questions, like where to find a notary or what to expect in court.”

Law students walk adoptive parents through every step of the adoption procedure, from the day the initial paperwork is filed to the day the child becomes a permanent member of the family. In many cases, students appear in court and present the case before the judge. Because the Adoption Legal Clinic handles cases statewide, students also perform all of the background and legal work for volunteer lawyers throughout Mississippi, who then make the necessary court appearances in their local communities.



FROM ONE ADOPTIVE PARENT TO ANOTHER Shirley Kennedy knows first-hand the excitement, anxiety, joy, and impatience an adoptive parent feels. Kennedy and her husband are the parents of two adopted children, 18-year-old Kyle and 17-year-old Kelly. Following the arrival of babies Kyle and Kelly, Kennedy left her practice with the Brunini Law Firm to become a stay-at-home mother. When the children began school, Kennedy accepted a position as director of the MC Law Child Advocacy Clinic. Today, one of her greatest joys is helping other adoptive parents through the Adoption Legal Clinic. “I feel such a connection with these parents,” Kennedy says. “I know how nervous and anxious they are about the legal part – I *was* a lawyer and it was still an anxious time for me. My husband and I had to wait for some time for Kyle and Kelly, and I know how hard the waiting can be. I’ve seen tears of joy and relief in court, and I know exactly what that feels like.”

“This is a great opportunity for our students to gain experience and network with attorneys and chancellors statewide,” Kennedy says. “But most of them participate because they genuinely want to help these children and families.”

“In the Adoption Legal Clinic, students get to make a real difference, one child and one family at a time,” says Courtney Wolfe ’12, who worked in the clinic as a law student. “What I enjoyed the most was meeting with adoptive families and their newly adopted children and seeing how happy they were that they had made it to the other side of the adoption process. I remember Professor Welch telling us that adoption was the only time you would see everyone walk out of the courtroom happy, and she was right.”

When his current cases are complete, third-year law student Matthew Powers will have helped finalize nine adoptions through the clinic.

“I’ve loved every minute of it,” Powers says. “I handled a case in which a family was adopting a little girl who had just turned three. When I walked into the courthouse, this little girl patted the chair beside her, asking me to sit there. She showed me a photo album that was filled with pictures of her from the time she arrived with this family up until that day. The families are appreciative, but I get so much personal reward out of it.”

“One of the first families I worked with was adopting a four-year-old boy they had been caring for since he was born,” Wolfe says. “The family was so excited that it was finally happening. The adoptive parents, their natural children, the adopted child, and the proud grandparents were all there at the courthouse. The judge asked the child if he wanted to be adopted. The little boy was shy – he nodded ‘yes,’ then buried his head in his mother’s shoulder – but one of the natural children who could not have been more than 10 years old wanted to make sure the judge was clear. She spoke up and told the judge that yes, the child wanted to be adopted, and that she and the rest of her family were ready to officially have a new brother.”

Lisa Robin ’12 had a personal interest in adoption even before she began working with the clinic. Robin’s cousin had adopted a child from Russia; another cousin had gone through the court system so that her new husband could adopt her daughter. Prior to beginning law school, Robin worked as a paralegal in family law, where she saw divorces and custody battles. Robin was interested in working on

adoption, what she refers to as “the happy side” of family law.

“It was so rewarding to talk to these parents and to hear them explain why they wanted to adopt,” Robin says. “In many cases, the parents had already been caring for the child for years, but they wanted that child recognized as legally their own. They wanted to be able to say, ‘This child is *mine*.’”

Jessie Summers, now the legal mother of five siblings, was one of those parents.

“The people at the clinic were so much help to us,” Summers says. “They helped me understand about going through the system, and when all five children decided they wanted to change their name to ‘Summers,’ they helped us do that. My oldest adopted daughter is going to college now, and she wants to be a lawyer. I think she wants to help other people the way the clinic helped us.”



ADOPTION FAIR • AUGUST 11

The Adoption Legal Clinic will host an adoption fair on August 11, 2012 on the MC Law campus. The event will feature speakers on adoption-related topics, information for foster parents, and face painting, crafts, and other activities for children. For more information, contact the Adoption Legal Clinic at 601.925.7179.

A MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

The Adoption Legal Clinic offers volunteer attorneys the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child and to help bring families together through adoption. The clinic qualifies for the *pro bono* hours required of attorneys practicing in Mississippi. Prior knowledge of adoption law is not required.

Practicing attorneys interested in volunteering may contact:
MC Law Adoption Legal Clinic
601.925.7179 • adoption@mc.edu

 For more on this story, visit www.mc.edu/beacon.



A HEART FOR CHILDREN • CRYSTAL WELCH ’09 Ever since she landed her first job in a day care center at the age of 16, Crystal Welch has known she had a heart for children. Following her graduation from Bowdoin College in Maine, Welch spent two years in Guatemala as a volunteer with the Safe Passage Program, a non-profit organization working to bring hope, education, and opportunity to children living in extreme poverty. Welch volunteered as a first grade teacher and librarian in a “garbage dump community,” a poverty-stricken, drug-invested community where the children spent their days scavenging in a garbage dump. Upon returning to the United States, Welch enrolled at MC Law, where she participated in both the Guardian *ad Litem* and Adoption Legal Clinics as a student. Welch practiced criminal law before returning to MC Law in 2010 as an adjunct professor and attorney with the Adoption Legal Clinic. “I love the fact that I can use my legal training to bring families together,” Welch says. “People think being an attorney is always adversarial. The Adoption Legal Clinic lets me use my professional training to do good for everyone involved.”



Compassion

that runs

BONE DEEP

How her husband's bone marrow transplant gave Carol Barnes a heart for others

Carol and Rusty Barnes met when they both served as orientation counselors at Northeast Mississippi Community College, where Carol was a Tiger dancer and Rusty was a football player. Not long after they were introduced, Rusty presented Carol with a dime store ring and asked, "Will you marry me?"

Before long, the pretend proposal became a real one. Following their graduation from the University of Mississippi, Carol and Rusty married, settling into a happy family life that soon included two beautiful daughters. Rusty became a major with the criminal unit of the Mississippi Highway Patrol while Carol established a career as a professor in the kinesiology department at Mississippi College. Life for the college sweethearts seemed nothing short of idyllic.

But in 2006, Rusty began complaining of nausea and fatigue. A visit to the doctor brought a diagnosis of chronic myloid leukemia. The 41-year-old husband and father had cancer.

The Barneses were relieved to learn that chronic myloid leukemia typically responded well to treatment. Rusty was given chemo through a simple pill, and within one month, the cancer was in remission.

"He actually felt a little guilty because it seemed so easy," Carol recalls.

But during a routine follow-up visit in October of 2011, that relief changed to fear. The leukemia had evolved into acute myloid leukemia, a much more serious form of cancer.

The couple broke the news to their children, Merrie Claire, then a freshman at the University of Mississippi, and Annelise, a student at Northwest Rankin Middle School.

"Our older daughter is very sensitive and emotional," Carol says. "When Rusty called her at college to tell her, she began to cry. The 13-year-old was very brave. She said, 'Okay, Daddy, we're going to handle this.'"

As recently as 10 years ago, a diagnosis of acute myloid leukemia would have been a death sentence. While there was hope for Rusty Barnes, fighting the cancer this time would take more than a simple pill. The treatment would involve days of intense, intravenous chemotherapy referred to as "red devil chemo." Harsh side effects would include intense pain, nausea, and fatigue, and Rusty would need frequent blood and platelet transfusions. But the chemo was only the beginning; Rusty would also need a bone marrow transplant. When none of their family or friends proved a match, a national search for a compatible donor began.

"I know this will sound crazy," Rusty says. "But it never scared me. I felt the good Lord had a plan. Prayer had worked the first time and we trusted it to get us through this time, too. I was always more worried about Carol and the girls than myself. I told the doctor, 'I have two daughters to walk down the aisle. If your plans don't include that, we need to regroup right now.'"

Support for the Barnes family poured in from friends, family, their church, and Mississippi College.

"Carol and my family had it the worst. We were diagnosed. We had chemotherapy. We all went through it together, I just happened to be the one with the cancer. My family did all the work. All I had to do was live." — Rusty Barnes

SAYING “THANK YOU”

The donor who saved Rusty Barnes’ life was a 23-year-old man. The bone marrow donation program requires that a full year pass before the donor and recipient may contact one another, but the Barnes family has already sent the donor letters expressing gratitude for his priceless gift. “My family really wants to meet the donor,” Rusty Barnes says. “I have mixed emotions. What do you say to the guy who saved your life? There is no way to thank him, but yes, I definitely want to meet him.”

LEFT TO RIGHT: RUSTY, ANNELISE, MERRIE CLAIRE AND CAROL BARNES



“I knew I’d have to miss some classes,” Carol says. “I was open with my students and my colleagues in explaining why, and I asked them to pray for us. I received so many words of encouragement from my MC family. I felt so blessed to be exposed to Christian young men and women who were so strong in their faith. I had students I didn’t even know come to me and say ‘God’s going to be there for you. He’s going to help you through this.’ That was pretty powerful.”

Carol’s colleagues filled in for her on days when she was unable to leave Rusty’s side. MC students and members of the Mississippi Highway Patrol stepped up to offer their prayers, support, even the blood from their own bodies, donating gallons of blood and platelets in Rusty Barnes’ name. They were joined by complete strangers who read about the Barnes family on Facebook and were inspired to donate. Carol’s e-mail inbox was filled with Scriptures and messages of love and encouragement.

While Carol knew the diagnosis was serious, she never once allowed herself to think that her husband might die.

“We knew that God was with us every step of the way,” she says. “And we realized very quickly that God was not through with Rusty here on earth.”

Rusty Barnes spent most of October and November of 2011 in the hospital receiving chemotherapy, confined to isolation to prevent infection. In December, the Barneses received the news they had been waiting for – a bone mar-

row match had been found.

The transplant was scheduled for December 7, 2011. Preparing for the procedure meant taking Rusty Barnes to the brink of death. Intense chemotherapy killed virtually all of his stem cells; the new donor cells would take their place. But with Rusty’s body ready, the Barneses received frightening news from the bone marrow registry. The plane transporting the precious, life-saving donor cells – cells with a 48–72 hour window of viability – had been delayed. The chemo had killed Rusty’s own cells; failing to perform the transplant immediately would mean almost certain death. After the grueling treatments, the painful waiting, and the miracle of finding a donor, Rusty Barnes’ life was now threatened by a weather delay.

“I went on Facebook and called and e-mailed everyone we knew and asked them to pray,” Carol says. “Our contact from the registry was giving me text updates and finally, we got one that said the plane had touched down in Jackson. We were going to make it. I took pictures of that wonderful little bag of cells, that second chance at life, and posted them on Facebook. Then I sat and watched those cells move through the tube into my husband’s body.”

The December 8 transplant was successful. Rusty Barnes went from cancer patient to cancer survivor – and thanks to the anonymous donor, from blood type A+ to AB+. A bone marrow biopsy performed in May 2012 showed no trace of cancer.

DO YOU FEEL IT IN YOUR BONES? Would you like to have the opportunity to save someone’s life? Joining the bone marrow donor registry is as simple as filling out a form online. You’ll receive a kit in the mail containing swabs you’ll use to take a saliva sample from inside your cheek and a return envelope for sending your sample back to the National Marrow Donor Program. *To find out more or register as a donor, visit www.marrow.org or www.bethematch.org.*



“If I met someone who had just received a cancer diagnosis today, the first thing I would do would be to pray that person has a relationship with Jesus Christ. I can’t imagine what we would have done if we didn’t have that. My husband suffered greatly, but he always had that hope, that faith, because he knew that God was there, comforting him.” — *Carol Barnes*

Acute myloid leukemia cost Rusty 90 pounds and his dark brown hair grew back dark blond, but the most lasting change the cancer worked in Rusty and Carol was a renewed appreciation for life, each other, and the power of prayer, and for Carol, a heightened sense of compassion for others.

“I would never say I’m glad my husband suffered,” Carol says. “But God allows things to happen for a reason. When Rusty was sick, so many people came to us and said, ‘You need to let me help you.’ I want to reach out and help others now.

“I think this experience has made me a better person and a better teacher,” Carol continues. “I always enjoyed teaching, but now I look at circumstances and really feel what my students are going through. You have to have compassion to be a good teacher, to make a difference in someone’s life. My daughter came to me once and said, ‘My professor doesn’t care how I do in his class. He doesn’t care about me.’ I do care and I want my students to know that.”

In talking with them, it’s clear that Barnes’ students *do* know.

Seth Lusk is a senior at MC; Carol Barnes is his teacher and advisor. At the same time that Barnes was coping with her husband’s illness, Seth’s father was diagnosed with the same form of cancer.

“I approached her about my dad because I was missing so much class,” Lusk says. “I had never heard of this condition before my dad got sick. When Professor Barnes told me her husband had it, too, it was strange to hear, but it also gave me a sense of relief. I had someone to talk to, someone I already trusted and respected, who really understood.”

