A black and white close-up portrait of Michael Catt, a man with grey hair and a goatee, looking slightly to the right. He is wearing a dark shirt. The background is blurred.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE | SUMMER 2010

# beacon

## Close-up On Michael Catt

THE PASTOR, PRODUCER,  
AND FATHER TALKS  
ABOUT HIS NEW MOVIE,  
*COURAGEOUS*



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

LEE GARDNER ROYCE

One would be hard-pressed to imagine a more universal experience than that of fatherhood. Fathers are common to all of us and a significant minority of us are or will be fathers. And yet, fatherhood is in trouble, particularly in the United States, where 25 percent of the children are born out of wedlock, mostly with absent fathers, and fully 50 percent of our children experience the trauma of divorce.

This edition of the *Beacon* is dedicated to fatherhood and to the truths and actions that will make us better actual and surrogate fathers.

One of the great privileges of my life is that of fatherhood. My 26-year-old son, Mark, is pursuing a Ph.D. in political science. As I have pondered about our relationship and its many pleasures and challenges, I am reminded of a classic father-son experience, that of learning to drive a car. When Mark was in the 10th grade, my wife and I found him a used car with a high crash safety rating (our choice) and a fire engine red paint job (his choice). He still drives the car.

I vividly remember as we drove around a parking lot at Anderson College, him turning to me and saying, "I don't think I can do this, I don't think that I'll ever learn how to drive." Seizing the teachable moment, I replied, "Son, you can accomplish whatever you set your mind to do and look around you everybody learns how to drive and if they can do it so can you. Here is the key: believe that you will succeed, take it one step at a time and practice, practice, practice."

This advice remains good in so many ways and for so many goals we attempt. Of course, Mark learned how to drive and to succeed in so many other ways too, serving his community and his Lord and making his parents very proud.

If you are a father, strive to become a better father. If you can substitute for absent fathers, do so. Take the mentoring opportunities that fatherhood affords. I hope this issue of the *Beacon* will inspire in each of us a new appreciation for the human fathers who guided us to the best of their abilities and a renewed love for the Heavenly Father who guided them in their efforts. May we all learn from our Heavenly Father the highest lessons of fatherhood.

*Lee Royce*

# beacon

## BY THE BEACON'S LIGHT

*"After this manner therefore pray ye:  
Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed  
be thy name." – Matthew 6:9*

God could have chosen any word or any idea for us to use to relate to Him, but He chose "father." A critical role of the earthly father is to help his children better understand their Heavenly Father. Absent, cruel, or indifferent earthly fathers can lead their children to believe that God is also absent, cruel, or indifferent. A concerned, compassionate, and approachable father, however, paints a picture for his children of the boundless love of their Heavenly Father.

In the following pages, you'll meet men who have risen to the challenges and experienced the joys of fatherhood. Some are fathers in the traditional sense of parent to children; others are surrogate fathers, men who have seen a need in a child's life and moved to fill that need. What all have in common is their desire to fulfill the role of "father" as modeled by God.



*On the Cover:* Michael Catt '75 is senior pastor of Sherwood Baptist Church and executive producer with Sherwood Pictures, the church-based film company behind *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*. For a behind-the-scenes look at the busy life of this pastor, producer,

husband, and father and a sneak peek of Sherwood's new film, *Courageous*, see page 26.



12 IT TAKES A VILLAGE



16 RISING TO THE CHALLENGE  
How Paul and Mandy Rogers turned a curve ball into a home run



22 TEACHER, COACH, MENTOR  
Professor Brian Anderson's Three Point Score



36 A PICTURE PERFECT GIFT  
Dr. Sam Maxwell honors the father who inspired him with a scholarship at MC



40 HICKMAN x 10  
Allen and Amy Hickman and sons prove that more really is merrier



## Contents

Along College Street **3**

Expanding the Boundaries

500 Make the Forbes List

Is there a PA in the house?

New Ways to Reach Old Friends

Putting the “Student” in Student-Athletes

Class Notes **47**

Portraits from the Hall of Fame **54**

The *Beacon* is now 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](http://www.mc.edu/beacon) for the rest of the story.



## Credits

*Beacon*  
Summer 2010

EDITOR  
Tracey M. Harrison '91, '94

ASSISTANT EDITOR  
Andy Kanengiser

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR  
Marlo Kirkpatrick

CLASS NOTES  
Tracy May  
Amy Rowan '85

DESIGNER  
Alecia Porch

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Robby Followell '07

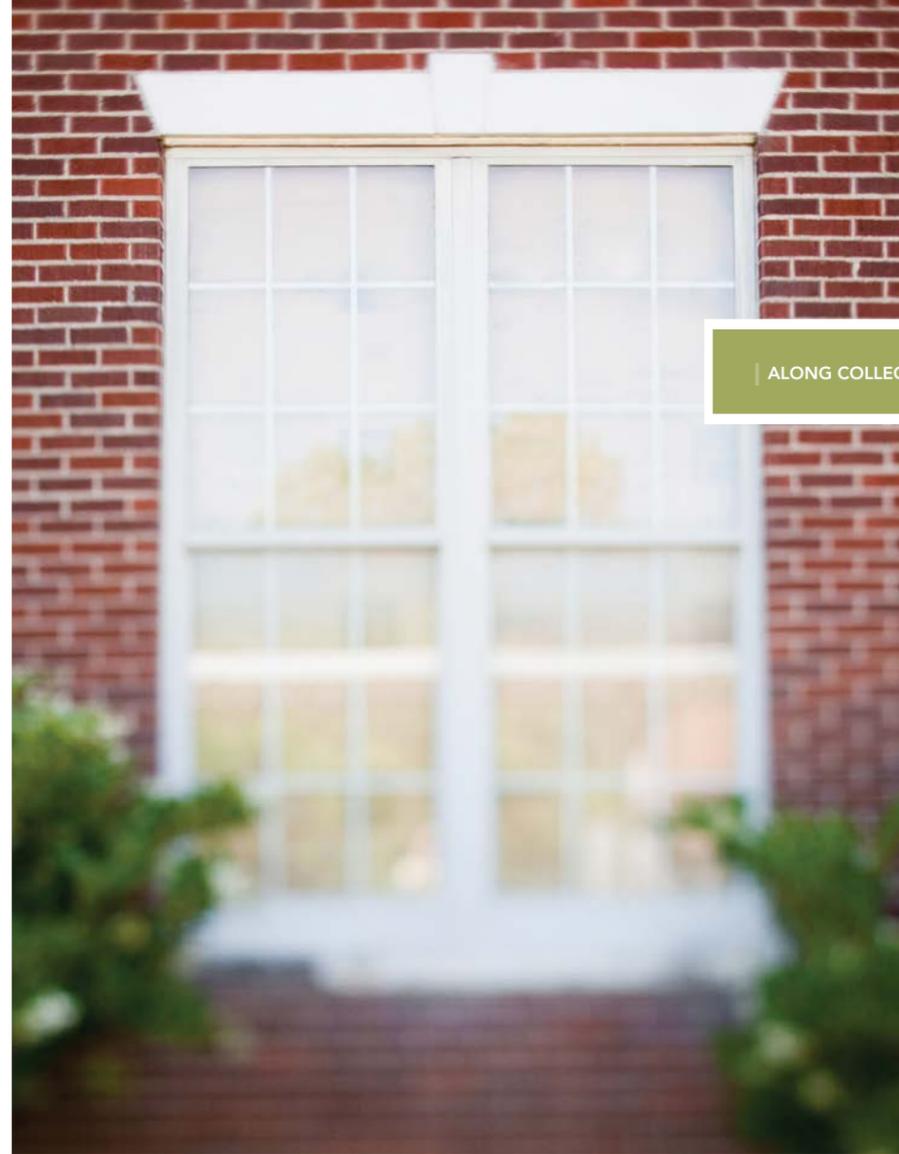
WEB DEVELOPER  
Justin Garcia

VIDEOGRAPHER  
Ethan Milner

*Beacon* magazine is published by the Office of Public Relations, Mississippi College, Box 4003, Clinton, MS 39058. Distributed free of charge to alumni and friends of the University.

Postmaster and others, please send change of address notification to: Office of Alumni Affairs, Box 4027, Clinton, MS 39058

Copyright 2010



ALONG COLLEGE STREET

# Expanding *the* Boundaries

A NEW PROPERTY ACQUISITION EXPANDS THE CLINTON CAMPUS

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S CLINTON CAMPUS WILL SOON BE A little larger. MC has entered a contract to purchase the former Clinton Junior High School property fronting Clinton Parkway and College Street in the heart of downtown Clinton.

Purchased for a winning auction bid of \$3,500,000, the 17.5-acre property will provide much-needed room for MC to physically expand. With virtually every square inch of the current campus occupied, the university was in pressing need of extra space. MC has hired Richard Dean,

an architect and campus planner, to help explore options and determine how to best use the new space.

“Our programs and enrollment are growing and with the purchase of this property, MC has the opportunity to grow physically as well,” says MC President Dr. Lee Royce. “This is a beautiful piece of property, and the location could not be better in terms of proximity to our campus. This is just the right piece of property and it became available at just the right time.”

## Satellite Campus Opens in Flowood

Classes at the Flowood Center, MC's satellite campus in Flowood, Mississippi, will begin August 23. The Flowood Center will host MC's Accelerated Degree Programs (ADP), replacing satellite campuses in Madison and Brandon. Located at 115 Laurel Park Cove adjacent to the Flowood Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center on Lakeland Drive, the Flowood Center features eight classrooms and will also offer live classes via video and audio. Geared toward working adults, the ADP classes allow students to earn degrees in business administration, accounting, marketing, public relations, and sociology. Courses are offered in eight-week sessions that meet two nights per week. Registration for classes beginning August 23 is August 19. For more information, contact Bebe Garrison at 601.925.7617 or [garrison@mc.edu](mailto:garrison@mc.edu).

PICTURED ABOVE: MC IS WORKING TO DETERMINE THE BEST USE FOR BUILDINGS LIKE THIS ONE ON THE PROPERTY.



# 500 Make the Forbes List

## An appearance by Steve Forbes draws an audience of 500 and raises \$312,875 for scholarships at MC

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SUPPORTERS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE spring scholarship banquet enjoyed political and economic insights and an entertaining quip or two from keynote speaker Steve Forbes. Forbes' March 29 appearance raised a banquet record of \$312,875 to support scholarships at Mississippi College.

Editor-in-chief of *Forbes* magazine, CEO of Forbes media, a regular contributor to Fox News, and a columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, Forbes is known for his outspoken opinions on everything from health-care to the nation's leadership to the future of capitalism.

Forbes' appearance attracted more than 500 visitors to the Mississippi College campus, including Lt. Governor Phil Bryant, Agriculture Commissioner Lester Spell, and Supreme Court Justices William Waller and Randy Pierce. Bryant, an MC alumnus who teaches political science classes part-time at his *alma mater*, introduced Forbes to the welcoming crowd. Forbes' remarks were followed by a Q&A session moderated by Mississippi College School of Business Dean Marcelo Eduardo.

Forbes' address included a call for an end to the nation's enormous, complicated, and still-growing tax code, which now includes some nine million words and which even America's scores of tax experts find difficult to decipher.