Barnes was able to provide Lusk with information, advice, and the kind of support that could only come from someone who had experienced cancer first hand. When Barnes asked that a blood drive already planned for the MC campus be held in honor of Seth Lusk’s father, the line to donate stretched over 100 feet.

“My dad’s condition was really bad for awhile, and I was very worried,” Lusk says, his voice breaking as he fights back tears. “Professor Barnes encouraged me to be strong for my dad. She told me to stay positive, that her husband had been through it and my dad would make it through it, too. And during all of this, she was still going through it herself. Sometimes I’d go to her office to talk to her and see these piles of bills or overhear some of her conversations with the doctors. I felt for her, too.”

Thirty-seven-year-old Lekishi Davis is a single mother of two who suffers from hypertension. Her 11-year-old son has been diagnosed with behavioral disorders and has spent time in treatment facilities; caring for him has made it chal-

lenging for Davis to care for herself. Still, Davis enrolled in MC determined to become a nurse.

“When I found out I would actually be able to attend college, I was so excited,” Davis says. “I kept telling people ‘I’m going to MC, y’all!’”

But in October 2011, midway through her first semester, Davis woke in the middle of the night to find her apartment building in flames. She and her children escaped unharmed, but lost all of their possessions in the fire.

“Losing everything was awful,” Davis recalls. “But it was more than that. It took the wind out of my sails. I could not seem to bounce back. It made me question whether I should be there at MC, whether I should even try.”

When Carol Barnes learned what had happened, she reached out to Davis.

“Professor Barnes called me to check on me. She bought me Walmart gift cards. She gave me my lessons so I wouldn’t get behind in class. She convinced me to enroll in an exercise program and made sure I was taking my medicine. When she found out about my son’s condition, she gave me advice about his diet and things that would help him, too,” Davis says. “All I could think was, ‘Why is this woman doing this? She has things of her own going on. Her husband is sick. She doesn’t even *know* me.’”

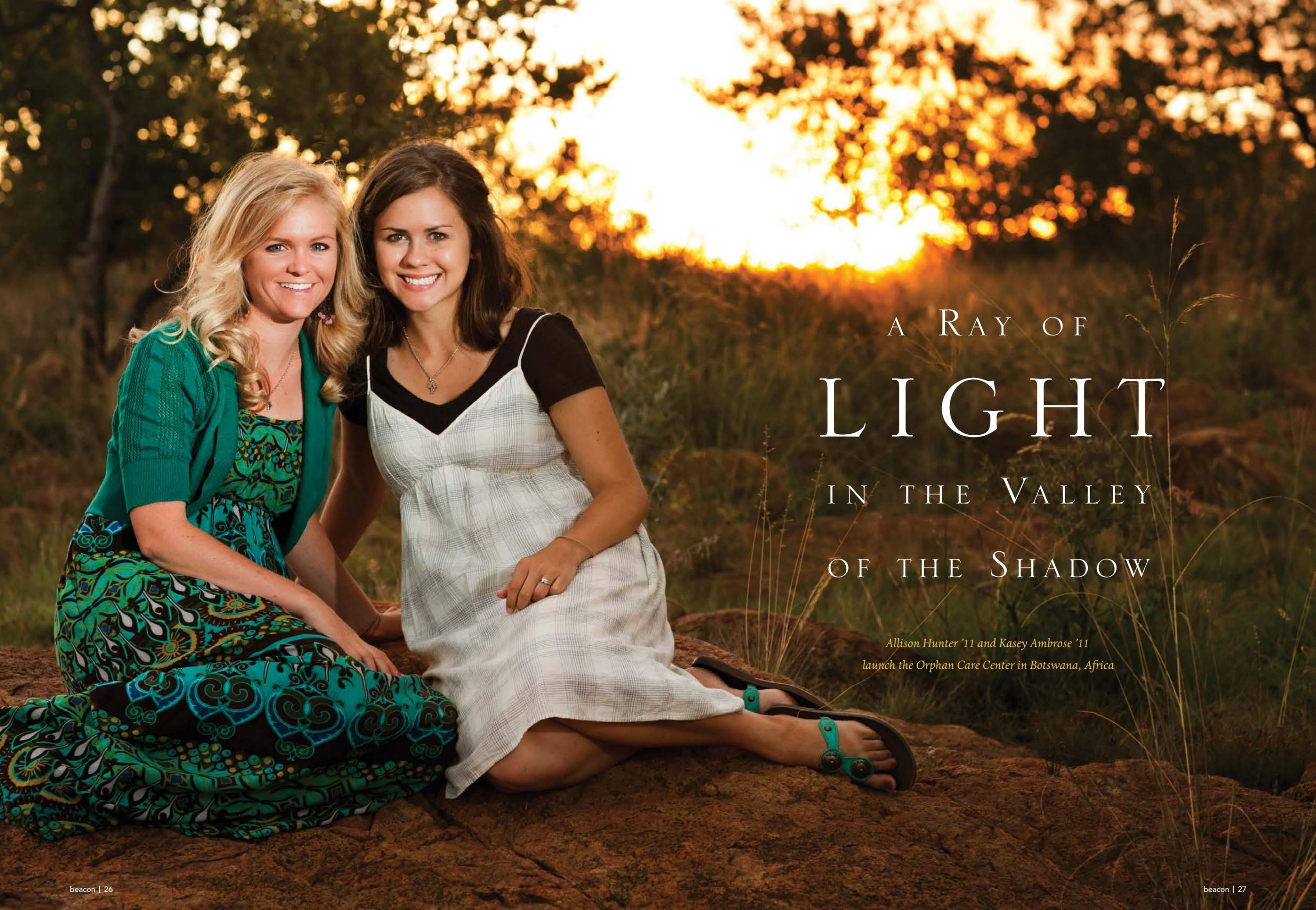
“I didn’t think there were any good people left. I had lost a lot of faith in humanity,” Davis continues. “But Professor Barnes and the whole MC campus got together to help me. It was amazing, *shocking* to me to learn there were people out there who had a heart. That support helped me work my way back. I’m still in school and my children and I are getting back on our feet.”

Carol Barnes has taken to heart 2 Corinthians 1: 3–4, which reminds us that God comforts us “so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”

“Professor Barnes made my whole experience at MC very different,” Seth Lusk says. “I’m not from Mississippi and at first I didn’t feel like I fit in here, but her personal support changed that. She is one of the most genuine, compassionate people I’ve ever met.”

“If I had to describe Carol Barnes in one word, that word would be ‘Godsend,’” Davis says. “She has the attributes the Bible uses to describe love – she is that person in First Corinthians 13. Other people can *quote* it, but she *does* it. Sometimes God sends you an angel to help you through. That’s what Carol Barnes was to me.”

 For more on this story, visit www.mc.edu/beacon.



A RAY OF
LIGHT
IN THE VALLEY
OF THE SHADOW

*Allison Hunter '11 and Kasey Ambrose '11
launch the Orphan Care Center in Botswana, Africa*


 THE NATION
 OF BOTSWANA,
 AFRICA,

IS ENDANGERED BY A HEALTH CRISIS OF CATASTROPHIC proportions. One in every four people living in Botswana is infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In 1965, the life expectancy in Botswana was 65 years; by 2005, AIDS had cut that life span to a mere 40.

Children are not immune to the ravages of the disease. Botswana is home to more children orphaned by AIDS than any other nation on earth. Some 93,000 children have lost at least one parent; many of the children are infected from birth themselves.

For Allison Hunter and Kasey Ambrose, these statistics are more than just numbers. They are the haunted eyes, the pain-filled faces, and the tiny, outstretched hands of the children of Botswana. Taking Christ's call to care for orphans and widows to heart, Hunter and Ambrose left all they knew in America behind to relocate 8,541 miles away to the small city of Lobatse, Botswana, where they are sharing a message of hope with children living in the Valley of the Shadow.

HUNTER AND AMBROSE, BOTH 23, are the founders of the Orphan Care Center, a program that provides 10 orphaned and vulnerable children in Lobatse, Botswana, with a daily meal, a safe place to play games or sing songs, and a loving touch they might not experience at any other time or place in their lives. Most importantly, the Orphan Care Center offers children hope in the love of Christ and training in the Word of God. In a country marked by death and despair, the Orphan Care Center is equipping the smallest and weakest to become a new generation of strong spiritual leaders.

"There is such a loss of hope that comes from contracting AIDS. Everyone here in Botswana either has AIDS or has watched a friend or relative die from it," Hunter says. "But there is a reason to live, even if you are HIV positive, or your parents are dead, or you don't know who will take care of you tomorrow. There is always hope in Christ, and that hope is what Kasey and I are here to share."

While HIV treatment is made free to every citizen of Botswana by the government, the stigma attached to the disease means some people do not seek treatment for themselves or for the children in their care. For many of those suffering from AIDS, death – even the death of a child – is preferable to bearing the stigma that comes with the disease. The suicide rate is high; many people who find they are HIV positive kill themselves rather than face the shame of living and the agony of dying of AIDS.

Children here have little opportunity for a childhood. It is not unusual to find young children caring for their sick parents, and after their parents die, caring for their younger siblings. The streets of Lobatse are filled with small children carrying even smaller children on their backs, sometimes pushing them in wheelbarrows to clinics for HIV drugs.

In this daunting place, at a time in life when most of their friends are taking their first steps up the career ladder

or sending out wedding invitations, Hunter and Ambrose are fulfilling a calling that brought them together and led them to Botswana.

"This is my purpose," Ambrose says. "I have joy, peace, and a sense of comfort in my heart knowing this is exactly where I am supposed to be."

THE CALL TO AFRICA

In 2009, Allison Hunter spent five months in Botswana working with Hands-On, a program of the International Mission Board (IMB) that connects college students with missions worldwide.

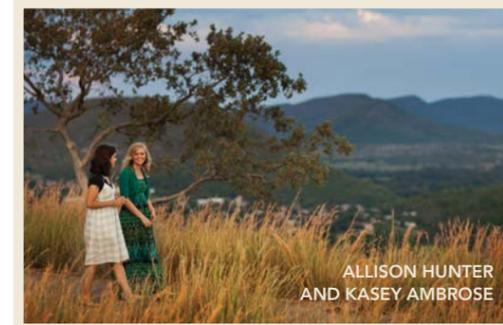
"Our focus was on church planting, but the house where I stayed was across the street from this rundown orphan care center," Hunter recalls. "In the afternoons, I would go there and play with the kids. The truest relationships I formed in Botswana were with those children. Of everything I did during those five months, when I returned home, that's what I kept thinking about – those children."

Kasey Ambrose heard the call to Africa when she was just 15 years old. Ambrose sponsored a child in Tanzania through a missions program. The little girl was an AIDS orphan and was infected with the disease herself, prompting Ambrose to research the issue of AIDS and orphans in Africa.

"The Lord put the children of Africa on my heart," Ambrose says. "I didn't have any idea how I would get there, but I began saving money to go to Africa."

Five years later, during her sophomore year at Mississippi College, Ambrose received the opportunity she'd been praying for in the form of a college student mission to Botswana organized through First Baptist Church Jackson.

"From the minute I got on the plane, I felt peace," Ambrose recalls. "I was finally going to the place I knew I had been called to be."



ALLISON HUNTER
AND KASEY AMBROSE

FINDING JOY AFTER LOSS

Allison Hunter knows what it's like to lose a parent. Her own mother died when Hunter was only seven years old. "I miss my mother every day, but I know that God allowed me to experience that loss so that I might better understand our children," Hunter says. "I know they're hurting and scared, but I also know they want to be treated like any other kid. They want to play and laugh and have fun. I think sometimes we expect orphaned children to be sad all the time, and they can sense that. But it's okay to live your life and find joy. You don't have to feel guilty for that. I think that's something that losing my own mother has allowed me to understand."



THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

One in every four adults in Botswana – some 300,000 people – has AIDS or is positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The life expectancy in Botswana in 1965 was 65.
The life expectancy in Botswana in 2005 was 40.

Botswana is home to more children orphaned by AIDS than any other nation on earth. An estimated 93,000 children have lost at least one parent to AIDS.

The cost of medical care, loss of income due to illness or death, and funeral expenses have pushed families and entire communities into poverty.

The economic output of the country as a whole has been reduced by the loss of workers and their skills.

“WE ARE THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION.
PEOPLE ARE DYING IN CHILLINGLY HIGH NUMBERS.
IT IS A CRISIS OF THE FIRST MAGNITUDE.”

Former President Festus Mogae, Botswana

“IF YOU SPEND YOURSELVES IN BEHALF OF THE HUNGRY AND SATISFY THE NEEDS OF THE OPPRESSED, THEN YOUR LIGHT WILL RISE IN THE DARKNESS, AND YOUR NIGHT WILL BECOME LIKE THE NOONDAY.”

Isaiah 58:10

Ambrose spent much of that two-week mission trip ministering to children in an AIDS orphan center.

“When I got back home, I kept seeing those children’s eyes,” Ambrose says. “I would think about specific children that I had held and how I’d told them everything would be okay...” Ambrose’s voice breaks as her own blue eyes fill with tears. “Their eyes, their faces wouldn’t leave my mind. I had this uneasiness in my heart. All I could think was, ‘Lord, I have to go back.’”