The Declaration of Independence, Forbes noted by way of comparison, includes just 1,300 words.

Despite challenging times, Forbes predicted growth in the economy, saying, "This year will be far better than last year," and also addressed healthcare reform, stating bluntly, "There's no reason why the government has to take over healthcare."

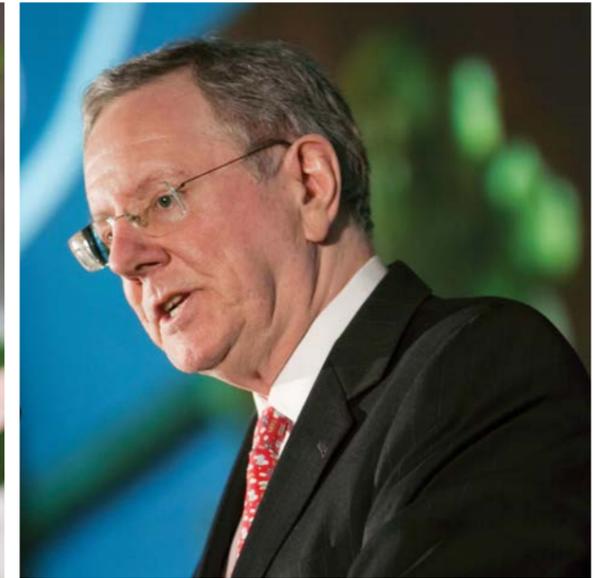
In an article in the *Clarion-Ledger*, Forbes was asked to size up the 2012 presidential prospects. "Sort of like the prom, I'm looking at everybody," Forbes said, but added that he would support Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour if Barbour decides to toss his hat into the ring.

Forbes was the latest in a powerful line-up of speakers who have visited MC since 2008. Previous banquets have generated more than \$422,000 for scholarships at MC.

"The scholarship banquet not only raises money for scholarships, but also raises awareness of Mississippi College

as a university that hosts noted commentators on the American political and economic scene," said MC President Dr. Lee Royce. "We're pleased to bring these experts to Mississippi and to provide a venue for them to share their experiences and viewpoints with the community, and at the same time, raise funds to help the next generation of leaders attend MC."

\*\*\*  
Despite challenging times, Forbes predicted growth in the economy, saying, "This year will be far better than last year."  
\*\*\*



**SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET SPONSORS**

The Presenting Sponsor for the scholarship banquet was The Lifeshare Foundation, led by CEO and Chairman Wayne Parker, a former Mississippi College trustee. The Lifeshare Foundation contributed \$85,000 toward the event. Platinum Sponsors who contributed \$25,000 or more included J.L. Holloway and joint sponsors Dr. Bobby Graham and Dr. Sharon Martin. The annual scholarship banquet is a component of MC's "Growing the Vision" campaign, a drive to raise \$80 million for scholarships, academic programs, endowment support, and capital improvements to the MC campus.

# P IS THERE A A IN THE HOUSE?

IN A 2009 RANKING OF THE BEST JOBS IN AMERICA, CNNMONEY.COM RANKED PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT #2.

IN A RANKING OF FASTEST-GROWING PROFESSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, CNN.COM RANKED PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT #4.

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, THE MEAN SALARY FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS IS \$81,610.



MC is poised to launch the first masters level physician assistant program in the state of Mississippi. A natural extension of MC's outstanding pre-med and nursing programs, the physician assistant (PA) program is scheduled to welcome its first students in 2011. A three-year grant of \$500,000 from the Hearin Foundation will help fund the new program.

A physician assistant is a licensed healthcare professional who practices medicine under the supervision of a physician. Working as part of a team, a physician assistant diagnoses and treats illnesses and can offer a broad range of healthcare services traditionally provided by doctors.

"Many people choose this profession because they get the satisfaction of treating patients with far less administrative

responsibility than the typical M.D.," says Robert Philpot, Ph.D., PA-C, director of the MC physician assistant program. "As an added bonus, the field is virtually recession-proof, owing to an ongoing shortage of primary-care physicians."

MC's physician assistant program will benefit not only its students, but also the people of Mississippi. Of the approximately 80,000 PAs currently practicing nationwide, only 100 are working in Mississippi. Graduates of the MC PA program could significantly augment the state's physician and PA workforce, particularly in rural areas where access to medical care is sparse.

Physician assistants educated at Mississippi College may also bring an enhanced level of patient care. Missis-

sippi has the nation's highest rate of teenage pregnancy, highest infant mortality rate, highest rate of sexually transmitted diseases, and the largest percentage of obese adults. The 100 PAs currently working in Mississippi were trained in other states where the patient populations and healthcare needs differ. Based in Mississippi, the MC PA program will be more in tune with and responsive to the needs of Mississippians and the Mississippi medical community.

"This program is an excellent fit not only with MC's mission of academic excellence, but also with our mission of service," says Dr. Stan Baldwin, dean of MC's School of Science and Mathematics. "We'll be preparing physician assistants to provide desperately needed healthcare services

in some of the poorest and most under-served areas of Mississippi and surrounding states."

Working with a supervising physician, MC physician assistant graduates will be able to:

- Perform physical exams \* Diagnose and treat illnesses
- Order and interpret lab tests \* Suture lacerations
- Assist in surgery \* Provide patient education/counseling
- Make rounds in nursing homes/hospitals
- Prescribe pharmaceuticals

## MEET DR. ROBERT PHILPOT



Dr. Robert "Bob" Philpot is the director of MC's new physician assistant program, the first program of its kind in Mississippi. Prior to joining the MC faculty, Dr. Philpot was director of physician assistant studies at South University in Georgia and has also served as a physician assistant faculty member at the University of Florida. A graduate of Belhaven College, Dr. Philpot is familiar with the metropolitan Jackson area and with the specific medical and health issues facing Mississippi residents. \* "Dr. Philpot brings a wealth of experience in running a PA program," says Dr. Stan Baldwin, dean of MC's School of Science and Mathematics. "MC is fortunate to have a person of his experience and talent at the helm of this new program." \* MC expects to hire six additional faculty members, including four physician assistants and two physicians, to round out the PA program faculty.