When Ambrose had the opportunity to participate in another mission trip to Botswana in 2009, she jumped at the opportunity, this time staying for three months. During that time, Ambrose met Hunter, who was there with Hands-On. The two became friends, returning for more mission work in Botswana together the following year.

“This time when I came home, it wasn’t a sad feeling, it was more of a battle, an adrenaline rush,” Ambrose recalls. “The problem there with the orphans was so big. I kept asking God how He could use me to help solve it. I prayed that He would equip me to go back and make a difference.”

Allison Hunter was also struggling with the sense of an unfulfilled calling.

“Kasey and I both felt there was an unfinished chapter waiting for us in Africa.”

WRITING THE NEXT CHAPTER

While still working to complete their elementary education degrees at MC, Hunter and Ambrose began researching what they could do to make an impact for Christ in Botswana. One of their favorite meeting sites was Barnes & Noble, where they had access to both coffee and an entire shelf full of books on how to build a ministry from the ground up. There, in the bookstore, on a Subway napkin, they wrote out the description of their vision – a self-sustaining orphan care center in Lobatse, supported by the local church and run by local women. That scribbled dream became the outline for a proposal the women submitted to the International Mission Board. Less than two months later, they received a response. The IMB wanted them to return to Lobatse.

“Right then, we got down on our knees and prayed that the Lord would give us strength beyond our own,” Hunter recalls. “We knew that just the two of us right out of college didn’t have much to offer beyond what God would equip us with. Then went out and got garlic bread sticks to celebrate.”

What emerged was a partnership between Hunter and Ambrose, the IMB, and the Lobatse Baptist Church in Botswana. Hunter and Ambrose committed to spend a minimum of two years in Lobatse to establish an orphan care program. While they would receive no financial support from IMB, Hunter and Ambrose would live in a comfortable house on a mission compound in Lobatse for a modest monthly rental fee, and have the security of knowing they were considered part of the IMB team in Botswana.



GOD TAKES THE WHEEL

Just prior to leaving for Botswana, Hunter and Ambrose realized they would need approximately \$5,000 to purchase a car for transporting children and picking up food and supplies. It had taken months to raise enough funds to cover their basic living expenses; the women had no idea where the money would come from. “We did the only thing we could do,” Hunter says. “We prayed.” The next day, Ambrose received a letter from a family whose children she had babysat years earlier. The family had heard about the planned ministry from Ambrose’s family, and enclosed a check to support the effort. The amount of the check? \$5,000 “That check was already in the mail before we ever starting praying about it,” Hunter says. “God has been ahead of us the whole way.”

The pastor and congregation of Lobatse Baptist Church agreed to allow the women to operate the Orphan Care Center out of the small church and to pay three local women a modest stipend – approximately \$225 in U.S. dollars per month for all three – to work with Hunter and Ambrose to establish and operate the program. Hunter and Ambrose would serve as volunteer leaders, raising their own support and receiving no compensation from the church.

In January of 2012, after graduating from MC and raising two years worth of living expenses, Hunter and Ambrose returned to Botswana.

“We knew this was the beginning of the biggest adventure of our lives,” Hunter says. “We didn’t know exactly where the next two years would take us or what would happen after that, but we knew that trying to do something was better than doing nothing.”

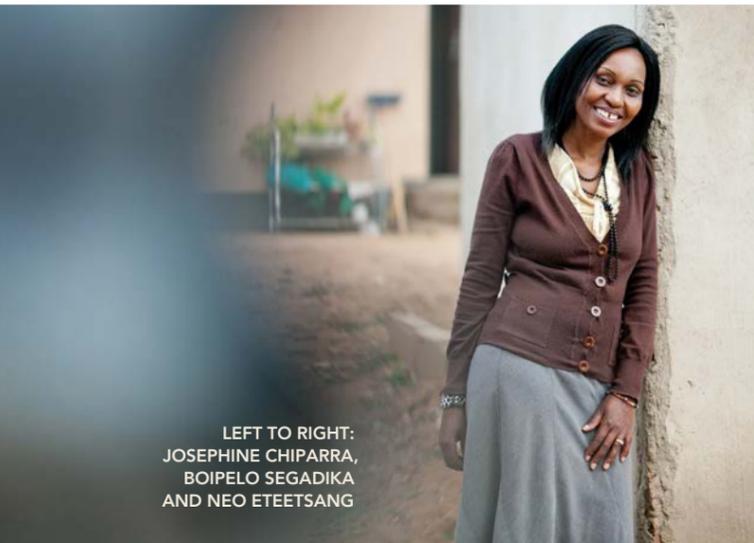
PLEASE LOOK IN YOUR HYMNALS

The hymnals used by the congregation of Lobatse Baptist Church in Botswana were once used by worshippers in Mississippi. Many of the hymnals bear inscriptions from a Baptist church in Amory, Mississippi.

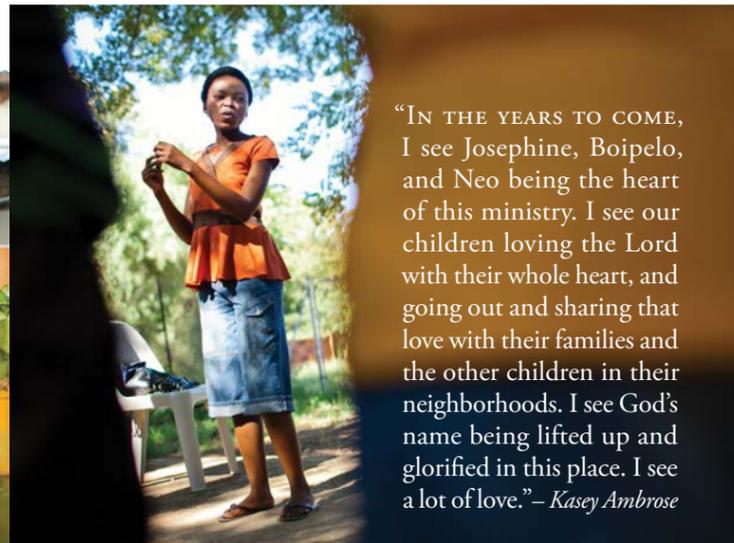


“RELIGION THAT GOD OUR FATHER ACCEPTS
AS PURE AND FAULTLESS IS THIS: TO LOOK AFTER
ORPHANS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR DISTRESS AND TO KEEP
ONESELF FROM BEING POLLUTED BY THE WORLD.”

James 1:27



LEFT TO RIGHT:
JOSEPHINE CHIPARRA,
BOIPELO SEGADIKA
AND NEO ETEETSANG



“IN THE YEARS TO COME, I see Josephine, Boipelo, and Neo being the heart of this ministry. I see our children loving the Lord with their whole heart, and going out and sharing that love with their families and the other children in their neighborhoods. I see God’s name being lifted up and glorified in this place. I see a lot of love.” — Kasey Ambrose



EMPOWERING THE LOCAL WOMEN

Hunter and Ambrose realized the key to building a lasting ministry would be rooting that ministry in the local church.

“People from outside Botswana come with the best of intentions,” Hunter says. “They build brand new facilities and start new programs, but the local people think of it as *that person’s* program, not as their own. When that person or group leaves, the building falls into disrepair and the ministry ends. And if too much help comes from outside, the people here say, ‘Oh, we have to have help, we don’t really have anything to offer ourselves.’”

“Mine and Kasey’s goal wasn’t to start the Allison and Kasey Orphan Care Center. It was to empower the women in Lobatse to start an orphan care center with their own knowledge and resources and the love they have in their hearts,” Hunter continues. “They are capable of doing it – more so than we are. They know this country, its culture, its language, and its children, and they’ve grown up in its problems. All they needed was someone to tell them they could do it.”

Hunter and Ambrose’s faith was tested when Hunter hung a sign-up sheet in the Lobatse Baptist Church inviting local women interested in working on the project to sign up for interviews. She left 10 spaces on the sheet.

Not a single woman signed up.

“We’d go back every day to check and see nothing,” Hunter recalls. “One day, I just stood staring at that blank

sheet of paper. All I could think about was all of the people who had invested in us, and I thought, ‘What are we doing? This is never going to happen. We’re not going to find one person, let alone three, who is willing to do this.’ I went home and wrote in my journal that night, ‘Maybe I should have just stayed home.’”

“Three days later, five women had signed up,” Hunter continues. “One woman had already quit her job in hopes of joining our team. She was willing to risk it, she told me, because the Lord had told her to work with us. I realized He had been working in their hearts before their names were ever on my list.”

Three local women, Josephine Chiparra, Boipelo Segadika, and Neo Eteetsang, were chosen for the program. Key to training the women was instilling in them a sense of their own worth. Born into lives of struggle with little education and very limited resources, the women initially felt they had little to offer. Their work with the Orphan Care Center has changed that.

Boipelo Segadika is a single mother with three children who left a steady job in a printing shop to be a part of the Orphan Care Center. Before finding work at the print shop, Boipelo had known extreme poverty; at times, she confesses, she thought of killing her children and then herself rather than watch them die of sickness or starvation. Boipelo’s faith in God saw her through those dark times, and it is that faith she now shares with the children of Lobatse.

MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE

The official languages of Botswana are English and Setswana. Some English words have a different interpretation than in the United States; for example, “now,” means “sometime soon,” while “*now now*,” means “right now.” “Here” can mean “in this house,” “in Lobatse,” or “in Africa,” while “*here here*,” means in this very place. Perhaps the most joyful sound in the Botswana dialect is not a word, but a praise chant. Called “oodalation,” the fast-paced chant combines “oohs” and “las” in an upbeat rhythm. Hunter and Ambrose heard the chant performed for the first time by Josephine Chiparra as she expressed her joy over being a part of the Orphan Care Center.



BANDS OF LOVE

Hunter and Ambrose turned a knack for sewing into a fund-raising opportunity for the Orphan Care Center. The women asked a tailor in Lobatse if they could purchase small pieces of the costly, traditional African tribal fabric left over from his dressmaking, explaining that they planned to turn the scraps into hand-sewn headbands they could sell. When the tailor learned they planned to use the funds raised to support the Orphan Care Center, he donated bags full of the colorful fabric to their cause. Allison, Kasey, Josephine, Boipelo, and Neo spent hours stitching each unique headband, then sold the headbands locally to buyers who not only appreciated their craftsmanship, but also their mission.

“I am not so very educated, but I am educated enough to share the Word of God. I am not ashamed to say that God is good,” Boipelo says. “When I left my job to work with Allison and Kasey, people laughed at me. They asked me who would provide for my children. I said, ‘God will provide.’”

Tall and slim with high cheekbones and warm brown eyes, Josephine Chiparra is strikingly beautiful. But Josephine grew up with a father who beat and belittled her, telling her that she was ugly, stupid, and worthless. Josephine recalls fleeing to the bush to cry.

“I needed love, but there was no love,” Josephine says, her eyes filling with tears. “Then I came to know Christ, and I knew the things my father said to me were not true. I knew that Christ loved me. Now I am so happy to tell these children they are loved and can do anything through Christ. Even when there is suffering, if you know Christ, you have hope.”

With no money for the bus, Josephine walks the five miles from her home to the church and back every day to share that hope with the orphaned children.

“These orphans feel alone or rejected because their parents have been killed by HIV,” Josephine says. “They have no clothes, they go to sleep with nothing to eat. We will make sure they have food and something to put on, but the most important thing is to tell them that God is their loving Father. I don’t have a lot of money to offer, but what I have to give is love.”

At 23, Neo Eteetsang is the youngest of the three women. Her dream is to be a part of a ministry that will change the future of her country. “I would like to see this ministry change the lives of children in Lobatse, to help them become children who know God. God chose us to do this work, to let these children know that He loves them.”

“One of the most exciting things has been to see the women come to believe in this project,” Hunter says. “One day Kasey and I overheard them talking. One of them said, ‘I think this ministry could change Lobatse.’ Then another said, ‘No, this ministry could change *Botswana*.’ Then the third said, ‘No. Our ministry is going to change *Africa*.’”



“EVERY TIME I HOLD ONE OF these children, I am praying for them, praying, ‘God, save this child,’ and praying they will know Jesus. I can’t change some of their situations, but I *can* offer them the hope that is in Christ.” – Kasey Ambrose

THE CHILDREN OF THE ORPHAN CARE CENTER

With their team in place, Hunter and Ambrose were ready to welcome the children.

Immediately upon arriving in Lobatse, the women had written a letter to the City Council asking for official approval of their program and help in choosing 10 children to register as its participants. The women deliberately limited the number of children to 10, realizing that keeping the number manageable would be critical to providing food and meeting other physical needs, and also to building a personal relationship not only with each child, but also with that child’s siblings and caregivers.

While they waited for approval, Hunter, Ambrose, and their team of local women filled the long weeks ministering to the children in the neighborhood surrounding the church and to groups of “street kids” who roamed Lobatse, engaging them in games of soccer, serving them peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and introducing them to the Word of God.