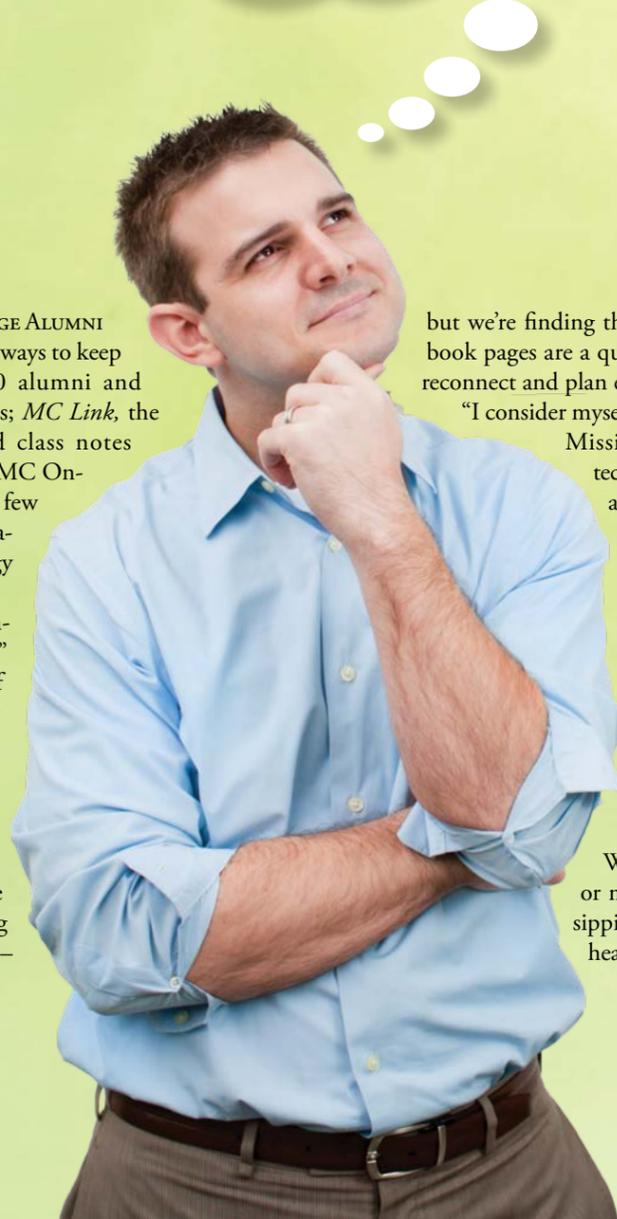


"Mississippi ranks last in many healthcare quality indicators. Part of the problem is lack of access to medical professionals. There is a dire need for additional healthcare providers for the citizens of this state. A PA program at MC will provide us another pathway for those much-needed providers."

DR. LOUANN WOODWARD, *Interim Dean of the University of Mississippi School of Medicine*

*The site visit for MC's provisional accreditation for the physician assistant program is in November 2010. MC expects to receive its provisional accreditation in March 2011.*

# NEW WAYS TO REACH OLD FRIENDS



THE MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE ALUMNI Association is finding more ways to keep in touch with its 30,000 alumni and friends. Facebook fan pages; *MC Link*, the alumni e-newsletter; and class notes posted on the association's MC Online Community are just a few examples of how the association is using new technology to network with old friends.

"This is a trend happening all over the country," says Ross Aven, director of alumni affairs. "The result is improved communication with alumni, no matter where those alumni are located or how they prefer to keep in touch. We're still using some tried and true methods of communicating – for example, the *Beacon* –

but we're finding that newer options like Facebook pages are a quick, easy way for alumni to reconnect and plan events."

"I consider myself to be 'old school,' but I see Mississippi College using new technology to communicate as a good thing," says Gene Tullios '64, an attorney in Smith County, Mississippi. "Every method of keeping in touch with alumni is helpful."

For more information on the many ways to stay in touch with the MC community, contact Ross Aven at [aven@mc.edu](mailto:aven@mc.edu), or try the traditional approach and call him at 601.925.3228.

Whether you prefer old school or new school methods, Mississippi College is always happy to hear from you.

Ross Aven, director of alumni affairs



## MORE WAYS TO KEEP IN TOUCH

### Alumni Website

(<http://alumni.mc.edu>)

Launched in October 2009, the Mississippi College Alumni Association website is packed with tips on how to stay connected, stay informed, and get involved.

### Online Alumni Directory

(<http://alumni.mc.edu/directory>)

Each MC alumnus has a profile in the alumni directory. Profiles contain the most recent information available from the university's records. Update your profile with your current address, phone numbers, e-mail address, and other information that makes it easy for friends to find you. You can select which items you would like to be available for other alumni to search and view.

### ChoctawMail & Google Apps

([http://alumni.mc.edu/choctaw\\_mail](http://alumni.mc.edu/choctaw_mail))

The MC Alumni Association offers a bigger and better alumni e-mail option with ChoctawMail powered by Google. ChoctawMail accounts utilize Google's web-based e-mail program, which provides users with more than seven gigabytes of storage, fast Google searches, and spam protection. ChoctawMail users receive a customized "@alumni.mc.edu" e-mail address that shows the world their status as proud alumni of Mississippi College. ChoctawMail is a benefit of the MC Alumni Association and requires registration to the alumni website.

### Online Class Notes

(<http://alumni.mc.edu/classnotes>)

MC takes great pride in the achievements and success of our alumni. We encourage alumni to share their career changes and promotions, business and community recognitions, company awards, marriages, birth announcements, and other news of interest with their fellow classmates and the MC community through Alumni Class Notes. Class

Notes are published online through the MC Online Community, as well as in the *Beacon*, the alumni magazine, and in the *MC Link*, the alumni e-newsletter.

### MC Link

(MC's Alumni e-newsletter)

*MC Link* is the e-newsletter of the MC Alumni Association. Alumni and friends who are not receiving the newsletter and would like to should email alumni affairs or update your alumni profile at <http://alumni.mc.edu>.

### Beacon Magazine

Published twice each year, MC's award-winning alumni magazine is packed with news about MC happenings and the accomplishments of our alumni. The *Beacon* is now 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](http://www.mc.edu/beacon) for the rest of the story.

### Social Media

#### Fan Pages

The world of social networking provides many opportunities for alumni to stay informed about MC and to connect with former classmates and the entire MC family. The Alumni Association has introduced the following Choctaw social media fan pages:

#### Facebook

([facebook.com/MSCollegeAlumni](http://facebook.com/MSCollegeAlumni))

#### Twitter

([twitter.com/MSCollegeAlumni](http://twitter.com/MSCollegeAlumni))

#### LinkedIn

The Association encourages all alumni to create profiles on these networks and to show their support for MC by becoming fans, friends, and members of the MC Alumni Association pages.

#### Facebook Groups

With around 50 official MC alumni groups formed on Facebook, it's easy to re-connect with friends and help plan events. Facebook has alumni groups for regional chapters, sports teams, classes, schools and departments, and affinity groups. You'll find a list of MC groups at [http://alumni.mc.edu/facebook\\_groups](http://alumni.mc.edu/facebook_groups). If you don't see a group that fits your interest, feel free to start one on your own. The alumni staff will be happy to help you.

### Alumni Association Officers

President: Bill Dye '54 • President-Elect: Eddie Donahoe '85 • Vice-President: Hugh Plunkett '75  
Past President: Nancy Davis '61 • Past President: Bill Smith '59

PUTTING  
The  
STUDENT  
IN  
STUDENT-  
ATHLETE

Mississippi College led the American Southwest Conference in ASC All-Academic players. All-Academic representatives include student-athletes who are in their second year of play and carry a grade point average of 3.0 or better. Some 107 MC players representing fall, winter, and spring sports made the list. This marks the ninth consecutive year that MC has led the American Southwest Conference in All-Academic conference representatives.

**ON AND OFF THE COURT, PATTERSON SHINES**

Whether she's drilling three-pointers, playing tenacious defense, or serving others off the court, senior Anna Patterson has been an exceptional leader for the Lady Choctaws basketball team.

The 2010 recipient of the MC Outstanding Senior Athlete Award for women's basketball, Patterson also landed a spot on the second team of the American Southwest Conference East squad. During the 2009-10 season, Patterson scored an average 11.8 points per game and shot a superb 35 percent from the three-point line.

Patterson is also a success off the court. In addition to posting a 4.0 grade point average, she served as president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, was an active member



"When people ask me what I want to do when I grow up, I tell them I want to help people," Patterson says. "That's been a big part of my time at MC. I've been blessed to be surrounded by other athletes who were not only pursuing greatness in their sport and the classroom, but also for Jesus Christ."

**FOR WHOM THE BELL BATS**

MC outfielder Bo Bell was one of five American Southwest Conference players named a preseason All-American by D3baseball.com. Bell was named ASC East Hitter of the Year after finishing second in the conference with a .438 batting average, tops among division players. The Gulfport native led the league for the second straight year in runs batted in, this season compiling 56. Prior to enrolling at MC, Bell was

a standout at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

**DOUBLE TROUBLE**

Kicking or catching, Brannon Walls is a winner either way. The kinesiology major suits up for Choctaw football

and baseball, and excels in both sports.

Walls was the hero who kicked the game-winning field goal with four seconds left to play in a crucial win over Mary Hardin-Baylor last fall. Walls' winning kick gave the Choctaws the victory they needed to claim the American Southwest Conference championship and earn a ticket to post-season NCAA Division III play. The Choctaws went on to finish 2009 with a 9-3 record.

In May 2010, Walls belted two homeruns in a crucial 9-8 win over the University of Texas-Tyler as the Choctaws eliminated the Patriots from the NCAA Division III West Regional in Oregon. Walls is also involved in MC athletics off the field as a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes leadership team and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

"My college years at MC have been some of the best of my life, emotionally, spiritually, and socially," Walls says. "I've made some lifelong friends here who share my interest in sports and love the Lord just as much as I do."

**CONFERENCE CALL**

Choctaw sports fans that thrive on American Southwest Conference competition will soon have another match-up at which to cheer. In April, the ASC announced that Shreveport's Centenary College will move from NCAA Division I to Division III affiliation and will join the ASC. Centenary

fields athletic teams in 13 ASC championship sports, including basketball, soccer, softball, tennis, golf, cross-country, and volleyball. With the addition of Centenary College, the ASC will return to a 16-member level with teams representing private universities in Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana.

**COACH BRIAN OWENS RACKS UP 100TH VICTORY**

MC baseball coach Brian Owens reached a major milestone with his 100th career win as the Choctaw's leader.

Number 100 didn't come without its share of suspense. The Choctaws edged the Millsaps Majors in a nail biting, 7-6 come back triumph on April 20th at Frierson Field on the Clinton campus. The ninth-ranked Choctaws wiped out a 6-2 deficit with three runs in the 8th inning and added two more in the 9th to knock off rival Millsaps and give



Owens a 100-67 record during four seasons as the Choctaws' head coach.