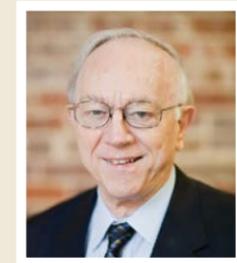
Then in late May, after five months of waiting, the children of the Orphan Care Center arrived.

“Finding out that we would finally be getting our children was one of the best moments of my life,” Hunter says. “The first little boy I met was Thabang. I was speaking to his caretaker – both his parents died of AIDS – when he came around the corner. I don’t know what it feels like to be a new mother, but that was the greatest joy I’ve ever experienced.

“The first day was incredible,” Hunter continues. “The children were all very shy and quiet. They have a lot of pain in their lives, and you can see that in the way they carry themselves, but they are also normal kids. They love to play soccer and they love to hold your hand.”

“I feel so much love for these children. I see them walking down the street and my heart is just filled with love for them,” Ambrose says. “The children here in Botswana don’t get touched. They don’t get held. When I see these children who are hurting or suffering, my first response is to say, ‘Come here, let me hold you.’ I want them to know that I’m right here. I’m close. I’m not leaving you, and if you need me, I’ll be here.”

The children, who range in ages from six to 10 years old, walk to the Lobatse Baptist Church every afternoon after school, where Hunter, Ambrose, Josephine, Boipelo, and Neo serve them a meal, then spend three to four hours singing songs, playing games, sharing Bible stories, and praying with them. At the end of the day Hunter and Ambrose walk them home, a ritual Hunter describes as “my favorite part of the day,” where they might have an opportunity to minister to the children’s caregivers or siblings. The plan is for the children to participate in the program until they are 12 years old – enough time to build lasting relationships and a strong spiritual foundation.



ANSWERING THE CHALLENGE AT HOME

In developing the business plan for the Orphan Care Center, Allison Hunter and Kasey Ambrose sought the advice of Eddie Kinchen ’59, an experienced businessman and a fellow member of First Baptist Church Jackson.

“I did everything I could to talk them out of it,” Kinchen says. “On paper, what they were proposing didn’t make good business sense. And as a father myself, I could not see sending these two young women to Botswana.

“But then I realized how compelled they were to do this, and how deep their faith was. Anytime I pointed out an obstacle, Allison and Kasey were confident God would take care of it because they had been called by Him to do this. Five times in the Bible, Jesus says, ‘Believe in Me.’ Twenty times in the Bible, Jesus says, ‘Follow Me.’ These young women were the perfect example of being willing to follow. Their plan didn’t make sense from a business standpoint, but from a spiritual standpoint, it made all the sense in the world.”

Kinchen not only assisted Hunter and Ambrose with their business plan, but also took an active role in their ministry, helping to establish a donation fund for the Orphan Care Center and playing an ongoing role in advising the women as their ministry unfolds.

“A lot of times what God wants us to do doesn’t make sense,” Kinchen says. “And if God calls someone else to do something that doesn’t seem to make sense, we can sometimes help them do it. I might not have been called to do what Allison and Kasey are doing, but I am challenged by their willingness to do it, and I have been called to support them in it. I have to say, I love this challenge.”

“GOD IS GOOD.”

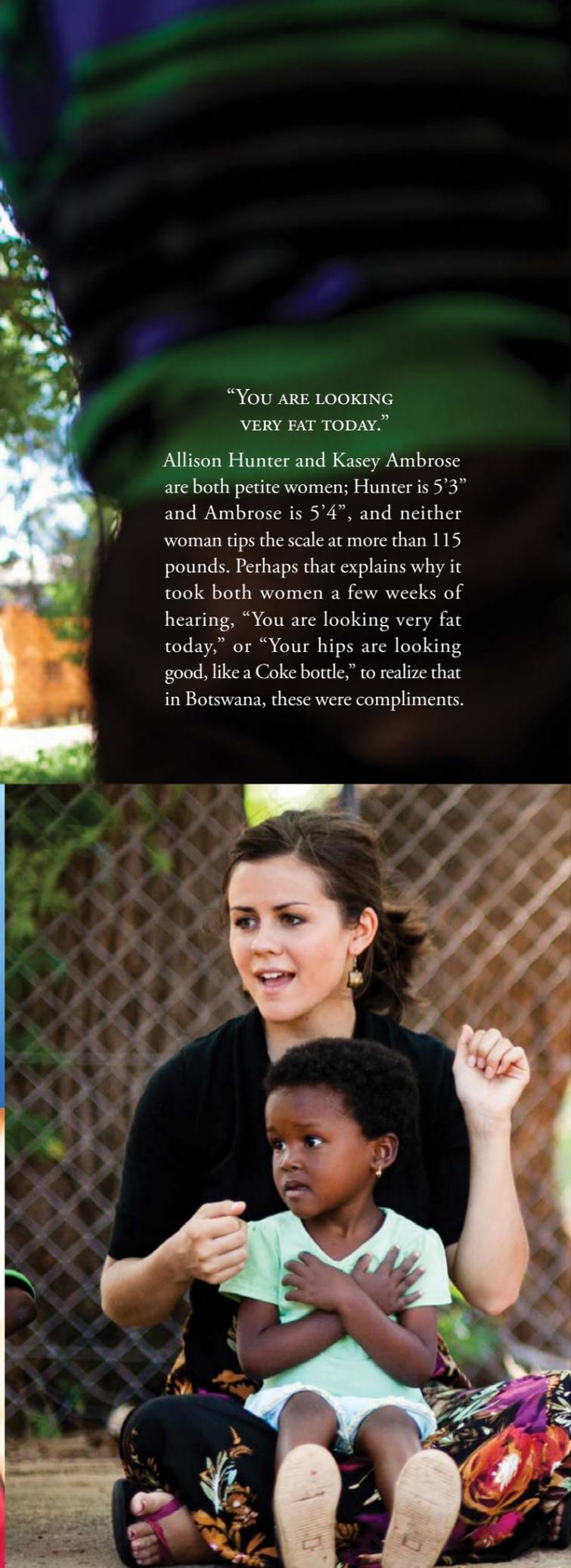
“Suffering is close to the hearts of everyone in Botswana. The people use scriptures to sustain them,” Allison Hunter says. “Before I came here, the book of Job was one that I avoided because I found it so depressing. It seemed almost cruel to me that God had put it in the Bible.

But as I talked to people here, I realized they all identify with Job, and they hang on to that book’s message of hope in the face of suffering. They say, ‘If Job could make it through *that*, I can make it through *this*. And if Job could still say ‘God is good,’ I can still say, ‘God is good.’”



“YOU ARE LOOKING VERY FAT TODAY.”

Allison Hunter and Kasey Ambrose are both petite women; Hunter is 5’3” and Ambrose is 5’4”, and neither woman tips the scale at more than 115 pounds. Perhaps that explains why it took both women a few weeks of hearing, “You are looking very fat today,” or “Your hips are looking good, like a Coke bottle,” to realize that in Botswana, these were compliments.



Despite all they had seen and experienced on previous missions to Botswana, Hunter says she “had no idea how bad the children’s situations would be.” The children are desperately poor; when served their first meal, Hunter says, “They were so hungry. We piled their plates so high, I felt certain none of them would finish the meal. Two of our tiniest little girls went back for another huge plate.” Two of the little boys sleep on the floor of a “tuck shop,” a tiny shed-like building used for selling food, in a relative’s front yard. Another child’s entire wardrobe consists of two pairs of pants and a single, hand-me-down dress. One little boy will barely speak or make eye contact; his grandmother explains that he stopped communicating after his parents died.

Hunter and Ambrose believe that at least five of their 10 children have AIDS. One little girl has already suffered a heart attack triggered by taking HIV medicine without food. She is nine years old. A little boy has trouble walking; he is covered in sores that the women suspect were caused by a sexually transmitted disease.

“He is so tiny and innocent, and he has no idea,” Hunter says. “Mixed with all of the excitement, there are deep pangs of sadness. Some of our children may not have very long.”

Just outside the walls of the mission compound where Hunter and Ambrose live is a cemetery, a constant reminder of the epidemic that threatens the children they have come to love. Every week in Lobatse sees yet another funeral, yet another child left parentless. The harsh reality is that some of the 10 children with whom Hunter and Ambrose sing cheerful songs, play silly games, and share cookies will not live to adulthood.

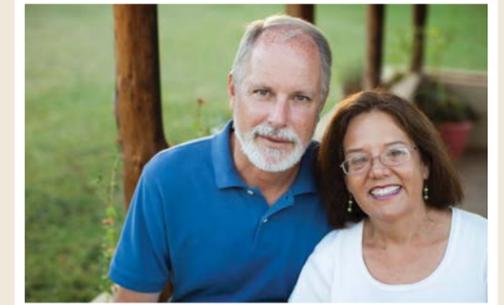
“I have thought about what it will be like if one of them dies,” Ambrose says. “It ignites a fire in me to want to share the love of Christ with them even more. I want to know that if they are going to die, they know Christ. I want to know that I will see them again one day in Heaven. That gives me hope.”

ALLISON HUNTER AND KASEY AMBROSE are working in Botswana strictly as volunteers, and must raise their own support. A fund for the Orphan Care Center has been established at First Baptist Church Jackson. Please send tax-deductible donations to:

LOBATSE ORPHAN CARE CENTER
c/o First Baptist Church
431 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Please make checks payable to First Baptist Jackson and include “Lobatse Orphan Care Center” in the memo line.

WHILE GIFTS OF ANY SIZE ARE WELCOMED, the women stress that what they need the most is prayer. “If you offered us a check for \$10,000 or your prayers, honestly, we’d rather have your prayers,” Hunter says. “We know we can accomplish more through prayer here in two years than we could in a thousand years through our own efforts.”



OUT OF AFRICA:

Robert and Margaret Fortenberry

The mission compound where Allison Hunter and Kasey Ambrose live in Lobatse is also home to Robert Fortenberry ’80 and his wife, Margaret, who have served as IMB missionaries in Botswana since 1994. The Fortenberrys returned to the United States in May 2012 for an eight-month stateside assignment, but were in Botswana to provide support and guidance to Hunter and Ambrose during the early days of the Orphan Care Center ministry.

“A number of years ago, our pastor in Lobatse, Jack Rantho, began to pray about us having a ministry to the needy children of Lobatse,” Robert Fortenberry says. “I am convinced that the vision God has given Allison and Kasey for working with the orphans in our area is a direct result of God’s heartbeat having found expression through Jack Rantho’s prayers. It has been my joy to work with Allison and Kasey to help them obey God and fulfill that vision.”

During their time in the United States, the Fortenberrys will speak at several conferences, including the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting and Missions Week at First Baptist Church Jackson. Robert Fortenberry will also teach a fall class in intercultural communication at MC.

After 18 years in Botswana, the Fortenberrys well understand the challenges that Hunter and Ambrose face.

“Some 60 percent of the population of Botswana is under the age of 21,” Robert Fortenberry says. “They are the most sexually active and the most likely to be HIV positive. On the other hand, they are also the most responsive part of the population, so there is an intense battle for the hearts and minds, souls and bodies of the youth of the country.”

“We’ve put a lot of emphasis on ministry to young people, both because they tend to respond more and because they need the power of Christ to escape the moral cesspool and onslaught of death all around them. Thankfully, many are responding to the message of salvation and we are seeing a new generation of young leaders emerging with a willingness to take the Gospel to their own people.”

For more on this story, visit www.mc.edu/beacon.

BODY *And* MIND

ONCOLOGIST BOBBY GRAHAM AND PSYCHIATRIST SHARON MARTIN
KNOW THAT COMPASSION IS A UNIVERSAL TREATMENT.

MOST PEOPLE WOULD CONSIDER “OVER MY DEAD BODY,” A threat, but for Dr. Sharon Martin ’72 and Dr. Bobby Graham, it’s the opening line of a love story.

Happily married for 28 years, Dr. Martin and Dr. Graham met when they shared the same cadaver in an anatomy class at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine.

“Sharon had already worked on a doctorate in anatomy and she knew a lot, so everyone in the class wanted to work on her cadaver,” Dr. Graham says. “I thought she was cute, smart, and competitive. I just wanted to work with *her*.”

The two spent months as study partners before romance bloomed and they decided to marry. Bobby Graham went on to specialize in oncology. After serving as a clinic doctor with the Mississippi Department of Health, Sharon Graham returned to school to become a psychiatrist. While they work in very different fields, Dr. Martin and Dr. Graham both consider compassion for their patients a critical part of their medical protocols.



Bobby Graham has been with Jackson Oncology Associates since 1990; he was previously with Jackson Medical Associates. While he's earned an out-

standing reputation in the field, Dr. Graham acknowledges that he considered other medical specialties before deciding to work with cancer patients.

"I didn't want to go into oncology because I thought it would be so sad," Dr. Graham recalls. "But in oncology, you have opportunities to help not just the patient, but the entire family during a frightening time. After working with a few patients, I realized oncology was a good field for me. A sad field sometimes, but a good field."