In 2010, Owens led the Choctaws to a record number of wins as the team reached an NCAA Regional Championship for the first time in program history. The Choctaws closed out the season with an impressive 39-11 record as they fell to Linfield College on May 22 in the championship of the NCAA Division III Regional in McMinnville, Oregon. In 2009, Owens led the Choctaws to an American Conference East Co-championship with a 30-16 overall and 14-4 conference record.

**PADDLING IT OUT IN WISCONSIN**

Mississippi College's table tennis team paddled its way to a 5th-place finish at the 2010 National Collegiate Table Tennis Association (NCTTA) championship in Wisconsin. More than 150 college teams nationwide play ping-pong; around 40 squads from the United States and Canada punched their ticket to NCTTA's big dance in the dairy state.

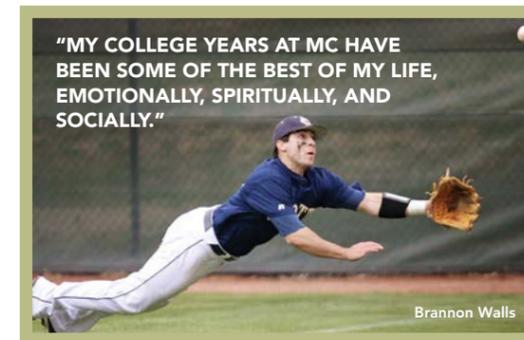
During their April 9-11 showing, the Choctaws netted wins over several larger schools, including Virginia Tech, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the University of Southern California. MC finished one notch below number four Princeton and one above number six California.

"We won the games that we were supposed to win," said MC table tennis team captain Ken Qiu. "We finished number five, exactly the same as the pre-nationals ranking."

All six MC players who made the road trip to the championships are natives of China, where table tennis is considered the national sport. The 2010 championship represents Mississippi College's third championship appearance in three years.

"Amazing as it seems, prospects look even better for 2011," says team sponsor Andy Kanengiser, the university news coordinator.

Qui and fellow players Bill Cai, Johnson Liang, Renping Ge, Lishun Lu, and Ou Lan are among the sport's top national collegiate stars. When they're not paddling balls, the six can often be found hitting the books together; all are students in the MC School of Business.



"MY COLLEGE YEARS AT MC HAVE BEEN SOME OF THE BEST OF MY LIFE, EMOTIONALLY, SPIRITUALLY, AND SOCIALLY."



## IT TAKES A VILLAGE

“And they were bringing the children to Him so that He might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, ‘Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’” — MARK 10:13-14

IN AN 1893 EDITION OF *The Baptist Record*, L. S. FOSTER, A pastor in Senatobia, Mississippi, proposed creating a home for orphans. Reverend Foster wrote, “If this thought is of God, He will put it into the heart of some person to send a contribution for this cause.”

Mrs. Lou Moore of Tillatoba, Mississippi, responded by sending a contribution of \$1.00, along with a note that said, “With my prayers, I enclose this dollar for the institution. If it finds company enough to effect a movement, you will hear from me again.”

In 1897, through the support of churches and indi-

viduals statewide, the Baptist Orphanage took in its first child. In the 113 years since, the ministry now known as The Baptist Children’s Village has provided a safe home, psychological and spiritual counseling, and loving care to more than 33,000 children.

“Our goal is to be able to help as many children as there are with needs,” says The Baptist Children’s Village Executive Director Dr. Rory Lee ’71, ’73. “We’re here to help families in crisis and to put children on a safe track that will allow them to become happy, healthy, mature Christian adults.”

**B**egun with a single dollar and a multitude of prayers, The Baptist Children’s Village (BCV) is now a statewide ministry that helps children and families understand and experience the healing love of Jesus Christ. BCV cares for approximately 100 children at any given time, and serves an average of 300 children each year.

Headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, BCV operates residential campuses in Brookhaven, Coldwater, Columbia, Louisville, Star (scheduled to open in late 2010), Water Valley, Waynesboro (scheduled to open in July), and Wiggins. The BCV has also acquired property in New Albany with plans to build another campus there in the future. Campuses are strategically located to provide access to families in every area of Mississippi; the goal is to have a campus within an hour’s drive of every child in the state.

In the ministry’s early days, most of the children who came to live at BCV were orphans. Today, most of the children have living parents. BCV provides short-term care for children whose parents have suffered the loss of a home or job or who have health or financial issues that make caring for their children temporarily impossible. BCV also offers long-term care for children who have been neglected, abused, or abandoned.

“Often times the children whose parents are still living, the ones who are here because of abuse or neglect,

require more emotional support than the children whose parents have died,” Dr. Lee says. “Working here, you see things that can make you very sad and very angry. But we’ve learned not to dwell on those negative feelings. Instead, we focus on showing Christ’s love not only to the children, but also to their families.”

When appropriate, BCV works to reunite children with their parents, offering counseling for the family as a whole. When reuniting the family is not possible, children may be adopted, placed with a loving foster family, or remain at The

Baptist Children’s Village until they reach the age of 21.

During their stay at BCV, each child lives in a cottage with as many as nine other children and a married couple who act as surrogate parents. These “houseparents” are parents in every sense of the word, providing love and discipline and working to heal the pain and fill the void in each child’s life.

“Houseparents are there when a child has a great report card or scores a touchdown. They are there when something goes wrong and the child needs a shoulder to cry on,” Dr. Lee says. “Houseparents aren’t drill sergeants barking out orders, but they

also don’t just pat children on the back and say, ‘Oh you poor little thing,’ they model Christian behavior and family life for the children. Houseparents are trained to fulfill this role, but more importantly, they are called to fulfill it.”

“I can tell you from experience that if God has not called you to work with children in residential care, you will not have what you need to do it,” Kathy Flournoy, director of the BCV campus in Star and a former houseparent, agrees. “Houseparents have to rise above their personal sadness and anger over what has happened to the children in their care and create a home that feels safe and comfortable, where the child feels accepted, has fun, and is loved. Houseparents have to be flexible and accept that not every situa-

tion is going to turn out as they might hope. We succeed only because God is so faithful and willing to supply our staff with the patience, compassion, and extra measure of whatever is needed to care for these children.”

Children at BCV have come from environments marked by chaos. They take comfort in a regular program of activities that includes Bible study in their cottages, worship at local Baptist churches, and attending public school. Children are encouraged to participate in recreational activities on and off campus.

**“My favorite moments are when a sad, angry, or withdrawn child who has been with us for a few weeks smiles, misbehaves and accepts correction well, asks for a hug, laughs with friends, or has his or her first real birthday party. Perhaps the best moment is when that child turns to you during an outing and says, ‘Let’s go home.’ That moment is the reason I do what I do.”**

**KATHY FLOURNOY**  
*BCV Campus Director and Former Houseparent*



**DR. W. RORY LEE**, executive director of The Baptist Children’s Village, also serves as president of the Baptist Child Care Executives, the national association of chief administrative officers from childcare facilities supported by Southern Baptists in 19 states and the District of Columbia. The organization allows for the exchange of ideas and successful strategies as each state deals with the challenges of caring for children who have been placed in their care.

“Our goal is to make their experience as much like that of a child living with his or her own family in as traditional a home as possible,” Dr. Lee says. “This year, one of our girls was head cheerleader at her school, one of our boys scored four touchdowns in his first football game, and another student was the editor of the school newspaper. We’re very proud to see our children succeed, particularly when they’ve had to overcome so many obstacles.”

**“When a child comes to stay with us, no matter how long that stay may be, that child leaves here knowing that he or she is loved, what love is, and that His name is Jesus.”**

KATHY FLOURNOY

While children in BCV care face many challenges, the toughest challenge for the staff is saying good-bye.

“Seeing a child reunited with his or her family is both the biggest reward and the biggest challenge of this job, especially for the houseparents,” Dr. Lee says. “They become very close to the children and to see them move on is bittersweet. They know that the child has a brighter future ahead because they’ve done their jobs, but they still miss that child.”

BCV alumni include judges, teachers, business people, tradesmen, and others working in a wide range of profes-

sions. The ministry hosts a reunion for former residents every other summer and alumni sometimes drop by the campuses with their own children, who are eager to see the place where their mom or dad grew up.

“When a child leaves our care, we want to see them come back as Christian adults who are achieving all that’s possible in their spiritual life, professional life, and family life,” says Dr. Lee. “Our goal is to have no repeat customers. We

hope that their family life will be such that their children will never need the kind of help we provide. In fact, my ultimate wish is that someday, there will not be a need for a place like The Baptist Children’s Village.”

Until that day comes, The Baptist Children’s Village remains a refuge and a source of Christ’s love and healing for children and families in need.

“When a child comes to stay with us,” Kathy Flournoy says, “no matter how long that stay may be, that child leaves here knowing that he or she is loved, what love is, and that His name is Jesus.”

## BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY

Chrystelle Thames ’00 comforts others as she was once comforted

“THERE IS SADNESS AT THE BAPTIST CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, but that is not the overall feeling on our campuses. There is healing here. There is the peace that comes from knowing you are in a safe place, maybe for the first time you can remember. And there is the hope that comes from the Lord. The one thing you will never feel at The Baptist Children’s Village is a sense of hopelessness.”

No one is better qualified to speak about the atmosphere at The Baptist Children’s Village than Chrystelle Thames, BCV’s public relations director. Years before she joined the BCV staff, Chrystelle arrived at The Baptist Children’s Village as a frightened, 16-year-old girl. One of 10 siblings, Chrystelle had spent the first several years of her life in a home marked by chaos and fear.

“My father was very abusive and my mother struggled from her own insecurities,” she says. “When it was just us

kids and my mother, we were fine, but when my dad was there, the house was filled with fear and anxiety.”

Chrystelle’s mother eventually left her father, but like many women fleeing an abusive situation, she now faced a new set of struggles as a single mother with 10 children. The family survived periods of extreme poverty, but when Chrystelle’s mother was injured in an automobile accident, she simply could not care for her children any longer. A social worker arrived at the family home, told the children to “pack a little bag,” and took all 10 of them to The Baptist Children’s Village.

“At that time, I was absolutely *engulfed* by fear,” Chrystelle says. “My mother was injured and we were going to a place we didn’t know to live with people we didn’t know. As the second oldest child and the oldest girl, I was scared not only for myself, but because of the responsibility I felt

“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.” — PSALM 68:5



toward my siblings.

“But after we settled in, I realized that for the first time, we felt safe,” Chrystelle continues. “There was no more constant fear, no more walking on eggshells. That umbrella of fear was gone, and living out from under it was a new and glorious experience.”

While Chrystelle kept in touch with her mother, she never returned to her family home, instead living at BCV until she was 20. With the guidance of counselors and her houseparents, Chrystelle soon found herself on a path she had never dreamed possible.

“God had intervened, and for the first time in my life, I realized there was a plan,” Chrystelle recalls. “Children

growing up in the kind of poverty I experienced as a child don’t have many dreams for the future. Without The Baptist Children’s Village, I would never have even considered the idea that I could go to college or have the kind of job I have today. God used The Baptist Children’s Village to provide that education for me.”