Practicing oncology often means treating patients who will be terminal. Dr. Graham walks a daily line between being professional and becoming callous, being sensitive to a patient's fear and grief and becoming too emotionally involved to perform his job well. He credits his faith with helping him find the right balance.

"I pray every day for four things," Dr. Graham says. "For the competence to do a good job; for confidence, which comes from knowing that God is in control no matter what I do; for the compassion to treat people the way I would want to be treated; and for completion."

"Completion can be the hardest," Dr. Graham continues. "Doctors get attached to their patients and their patients' families. When you get to the end of a patient's treatment, there is a tendency to want to pull back, to not want to go to that patient's room every day. I pray for the completion that allows me to continue to be there for the patient."

While he still feels sorrow when he remembers each of his patients who have died, Dr. Graham has also seen his share of miracles.

"It's so exciting to deliver good news to a patient," Dr. Graham says. "When you go in, the family is all tensed up, holding hands and holding their breath. Those times I can look at them and say, 'Your scan is clear,' are so exciting. I'm grateful for those days."

Dr. Sharon Martin's decision to become a psychiatrist was due in part to the six years she spent practicing with the Mississippi Department of Health. For the majority of that time, Martin worked in the Department of Health office in Port Gibson, Mississippi, where she treated "every patient who walked in the door." She saw a variety of people with a variety of illnesses, but one patient still stands out in her memory.

"This woman came in regularly convinced she had a serious medical condition. She would try to show me the proof of that condition on her clothing," Dr. Martin recalls. "There was never anything there. She didn't have a physical condition. She was psychotic and delusional, and she refused to take the antipsychotic medication that would have helped her."

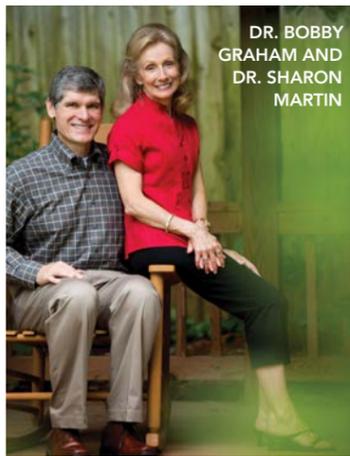
"Meeting her and other patients like her made me think about practicing psychiatry," Dr. Martin continues. "You'd be surprised by how many people come to the doctor complaining about a physical problem – and maybe they do have physical symptoms – but what's really behind it is a mental problem."

When the couple's sons were three, four, and five years old, Dr. Martin returned to the University of Mississippi School of Medicine to study psychiatry. Upon completing school in 1996 she accepted a position at the Mississippi State Hospital at Whitfield, where she has worked ever since.

Patients are admitted to the State Hospital when they have been deemed a danger to themselves or to others, or when they are unable to care for themselves. Dr. Martin is a psychiatrist in the female receiving area, where patients are admitted and undergo their initial physical and mental evaluations.

"Our patients usually come from an outside hospital or from jail following a court commitment. Occasionally they come here from their homes," Dr. Martin says. "They range in age from 18 to 83 years old. Some come from wealthy families, some are homeless. Some are highly educated, some are not. Some patients look perfectly ordinary, other patients may not have bathed in months or even years. All of those patients are together on this one unit."

Dr. Martin is a psychiatrist in the female receiving area, where patients are admitted and undergo their initial physical and mental evaluations.



SUPPORTING MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE Dr. Sharon Martin '72 has strong ties to Mississippi College. Dr. Martin's mother earned bachelor's, master's, and specialist's degrees at MC, and her father graduated from the Jackson School of Law, now MC Law. Dr. Martin also serves as a member of the MC board of trustees. Dr. Bobby Graham is an alumnus of Millsaps College, but the couple agreed early on not to bring the Backyard Brawl into their *own* backyard. Instead, both are generous supporters of Mississippi College. "We donate to things we believe in," Dr. Graham says. "I'm not an alumnus, but like Sharon, I believe in what MC stands for." The couple has made many contributions to the university, including sponsoring the annual spring scholarship banquet. "Both of my parents were teachers, and education is just so important to us," Dr. Martin says. "It's nice to have noted speakers come to MC for the banquet, but knowing that we're helping someone who might not otherwise have a chance to get an education attend MC is the real reason we want to be involved."

"I PRAY EVERY DAY FOR FOUR THINGS.

For the competence to do a good job; for confidence, which comes from knowing that God is in control no matter what I do; for the compassion to treat people the way I would want to be treated; and for completion." — Dr. Bobby Graham

Following a physical and psychiatric evaluation, orders are written and the patient's treatment begins. As patients progress in their treatment, they are moved from the receiving unit to less restrictive floors.

Dr. Martin has treated patients whose mental illnesses left them barely able to speak and patients who were so violent and aggressive they could barely be contained. She has witnessed terrible suffering on the part of patients and their families, and has been verbally attacked by the patients she was trying to help.

"If I get screamed at or called an obscene name once a day, I get screamed at or called an obscene name 50 times a day," Dr. Martin says with a wry smile. "When my sons were in medical school, I couldn't even get them to come do a rotation with me. I think they were scared."

The average stay at the Mississippi State Hospital is four weeks. As many as 50 percent of Dr. Martin's patients are readmissions – patients who have been released, but find themselves back under psychiatric hospital care.

"This is one of the differences between treating physical illness and treating mental illness," Dr. Martin says. "Many mental illnesses – schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and others – are not curable, but they are *treatable*. The problem is that the patient works against you. There is a lack of insight because they don't recognize that they are impaired, or the side effects of the medicines are so bad that they refuse to take them."

"It gets very frustrating," Dr. Martin acknowledges. "When I get frustrated, I make a point of pulling back a little, making my contact with that patient a little briefer. I'm still providing the level of care the patient needs, but I'm giving myself some time and space to defuse so I can go back in and give that patient what he or she needs."

Despite the unique challenges that come with treating mental illness, Dr. Martin remains committed to helping not only her patients, but also their families.

"Mental illness devastates the family as well as the patient," Dr. Martin says. "These illnesses can be treated *if* the patient is compliant, but they can't be cured. It never ends. They go on and on for years with no relief. We're talking about living with a family member who might be violent or acting in such a way that they can never be left alone or taken out in public. I can't tell you how many times I've heard a family member say, 'We just don't know what to do anymore.' In many cases, we are the only place these patients and families have to turn."

Like her husband, Dr. Martin has also experienced success stories – patients who *do* take their medication or respond to treatment and go on to live healthy, productive, and happy lives.

"We treated one young woman I was really concerned about after she was discharged," Dr. Martin says. "Later she sent a message to me that said she was doing well and to tell her treatment team hello."

"I am not a saint – Bobby will tell you that – but when you actually talk to these people, their stories are compelling," Dr. Martin continues. "You feel like you can help them. Some you can't, but some you can. Some *do* want help and they don't have anywhere else to get it."

"Actually, she is a saint," Dr. Graham says. "She keeps doing this because she was called to do it."

People who choose to work in fields that see such great joy and such great sorrow risk becoming jaded to any emotion, happy or sad. But Dr. Sharon Martin and Dr. Bobby Graham both say their work has made them more empathetic, more compassionate people.

"Sometimes, we come home and flip a coin to see who had the best day or the toughest day," Dr. Graham says. "But I have an advantage in dealing with the highs and lows. I can always talk to my psychiatrist."



SOMETHING IN THE GENES

It's understandable that Dr. Sharon Martin and Dr. Bobby Graham are tempted to brag about their children. Their three sons, all MC alumni, are already making quite a mark on the world.

After making the highest score in the nation on the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Jacob Graham '07 enrolled at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine, where he is completing an internship in internal medicine. Jacob is combining his medical studies with classes at seminary; his plan is to specialize in end-of-life care. Jacob's wife, Elise, is a dentist.

Aaron Graham '08, a former MC student body president, graduated from the Harvard University School of Law and currently works as a clerk for Judge Rhessa Barksdale of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. He will begin a position with the law firm of Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP this fall.

Caleb Graham '10, a former Presidential Scholar, is in his third year of medical school at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine. Caleb finished his first year of medical school first in his class.

Above: Caleb, Aaron, and Jacob Graham



"J.R. AND I LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO THAT WHAT YOU HAVE IS NOT JUST BECAUSE YOU EARNED IT. IT'S ALSO BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T SPEND IT," TERESA JOHNSTON SAYS. "SO WE HAVE BEEN FRUGAL, HAVEN'T WE?" "WE'RE PRETTY TIGHT," J.R. JOHNSTON REPLIES WITH A LAUGH.

A GENEROUS GIFT *from the* GREATEST GENERATION

A focal point in J.R. and Teresa Johnston's Houston, Texas, home is a photograph of the steps leading into Mississippi College's Lowrey Hall. It was on those very steps that J.R. and Teresa met as MC students more than six decades ago.

"Those are the steps where we met," J.R. says, pointing to the photograph. "And met, and met, and met."

J.R. was attending college on the G.I. Bill, back home in Mississippi after taking shrapnel in his leg during the Normandy invasion. Teresa, a former Miss Hospitality, caught his eye as she made her way up the steps to the library.

Married for 65 years, the Johnstons' fondest memory is of their wedding ceremony, held on a Sunday after church and performed by J.R.'s father, a Baptist minister.

"It was the cheapest wedding you ever saw," J.R. says.

"No, dear, it was *inexpensive*," Teresa chides gently, patting his hand. "Our wedding was not *cheap*, it was *inexpensive*."

Over the next six decades, J.R. and Teresa built a happy life together, with J.R. eventually retiring as CFO of

Houston Light & Power and Teresa enjoying her own career as a bookkeeper at a Houston gas company ("The rival to his electric company," Teresa points out.)

As a result of frugal living and careful planning, the Johnstons have been able to give generously to Mississippi College. The couple purchased an annuity that provides them with an income for their lifetimes and will benefit their *alma mater* upon their passing.

"God has been so good to us, why not give back this way?" Teresa says. "MC means everything to us. It was a wonderful place to be and it's a great feeling to be able to do something like this for the university."

"We were both fortunate to get to go to college, and we thought about the fact that MC gives a lot of scholarships to students that otherwise wouldn't be there," J.R. says. "As Christians, we have a certain obligation to God's work and this is one way we can figure we've helped God out – by giving back."

PLANNED GIFTS TO MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

may include simple bequests (gifts left in a will), trusts, life insurance, annuities, or real estate. For information on making a planned gift to Mississippi College, visit www.mc.edu/plannedgiving or contact:

DR. BILL TOWNSEND • *Vice President for Institutional Advancement*
601.925.3257 • bill.townsend@mc.edu

Class Notes

40s Dr. Cecil Sutley (B.A. '48) received Ouachita Baptist University's Elrod Center for Family and Community 2012 Community Service Excellence Award. Dr. Sutley has served as volunteer chaplain for Baptist Hospice of Arkadelphia for 18 years. He and his wife, Ellajane, have served as volunteer replacements for missionaries on furlough, delivered meals-on-wheels for 20 years, and participated in numerous disaster relief efforts with Red River Baptist Association. Sutley served at Ouachita in such roles as university counselor, dean of students, and professor of psychology and religion for a total of 33 years. An Army Air Corps veteran, he earned his doctor of religious education and doctor of education degrees at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

50s Dr. Joseph H. Hamilton, Jr. (B.S. '54, D.S.C. '82) has been elected a member of the Academia Europaea, a non-governmental association of independent scientists and scholars in arts and sciences that promotes learning, education, and research. Hamilton was one of 69 new members elected in 2011 from the field of physical sciences and engineering. He joins three other members from the United States elected in all fields this year. The experimental nuclear physicist was elected based on his pioneering research on how atomic nuclei behave in unstable conditions, a field which has become a major frontier with several countries building billion dollar facilities to pursue such studies.



Dr. Joseph Hamilton

Hal B. Lee, Jr. (B.A. '54), a major in the Mississippi Wing Civil Air Patrol, is the Civil Air Patrol's new state chaplain. He is responsible for the ministry of Civil Air Patrol chaplains throughout the state, equipping, training, and managing. Those chaplains will minister to cadets and senior Civil Air Patrol members involved in emergency services, Cadet programs, and aerospace education.



Dr. Donald Phillips

Dr. Donald Earl Phillips (B.A. '54, L.L.D. '84) was inducted into the Mississippi Community/Junior College Sports Hall of Fame in April 2012.

Rev. Thomas R. Lee (B.A. '58) is acting director of the Norton

Institute for Congregational Health, a ministry of Carson-Newman College.

60s Dr. Tad Barham (B.S. '62), the medical director and chairman of the board at Woman's Hospital in Flowood, has been appointed by Gov. Phil Bryant to the State Board of Health.

Rev. Joe Ratcliff (B.A. '62) retired in 2010 after 50 years of continuous pastoral ministry, with the last 17 years spent at First Baptist Church in St. Francisville, Louisiana.

Susan Moore Keen (B.S.Ed. '63) published the book, *Left to Die*, about Captain Harley Hall, a Blue Angels leader still missing in Vietnam. A teacher, reader, world traveler, gourmet cook, and the mother of two, Keen has written and published two cookbooks, worked as an interior designer, and graduated from several French cooking schools. She and her husband, Jack Keen, M.D., live in Fort Worth and are active members of Travis Avenue Baptist Church.

Dr. Ted Alexander (M.Ed. '64) was honored by the Mississippi Association of School Administrators with the Golden Lamp Award. Although Alexander retired in 2000 as president of Pearl River Community College, his work continues as chief executive officer of the Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation in Picayune. He has served as a biology and physical science teacher, coach, guidance counselor, and principal in Meadville, as the Pascagoula High School principal, and as superintendent of schools in Newton and McComb. Alexander is the founding chair and a current member of the board of directors of the Mississippi Council on Economic Education.

George Houston (B.A. '64) was featured in *The Christian Index*, the newsletter of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Dr. Emily Fokeladeh (B.A. '65), assistant professor in the Department of Modern Languages, was named the 2012 recipient of the Mississippi College Distinguished Professor Award.

Parker Dykes (B.S. '65, M.B.A. '79) was inducted into the Mississippi Community/Junior College Sports Hall of Fame in April 2012.

Robert Hawkins (B.S. '66, M.B.A. '79) has been hired as officer and credit analyst in the BankPlus administration office. Hawkins has more than eight years of experience in the banking industry.

Joe P. Walker (B.S.Ed. '69, M.Ed. '72), the founder of modern-day track and field at the University of Mississippi, will retire



DR. SAMUEL MARSHALL GORE HONORED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

IN A JUNE CEREMONY AT THE MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM of Art, internationally celebrated sculptor Sam Gore '51 received a lifetime achievement award from the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters. The award was the latest recognition for the 85-year-old former chairman of the MC Art Department, whose contributions to the art world span more than six decades.

"This was quite an honor," Gore said. "But I'm like a turtle on a fence post – I didn't get there by myself."

Gore credits God for giving him the skills to create extraordinary art pieces that include his "Servant Savior" and "Jesus and the Children" sculptures on the MC campus. Gore's sculptures are also displayed at First Baptist Church Jackson, the Gilfoy Nursing Museum at Baptist Medical Center, the Mississippi Capitol, and the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. He is currently at work on a "Fallen Comrades" sculpture saluting America's military veterans, which will be installed at the Clinton Visitors Center.

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters presents awards for achievements in fiction, non-fiction, visual arts, musical composition, photography, and poetry. Retired Hinds County Circuit Judge Swan Yerger, a member of the Institute's board of governors, nominated Gore for the lifetime achievement award.

"Sam Gore brings a great reputation in the art world and in sculpture," Yerger said. "He's renowned as an artist, and has been such a good role model and positive influence on art students over the years."

Sharing the lifetime achievement award with Gore was painter Dr. Andrew Bucci. Gore and Bucci join an all-star roster of previous lifetime achievement winners including literary icons Eudora Welty, Shelby Foote, and Ellen Douglas; opera star Leontyne Price; artists Marshall Bouldin III and Walter Anderson; and actor Morgan Freeman. Former Gore students Wyatt Waters and Bill Dunlap and retired MC music professor and composer James S. Sclater have also been recognized by the Institute.



Joe P. Walker

at the close of the NCAA championships and began work July 1, 2012, as an assistant coach at the University of Louisville.

Dr. Jimmy "Buddy" Wagner (B.A. '69) published two books, *Brief and Unusual Therapies* and *Searching For Values: A Grandfather's Way*.

Dr. Wagner served as director of the counseling center at Mississippi College from 1986 to his retirement in 2009. He continues to teach in the counseling psychology graduate program at MC.

Dr. Woodrow "Woody" Burt, Jr. (B.A. '69, M.Ed. '74) retired as president of Hannibal La-Grange University. He worked at the university for three decades, and served as president for the last 18 years. He and his wife are relocating to England this fall to teach at a college.

70s Marion Collier (B.A. '70) published the book, *A Matter of Grace*, a story of how second chances are the greatest gift life can provide.

Dr. James Patterson Smith (B.A. '71) has authored a new book, *Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story*, published by University Press of Mississippi.

Dr. Curtis Ferrell (B.A. '72) was named the new director of missions for the Calhoun Baptist Association.

Rev. Tom Hearon (B.A. '73) has been reappointed to the mission field. He will be working with the European Peoples Affinity Group in Prague, Czech Republic. He has formerly served in Brazil and Italy.

Anthony Jones (B.S. '74) was awarded the 2011 Realtor of the Year award by the Mississippi Association of Realtors.

Alfred Stubblefield (B.S. '74) retired from his post as president and CEO of Baptist Health Care, a business that employs 6,500 people working in 13 healthcare facilities throughout Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, Florida.

Benjamin "Ben" Crawford III (B.A. '76) was promoted to voice services task leader for Information Innovators, Inc. of Springfield, Virginia. Crawford leads a team of 10 members in keeping the voice communications systems working at the United States Patent and Trade Office in Alexandria, Virginia. He started with Information Innovators as a voice systems engineer in July of 2009. This year, Crawford celebrates 28 years in the telecommunications industry.

Stephen "Steve" Puryear (B.A. '76, M.B.A. '78) has been installed as the moderator of the Mississippi Presbytery, the governing body of the Presbyterian Church USA and has been chosen to be a delegate to the General Assembly (national governing body) in July 2012.

Rev. Bruce Fields (B.A. '78) serves as associate pastor/pastoral care at First Baptist Church, Gainesville, Georgia. He was recently honored for 20 years of service at the church.



Leslie Criss

Leslie Criss (B.A. '79) published *Still & Yet*, a collection of popular newspaper columns focusing on life in Mississippi. Criss is the features and special sections editor at the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* in Tupelo.

Victoria Hobson (B.S.Ed. '79) was honored by the Clinton Public School District upon her retirement from Northside Elementary School where she had taught since 1987.

80s Christopher Gillespie (B.S.Ed. '80), the long-time director of athletic training education at Samford University in Alabama, was inducted into the National Athletic Trainers Hall of Fame.

J. Carter Thompson, Jr. (B.A. '81) was named a 2011 Top Ten Leader in Law by the *Mississippi Business Journal*. A shareholder in the Jackson office of Baker Donelson, he leads the firm's Product Liability and Mass Tort Group and is co-chair of the Drug, Device and Life Science Industry Group. He has more than 25 years experience defending product liability and other claims and lawsuits and is a frequent author and lecturer on issues relating to litigation. Thompson and his wife, Wendy, have three sons, Alston, Carter, and Keith.

Phillip Grady (B.S. '83) was inducted into the McComb High School Hall of Fame in October 2011.

Karen Metz (B.S.N. '83) has been named CEO of Physicians Regional Medical Center in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Paul Long (M.B.A. '87) has been promoted to first vice president at Trustmark in Jackson, where he is the manager of the consumer loan center. He has more than 24 years of experience in the financial industry.

Wendell Barnes (M.B.A. '88), a client services manager for MWH Americas in the municipal water and wastewater division in Southeast Texas, was inducted into the Missouri S&T Academy of Engineering Management. The academy, established at Missouri S&T in 2004, is an advisory group to the university's engineering management department.

Gary Watts (B.S.B.A. '88) is founder and CEO of Broadband Voice, a technology company that specializes in providing hosted Voice over IP products to commercial businesses.

Jane Everly (Ed.S. '89, M.Ed. '96) has been named the Jackson Public Schools' Administrator of the Year.

Dr. Leslie "Les" Hughes (B.A. '89) is the new senior pastor of Highview Baptist Church, one of the Louisville, Kentucky area's largest congregations.

Rev. Dale Tadlock (B.S. '89) was recently elected to serve as the inaugural president of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Youth Ministry Network (CBFYMN). He continues to write youth mission curriculum for CBF and is consulting and writing curriculum for Passport Camps. In April 2012, Tad-

lock was featured in a nationally-released article dealing with the CBFYMN and youth ministry as a long-term career. In August 2012, he will celebrate his 25th year in student ministry and his fifth anniversary as associate pastor and minister to young adults and students at First Baptist Church, Waynesboro, Virginia.

Mark Wilson (B.S.B.A. '89) joined Westminster Theological Seminary in Glenside, Pennsylvania, as chief financial officer in December 2011. He is married to Nathalie Delest Wilson and they have three sons: Max (12), Luke (10), and Benjamin (6).

90s Elaine Saxton (B.S.B.A. '90) has been named chief financial officer of one of the fastest-growing private companies in America, New South Equipment Mats, headquartered in Madison, Mississippi. Saxton is a Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) and Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) with experience in corporate accounting, as well as internal and external audit.

Steven Dukes (B.S.B.A. '91) is director of customer relations with Broadband Voice, a technology company that specializes in providing hosted Voice over IP products to commercial businesses.

David Maron (B.S. '92) was named to *Portico* magazine's Top 10 list of up-and-coming Jackson area attorneys.

Steven Deaton (M.A. '94) received the 2011 Humanities Teacher Award for Holmes Community College presented by the Mississippi Humanities Council.

William "Brad" Johns (B.S. '94, M.S. '05, Ed.S. '09), chair of the math department at McLaurin High School in Rankin County, was named a Heroes of Hope™ Living with Cystic Fibrosis for his ability to serve as a role model and inspire hope in others with cystic fibrosis.

Jason Boutwell (B.S.B.A. '95, M.B.A. '98) has been promoted to first vice president and commercial relationship manager II at Trustmark National Bank in Hattiesburg.

Dr. Janice Lemon (M.Ed. '95) joined the faculty of Mississippi College in the Department of Psychology & Counseling. She was previously a senior counselor at Florence High School. Lemon holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Belhaven University and a doctorate in counseling education from Mississippi State University.

Edith Lynn Stark Kennedy (B.A. '96) has been promoted to assistant vice president within the BankPlus community development department. She has been with the bank for five years and has more than 12 years of experience in the banking industry.

Jennifer W. Anderson (B.S.B.A. '97) is the executive director of the Flowood Chamber of Commerce.

Richard Hollis Burge (M.Ed. '97), former principal of Lovett Elementary in Clinton, is a National Distinguished Principal. He is the only principal in Mississippi to receive the award in 2012.



HOMECOMING 2012: ALL ROADS LEAD TO MC OCTOBER 25-27, 2012

CLASS REUNIONS

Classes celebrating reunions include 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

50-YEAR CLUB REUNION

Honoring the Class of 1962

The Class of 1962 will celebrate its Golden Anniversary during Homecoming 2012, and the 50-Year Club will welcome new members into the club at that time.

ADDITIONAL HOMECOMING FESTIVITIES

A golf tournament, awards brunch, tailgating on the Quad, parade, departmental receptions, and of course, football will round out this fun-filled, nostalgic weekend. If you'd like to help plan a reunion, please contact the Office of Alumni Affairs at 601.925.3252.

NEW INDUCTEES TO THE SPORTS HALL OF FAME

THE MC SPORTS HALL OF FAME WELCOMED EIGHT new members in 2012. The Sports Hall of Fame recognizes superior Choctaw athletes, coaches, and administrators who have made major contributions to MC and have continued to demonstrate the positive values learned through competing in intercollegiate sports.

The 2012 inductees include Shinall T. Conway '01, football; Bob Boyte '82, baseball; Malcolm Houston '92, football; Raymond "Mickey" McGuire '57, basketball, football, and track; H. Harlan Stanley '66, basketball; Ed Trehern '69, football; Jason Williams '94, track and field; and Howard L. Willoughby '53, football.

Christi Wall (B.S.Ed. '97, M.Ed. '99), a fifth grade math and science teacher at Rankin Elementary in Tupelo, Mississippi, was chosen as one of 10 Tupelo teachers to receive the 2011 Tupelo Teacher of Distinction Award.

Renee Davis (B.S. '98, M.S. '01), after teaching mathematics on the Raymond campus of Hinds Community College for six years, will transfer to the Rankin campus in the fall 2012 semester to serve as an instructor and department chair for the mathematics department.

J. "Kyle" Fulcher (B.S.B.A. '98, J.D. '00) is division sales manager with John Deere Agriculture & Turf.

Donald "Don" H. Jones, Jr. (B.S.B.A. '99) has been promoted to vice president at Trustmark in Jackson, where he is a senior accountant.

00s Stephanie Rutland Jones (B.S. '00, M.S. '07) joined the Office of the Attorney General in Jackson.

Dennis Skains (B.S.Ed. '00) has been named the head football coach at South Lafourche High School in Galliano, Louisiana.

Lt. Colonel Stephen McCraney (B.S. '00, M.S.S. '11) received the Mississippi First Responder Award for his dedicated service after an April 2011 tornado devastated the town of Smithville in Northeast Mississippi. The award also cites McCraney's work as a first responder to the severe flooding of the Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers in May 2011. McCraney is MC's director of public safety.

Michael "Mack" Dowell (B.S.B.A. '00) has been appointed director of programming for the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT). A seven-year MDOT employee, he has served the last five years as the assistant director of programming.

Brian Blackwell (B.S. '01) has been named the marketing director for the *Louisiana Baptist Message* newspaper, where he served as staff writer from 2002-2006.

Aaron Chamberlain (B.S. '02) recently joined *Texas Monthly* as production manager.

Dr. William Waller III (B.S. '02) has joined the Hattiesburg Clinic and opened Dermatology-South, a service of the clinic. He holds a medical degree from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in Jackson, completed his internship in internal medicine at St. Mary's Medical Center in San Francisco, and completed a residency in dermatology and a clinical research fellowship in dermatology at Tulane University.



Lori Meeks

Lori "Brooke" Meeks (B.S. '04, M.B.A. '10) has been promoted to assistant vice president in the human resources department at Trustmark in Jackson.

Stephen Huwe (B.S.B.A. '05) has joined the firm of Daniel Coker Horton & Bell as an associate.

Elizabeth "Beth" Knight (B.S. '05, M.S. '07) has been named Richland High School's Teacher of the Year for 2011-12.

Kellye Smith (B.S.B.A. '07) has joined Ross & Yerger Insurance Inc. as a resource specialist.

David F. Berry IV (B.S.B.A. '04, J.D. '08) has been named shareholder and managing partner in the firm of Deaton & Daniel, P.A. in Flowood, Mississippi.

Megan Potts (B.S.B.A. '08, J.D. '11) has joined the Mississippi Court of Appeals staff as a law clerk for presiding Judge T. Kenneth Griffis of Ridgeland.

David McCoy (B.S. '09) is technical support manager of Broadband Voice, a technology company that specializes in providing hosted Voice over IP products to commercial businesses.

10s Juan Flores (M.B.A. '10) has been named the freight and logistics administrator for the State of Florida. Flores will serve as a key advisor on freight transportation policy, which will help to create the conditions needed for the private sector to make investments to strengthen Florida's economy by efficiently moving freight throughout the state.

Reginald "Reggie" Hurns (B.A. '10) has joined Youth Villages as a teacher-counselor at the Youth Villages-Inner Harbour Campus in Douglasville, Georgia, which provides residential treatment to children with emotional, behavioral and mental health issues.

Reagan Jackson (B.A. '10) has joined Mississippi Technology Alliance as a marketing and external affairs manager.



Mary Margaret May

Mary Margaret May (B.M. '10, M.M. '12) released her third album "I Asked the Lord" (available on iTunes, Pandora, and Amazon.com). For more information, visit www.marymargaretmay.com.

Matthew "Kyle" Moore (B.S.B.A. '10) received the American Board of Trial Advocates Scholarship (ABOTA), given to the student nominated by the lead ABOTA instructor in the trial practice course at MC Law.

Morgan Harpole (B.S. '11) is the new assistant softball coach at Grand Saline High School in Texas.

Marriages

Rev. Ernest (B.A. '53) and Bernice Goff celebrated 70 years of marriage on November 7, 2011.

Dr. David Raddin (B.A. '77) and Beverly Barber (B.S.Ed. '77, M.Ed. '85), March 17, 2012

Dr. Jonathan D. Carroll (B.S. '02) and Dr. Pisgah Hosseini, September 17, 2011

Lauren Chow (B.A. '02) and Myles Randall Grim, July 23, 2011

Latoya Lashanta Roberts (B.S.W. '03) and Courtney Robby Boler, October 29, 2011

Lindsey Sellers (B.S. '05) and Christopher Eric Martin, May 12, 2012

James "Hal" Plunkett (B.S. '06) and Kristi Turner, October 15, 2011

Cameron Vaughan (B.A. '06) and Cameron Pumphrey, May 12, 2012

Rhymes "Walker" Boggs (B.S. '06) and Natalie Paige Connelly, January 7, 2012

Meghan Elizabeth Poole (B.S.N. '07) and Timothy Wayne Tate, November 12, 2011

Megan Elizabeth Potts (B.S.B.A. '08, J.D. '11) and Lea Anderson Garrett, Jr. (B.S.B.A. '08), May 19, 2012

Lauren Elizabeth Parkin (B.S.B.A. '09) and Michael Whitney Hawkins, April 16, 2011

Sarah Ellen Dodson (M.M. '10) and Jeremy Shawn Fortenberry (B.M. '10), November 5, 2011

Anna Kate Brown (B.S.N. '10) and John Arthur Denton, Jr., March 10, 2012

Births & Adoptions

Dr. Michael (B.A. '87) and Christa Mann, David Patrick, February 7, 2012. He is welcomed by big sister Elizabeth.

Evan (B.A. '00) and Melanie (Massad, B.A. '01) Lenow, Laurel Ruth, August 12, 2011. She is welcomed by Molly, Elizabeth, and William.

Elizabeth "Lizzie" (Fortenberry, B.A. '01) and Eric Bebbler, Eli Bryan, March 26, 2012. He is welcomed by grandparents Dr. Cliff (B.S.Ed. '77, M.Ed. '78) and Melanie Fortenberry (B.S.N. '76, M.H.S. '90).

Dr. Charles (B.A. '01) and Claire (Smith, B.A. '01) Belknap, Katherine Myrick, December 15, 2011

Aaron (B.A. '02) and Marion (Knight, B.S. '02) Tucker, Aaralyn Joy, September 13, 2011. She is welcomed by big sisters Gracie and Makenzye.

Timothy "Tim" (B.A. '03, M.A. '06) and Ashley Krason (M.A. '07), Tanner, April 24, 2012

Mary Elizabeth (Crenshaw, B.S.N. '03) and Kevin Tullos (B.A. '03), Laura, December 29, 2011

Brittney (Danielle, B.M.Ed. '06) and Ross Aven III (B.S.B.A. '04, M.B.A. '06), Ross L. IV "Ro", April 19, 2012

Bethany (McGehee, B.S. Ed. '05) and David F. Berry IV (B.S.B.A. '04, J.D. '08), Bella Lofton, March 29, 2011



MC GOES DOWN UNDER

DISCOVER AUSTRALIA ON THE
MC SPRING BREAK TOUR
MARCH 7-16, 2013

Discover the fabled Land Down Under on a group tour hosted by Mississippi College March 7-16, 2013. This once-in-a-lifetime adventure is open to all MC students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. Participants may select courses for college credit or participate as non-credit enrollees.

Highlights include touring Cairns, the colorful capital of tropical North Queensland; exploring ancient cultures at the Tjapukao Aboriginal Cultural Park; taking in breathtaking scenery aboard the Kuranda train; and discovering the wonders of Sydney, the bustling capital of New South Wales and home of the world's most famous opera house. You'll also have the opportunity to cuddle with koala bears, explore thundering waterfalls, feed kangaroos, snorkel the Great Barrier Reef, or explore the colorful Bondi beachfront.

TOUR PRICE: Approximately \$3,940, depending upon number of participants. *For tour inclusions and a detailed itinerary, visit www.mc.edu/academics/abroad.*

If you are interested in participating, please complete and return the registration form found online along with a deposit of \$350 to Continuing Education, Box 4031, Clinton, MS 39058.

For more information, please contact Dr. Beth Stapleton at stapleto@mc.edu or at 601.925.7664.

Stephen (B.S.B.A. '05) and Amy Berry Huwe (B.A. '06), Caroline Grace "Callie," December 21, 2011

Heather and Arthur Wood IV (B.S. '04), Anne Elise, September 6, 2011

Micki (Bennett, B.S. '05) and Andy Atkinson, Alice Olivia, January 5, 2012

David and Lauren (Mitchell, B.S. '08) Sansing, Webb Robert, February 29, 2012. He is welcomed by grandparents Cliff (B.S.B.A. '83) and Fran (Ellis, B.M. '83, M.M. '94) Mitchell and great grandparents Rev. Gowan (B.A. '57) and Kay Ellis.

Bailey (Duke, B.S.B.A. '10) and Blake Rowell (B.S.B.A. '11), Anderson Blake, November 3, 2011

Doug and Jenny Price (MC intensive English program coordinator in Office of Global Education), William Welby, December 22, 2011

Martha and D.J. Rosado (MC assistant professor in Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry), Addison Marie, March 12, 2012

In Memoriam

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE EXTENDS SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE FOLLOWING ALUMNI, FRIENDS AND FORMER FACULTY/STAFF MEMBERS.

Alumni

Carlena Hardin (Hillman '36), August 28, 2011

David Turner (B.A. '40), January 11, 2012

Dr. James Moore (B.A. '41), March 2, 2006

Dennis Thornton ('41), December 28, 2011

Mary Greenway Majure (Hillman '42, B.A. '42), November 24, 2011

Perry Egger (B.S. '43), October 17, 2011

Rev. Tom Gullatt (B.A. '44), November 15, 2011

Turner McLaurin (B.S. '45), January 5, 2012

Jean Lovett Myatt (B.S. '45), January 31, 2012

Dorothy Buxton (B.A. '46), December 1, 2011

Dr. Hubert Hurt (B.A. '47), September 21, 2011

Richard Courtright (B.A. '48), June 2, 2011

Myra Gullede (B.A. '48), March 10, 2011

Wayne Coleman (B.A. '49), March 31, 2012

Shirley Dukes (B.A. '49), December 17, 2011

Barbara Given Hardy (B.A. '49), April 21, 2012

Rev. Carl Nelson (B.A. '49), July 28, 2011

Betty Martin Cason (B.S. '50), November 1, 2011

Harold E. Dacus (B.A. '50, M.Ed. '72), January 9, 2012

Bobby Jean McCown Wall ('50), April 21, 2012

Robert Dunaway (B.S.Ed. '51), November 7, 2011

Dr. Martha Maxwell Wood (B.A. '51), April 19, 2012

Fred Jolly (B.S.Ed. '52), May 11, 2012

T. Garvice Murphree (B.A. '52), November 8, 2011

Margaret Fields Pitts (B.S.Ed. '52), April 7, 2012

Carl Walker (B.S. '52), March 23, 2012
 Joe A. Lee (B.S. '53), September 10, 2011
 Eloise "Weasie" Bym Rodenhiser (B.A. '53), January 31, 2012
 Rev. John Alexander (B.A. '54), May 11, 2012
 Rev. Calvin Inman (B.A. '54), December 30, 2011
 Major Thomas Wayne Black, Jr. (B.S. '55),
 November 25, 2011
 Caroline Stansbury Loflin ('56), April 20, 2012
 Sarah Maurer Harrell (B.A. '57), January 7, 2012
 Betty Stokes (B.S.Ed. '57, M.Ed. '61), December 26, 2011
 William Williams (B.S. '57), September 8, 2010
 Donnie Ainsworth (B.S. '58), February 11, 2012
 Katy Donald Davis Abbott (B.S.Ed. '58), June 17, 2011
 Mary Ballard (B.S.Ed. '58), October 2, 2011
 John Capers (L.L.B. '58), March 7, 2012
 Berniece Poole Rooke (B.A. '58, M.Ed. '75), March 30, 2012
 Sarah L. Wilkinson (B.S.Ed. '58, M.Ed. '61),
 October 27, 2011
 Henry Barfield (B.S. '59), March 21, 2011
 Dr. Ralph Howell (B.A. '60), October 21, 2011
 Robert Oakes (B.S. '60, M.Ed. '66), January 21, 2012
 Jane Lee Anderson (B.A. '61), November 15, 2011
 Abb Hatten (B.A. '61), April 25, 2012
 Joel Hollingsworth (B.S. '62), February 22, 2012
 Peggy Rodgers (B.S.Ed. '62), February 18, 2012
 Novis Jones (M.Ed. '63), September 2011
 Bennie Splain (B.S.Ed. '63, M.Ed. '66), March 30, 2012
 Dr. Denton Goodwin (B.A. '64), January 6, 2012
 John Speights (B.A. '64), November 10, 2011
 Frank Walsh (M.Ed. '64), April 2, 2012
 Roy Vickery (B.M.Ed. '64), February 8, 2012
 Eugene Bartels (B.S. '65), February 28, 2011
 Carolyn Burnham (B.S.Ed. '65), September 1, 2011
 Cliff Davis (B.A. '65), January 30, 2012
 John "Bo" Gambles (B.S.Ed. '67), May 11, 2012
 Julius Caston (M.Ed. '67), August 27, 2010
 Fredna Mullins (B.S.Ed. '68), November 23, 2011
 William T. Dixon III (B.S. '70), October 17, 2011
 Willie Hutchinson (B.S. '70), January 6, 2011
 Rev. James Jeter (B.A. '70), April 15, 2012
 Dorothy Shamburger (B.S.Ed. '70), May 15, 2012
 A.J. Kilpatrick (M.Ed. '71), May 20, 2011
 Dr. Milton Barrett (B.S. '75), May 12, 2012
 Margaret Lockett (M.Ed. '75), April 26, 2012
 Rufus Gladney (B.A. '77), August 31, 2011
 David Wittchen (M.B.A. '77), April 27, 2012
 Allan Omerza (B.S.B.A. '85), January 13, 2012
 Stacy Guynes (B.S.B.A. '86), February 14, 2012
 Esteen Quinn (M.C.C. '87), May 11, 2012
 Dr. Dianne Snyder (B.S. '87), April 9, 2012
 Nancy Cahill (M.S.S. '83, Ed.S. '89), October 28, 2011
 Wanda Kirby (M.Ed. '93), November 2, 2010
 Sue Weissinger (M.C.P. '96), April 3, 2012
 Scott Branning (B.S.B.A. '98), January 24, 2012
 Henry "Trey" Mangum (M.S.C. '98), June 17, 2011
 Craig Noone, (B.S.B.A. '03), October 14, 2011

Friends

Dr. Calvin Winfield Applewhite, February 12, 2012
 LaVerne Applewhite, March 24, 2012
 Ileta Bennett, February 28, 2012
 Amanda Berry, mother of library assistant Paula Brown, February 14, 2012
 Dorothy Cornelius, MC employee (1967-2006), April 6, 2012
 Bonnie Elam, mother of post office manager Jean Hawkins, February 7, 2012
 Rev. Theodore Ford, Sr., father of MC Trustee La'Verne Edney, October 20, 2011
 Elise Strange May, widow of the late W.E. Strange (MC mathematics professor) and mother of Carol Durham (music adjunct faculty), January 11, 2012
 Carol Causey Meadors, mother of Christian studies and philosophy professor John Meadors, October 1, 2011
 George Ellis Stringer, January 31, 2012
 Gov. William Lowe "Bill" Waller, Sr., November 30, 2011
 Indy (Nela Dean) Mitchell Whitten, November 29, 2011
 Carol West, MC Law professor, December 5, 2011



Wayne Parker

Wayne Parker • 1942–2012

The Mississippi College community mourns the loss but celebrates the life of longtime MC friend and supporter, Mr. Richard Wayne Parker.

A graduate of the University of Mississippi, the University of Texas, and the University of Mississippi School of Law, Mr. Parker

enjoyed a successful, 46-year career in real estate development. He used his financial success, his wisdom, and his Christian faith to lead, support, and bless countless others.

Mr. Parker served on the Mississippi College board of trustees from 2004 through 2009, including service as board chairman during a time of extensive growth for MC in terms of enrollment, capital facilities, the university's budget, and academic programs. He was a generous contributor to student scholarships, created a special emergency fund for international students, and financially supported the university's new physician assistant program. A Wayne Parker Student Leadership Award is given to an outstanding student in the physician assistant program every semester. Mr. Parker was the recipient of the Mississippi College Alumni Association's Award of Excellence, which honors non-alumni supporters of Mississippi College.

During the last decade of his life, much of Mr. Parker's time, resources, and energy was devoted to The LifeShare Foundation, an organization he founded to help meet needs in the lives of Mississippi's underprivileged and disadvantaged children. The foundation provides assistance to children at the Mississippi Schools for the Blind and Deaf and the Magnolia Speech School, and also provides scholarships to Missis-

sippi College for outstanding students with financial need. Mr. Parker also championed the LifeShare Community Ministry, an inner city ministry for children at risk. He was a devoted member of Northminster Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, for 44 years, serving as a member of the board of deacons.

Mr. Parker is survived by his wife of 44 years, Zeita Parker; two children, three grandchildren, and countless friends. While his family and friends mourn his loss, they take comfort in knowing that Wayne Parker's greatest pleasure in life was helping individuals in need, and that he leaves a great personal and Christian witness to the world.



Rev. James Yates

Rev. James Foster (Jim) Yates, Sr. • 1926–2012

The MC community mourns the loss of Rev. James Foster (Jim) Yates, Sr., former trustee and father of MC music instructor Carol Joy Sparkman.

Rev. Yates was pastor of Yazoo City's First Baptist Church from 1961 until his retirement in 1991.

He came to Yazoo City from First Baptist Church in Paragould, Arkansas, and served a previous pastorate at Brownsville Baptist Church in Brownsville, Tennessee.

A graduate of Union University and of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Rev. Yates served his community in numerous ways throughout his tenure as a pastor and in his retirement years. He was president of the Yazoo City Ministerial Association and the Yazoo City Rotary Club, general chairman of Parents of Public Schools, and president of the Yazoo

City Municipal School District Board, and also served on the board of directors of the Yazoo County Chamber of Commerce, United Givers of Yazoo County, Yazoo Arts Council, and other civic organizations. His outstanding service to these and other community endeavors earned him numerous awards and accolades, including Yazoo County's Most Admired Citizen and Citizen of the Year.

Rev. Yates served his denomination as moderator of the Yazoo County Baptist Association and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. He served on various committees in the Southern Baptist Convention and was a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He was a member of the board of trustees of Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, William Carey University, and Mississippi College. Following his retirement, Reverend Yates was called as an interim pastor to churches throughout Mississippi. A seasoned traveler, Reverend Yates made numerous trips around the world to visit missionaries, preach revivals, attend conferences, and participate in crusades.

Rev. Yates is survived by his wife of 56 years, Joy Yates; his daughter, Carol Joy Sparkman; three sons; and four grandsons. Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church of Yazoo City or to the Music Department at Mississippi College.

IF YOU HAVE NEWS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE, please send it to Class Notes, *Beacon* magazine, Box 4027, Clinton, MS 39058, e-mail MC at pr@mc.edu, or submit your news online at <http://alumni.mc.edu/classnotes>. Photos submitted should be of professional quality.



CHRISTMAS SHOWTIME IN BRANSON

NOVEMBER 12-15, 2012

The Alumni Association invites Mississippi College alumni, parents, and friends on a festive holiday getaway to Branson, Missouri. Tour package highlights include transportation to Branson; first class accommodations; reserved seats for several performances, including "Joseph – The Musical," the Andy Williams Christmas Show, the Brett Family Singers Show, the Tony Orlando American Christmas Show, and the World Famous Platters Show; Christmas shopping excursions; several meals, and more.

Cost is approximately \$745 per person (based on double occupancy). A \$100 per person deposit is due by August 30, with final payment due by September 28, 2012.

For more information, please contact Lori Bobo at lbobo@mc.edu or 601.925.3252.



PORTRAITS FROM THE HALL OF FAME

The Mississippi College Hall of Fame was established in 1960 to annually honor four senior students for their outstanding leadership ability, scholastic achievement, extracurricular activities participation, contribution to student life, and dedication to serving God and their fellowman.

THE *Beacon* CATCHES UP WITH DR. RICHARD AXTELL '77

Rick Axtell credits a trip he made to Bangladesh when he was a student at Mississippi College with forever changing the course of his life. Axtell spent the summer of 1976 serving as a Baptist Student Union missionary in Bangladesh during a time of famine.

"I looked into the eyes of fellow human beings who were starving to death," Axtell recalls. "The experience was life-changing and determined the course of my life and teaching more than anything else."

Haunted by the suffering he saw, Axtell dedicated his life to researching issues of poverty, hunger, and homelessness, and to teaching others about these issues not just in the classroom, but also through life-changing, first-hand experiences.

Axtell earned his master's degree and Ph.D. from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Deeply concerned about the issues of hunger and homelessness, Axtell served as director of Louisville United Against Hunger and as a case manager in homeless shelters. He has studied the effects of poverty, hunger, and violence in Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and India, as well as in the United States.

Today, Axtell is the chaplain and associate professor of religion at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. As a part of their coursework, students in Axtell's *Studies in Ethics: Poverty and Homelessness* class spend a weekend living in a homeless shelter, eating and sleeping alongside homeless people from all walks of life, including the mentally ill, recovering drug addicts, single mothers with children, and the working poor.

"Nothing is more important for developing compassion than an experiential understanding of what others go through," Axtell says. "Books are powerful and important, but putting a *face* on an issue engenders caring. Students come away feeling the pain of others with new sensitivity. The experience teaches them not only about the shelter system and the homeless, but also about themselves."

Axtell also leads students on immersive trips to Nicaragua and Mexico, where the students live in poverty stricken villages, most without electricity or running water, and work in the coffee fields alongside the village residents.

"These experiences raise questions about what kind of people students want to be in a world of seemingly intractable problems. As my students have played with children of the municipal dump in Managua, harvested coffee in a mountain cooperative, interviewed survivors of a massacre in Mexico, or stayed overnight in Louisville homeless shelters, I've known that the resulting questions would fuel ongoing commitments to make a difference in the world."

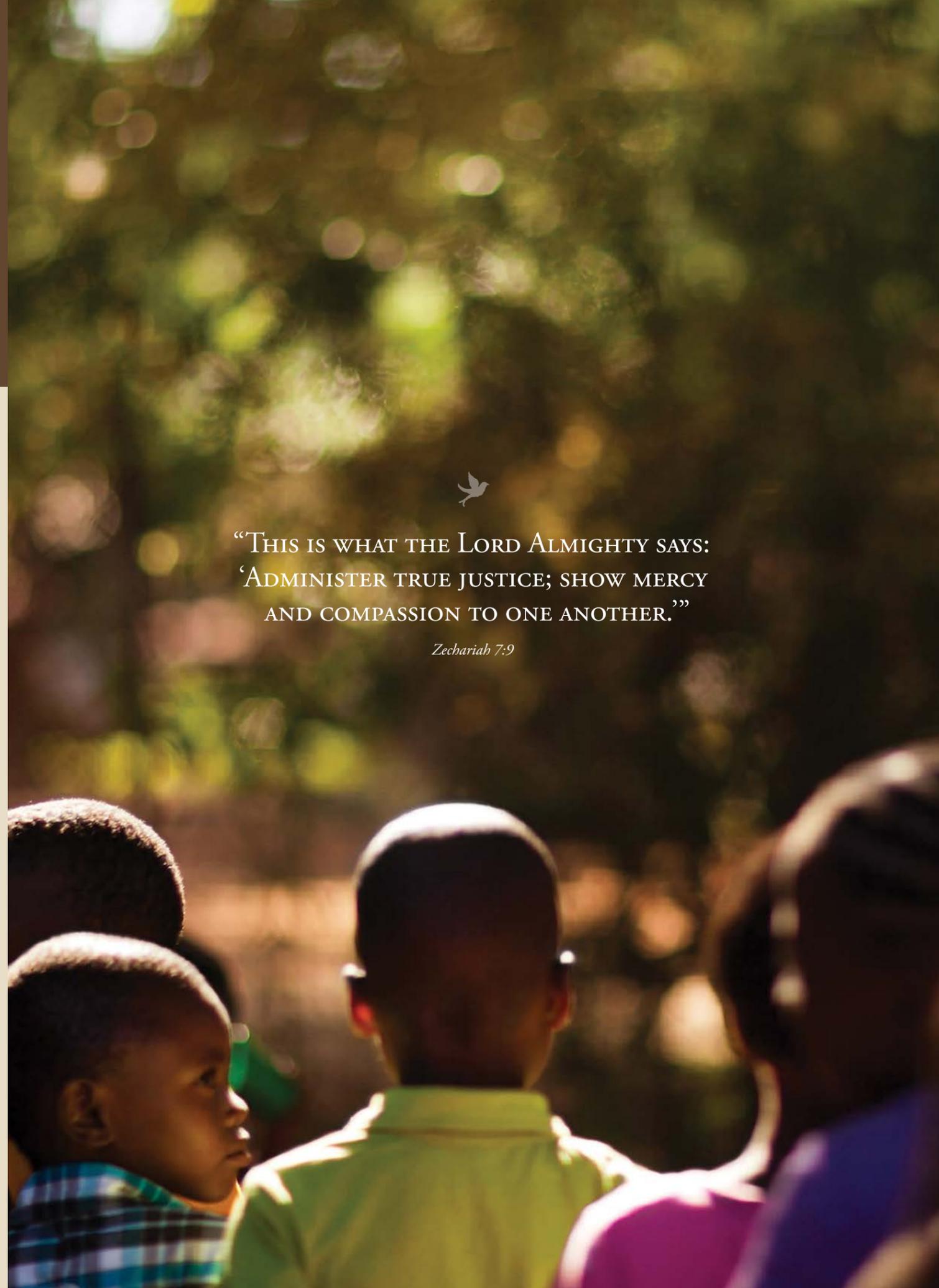
His students appreciate Axtell's unique approach; he was listed in the 2012 book, *The Best 300 Professors*, which honored professors from across the nation whose students recognized them as inspiring educators.

"My vision as an educator, inside and outside the classroom, has been to ease students across the boundaries of their comfort zones, so that they become committed to finding compassionate solutions to their generation's most pressing problems. No one can be quite the same after looking into the eyes of the unfamiliar 'Other,' the suffering 'Other,' and finding there a new connection, a new question, a new path, a new world. This is education."

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RICK AXTELL • *Hall of Fame '77*

Founders Award • Mr. Mississippi College • SBA Vice-President • BSU President
President of Sophomore Class • Vice-President of Freshman Class • Civitan • Nenamoosha Beau
Class Favorite • Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities



"THIS IS WHAT THE LORD ALMIGHTY SAYS:
'ADMINISTER TRUE JUSTICE; SHOW MERCY
AND COMPASSION TO ONE ANOTHER.'"

Zechariah 7:9



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