Chrystelle graduated from Hinds Community College and Mississippi College with a degree in communications. In 1982, she returned to BCV as a member of the public relations team, and has been sharing the BCV story as both a staff member and an alumna ever since.

But the greatest blessing to come from Chrystelle’s life at The Baptist Children’s Village has been her own family. Chrystelle’s husband, Bobby Thames, also grew up at BCV. The two met there as teenagers and were married in the Powell-Fullilove Chapel on The Baptist Children’s Village campus on December 20, 1980. Their dysfunctional childhoods led Chrystelle and Bobby to a shared determination that their family would be different.

“God used our houseparents to illustrate for me and my husband the way He intends families to live and care for one another,” Chrystelle says. “There is a yearning in the children here – children like the ones Bobby and I were – to have that in their own families someday. The Baptist Children’s Village had shown us that was possible.”

Chrystelle and her husband built the kind of family they had longed for as children, seeking God’s guidance in their marriage and in their parenting and giving their own children, Bridget, now 26, and Tyler, 21, a childhood very different than the ones they had known. Today, Chrystelle uses their story to bring hope to other families in crisis.

“The Bible says we are to comfort others in the way that we have been comforted,” Chrystelle says. “The Lord led me back here to share my passion and gratitude for this ministry with other children and families facing the same kinds of trials I once faced. I believe in this ministry because I have experienced first-hand how God uses it to touch families. God used The Baptist Children’s Village to change the direction of my life.”



**TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF** While BCV’s regular maintenance crews were busy with the construction of a new residential campus in Star, Mississippi, this spring, Mississippi College students helped spruce up BCV’s Jackson property, volunteering their time to help with yard work on the campus grounds. While the student volunteers didn’t meet the children who call BCV home, the mission of the ministry was never far from their

minds. “We toured the home the children lived in, and at first it seemed kind of sad, looking at their beds and their crayons and all of their things and realizing that these children didn’t have a home like the ones we grew up in,” says MC senior David Mortimer. “But then we talked to the staff and realized that these kids have a place to go where they’re safe and surrounded by good Christian people who will help them overcome the negatives in their pasts. That was a good feeling.”



**HOW YOU CAN HELP** The Baptist Children’s Village is privately funded, relying on endowment income and on support from the Mississippi Baptist Convention, churches, and individual donations. BCV is the only group home in Mississippi that accepts children placed through the Department of Human Services but receives no government funding. Instead, BCV operates as a Christian ministry supported by those who

believe in its mission. The Baptist Children’s Village offers volunteer opportunities, including helping with special events and construction projects on its nine campuses. BCV is also in need of visiting families who can host children in their homes for a week during the summer or over the holidays. For more information on supporting The Baptist Children’s Village, please visit [www.baptistchildrensvillage.com](http://www.baptistchildrensvillage.com) and click on “How You Can Help,” or call 601.922.2242.

# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

HOW PAUL AND MANDY ROGERS  
TURNED A CURVE BALL  
INTO A HOME RUN



“FINDING OUT THAT YOUR CHILD HAS A DISABILITY IS LIKE a curve ball,” Paul Rogers says. “You don’t see it coming. Then you have two children with disabilities, and it’s the curve ball that never ends.”

Paul was a student at Mississippi College School of Law and his wife, Mandy, was a nurse at St. Dominic Hospital when their first son, Nathan, was born in 1985. Nathan was born with a range of serious physical and intellectual disabilities; the diagnosis would eventually include a severe hearing loss, speech and language disorder, seizure disorder, growth hormone deficiency, severe attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and an intellectual disability.

“What do you do when you have a baby who’s so sick?” Mandy Rogers says. “You adjust.”

While Paul completed law school and began his legal career, Mandy quit her job to care for Nathan. Over the next three years, the young family juggled the pressures of the legal profession with the challenges of caring for their son, who required treatment from a seemingly endless procession of doctors, therapists, and specialists.

In 1988, Paul Rogers opened his own law practice. That same year, the Rogers’ second son, Ben, was born. At birth, Ben seemed to be a perfectly healthy baby, but by the time he was a toddler, the Rogers knew something was wrong. Ben was eventually diagnosed with many of the same disabilities as his older brother. There was no name for the spectrum of disabilities affecting Nathan and Ben; genetic testing revealed nothing. Paul and Mandy had nothing to guide them except a poor prognosis.

“I got in my car and I hit the steering wheel so hard I broke my ring,” Mandy says of the day she realized she and Paul would be raising not one child with profound disabilities, but two.

But while life had thrown the Rogers a curve ball, they were far from out. Instead, Paul and Mandy responded with a game-changing idea that would transform not only their own family, but also the lives of dozens of people with disabilities.

**IN** 1991, the Rogers helped organize a baseball game for children with disabilities. That first game was played on a field in Ridgeland, Mississippi, on a scorching afternoon in August. The 18 children playing had disabilities including Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, blindness, and a wide range of intellectual disabilities. The stands were filled with parents who had never dreamed they would see their children do something as wonderfully ordinary as play a baseball game.

“That was the first team sport activity Claire had ever been able to participate in,” says Charlotte Myers, whose daughter, Claire, has cerebral palsy. “For the first time in her life, she was more than just an observer.”

“I think everyone in the stands cried the whole game,” Mandy Rogers recalls. “Just seeing those kids on the field, having a good time with other kids like them, was really something special.”

It was supposed to be a one-time event, but the game was such a hit with the players and their families that the Rogers organized four more games the following summer. The third year, what had started as a one-weekend event was expanded to an entire season. Paul and Mandy Rogers, an attorney and a stay-at-home mom, found themselves the “commissioners” of a full-fledged baseball league. Given the make-up of the teams’ members, it was only fitting that the league be christened “Challenger.”

This year, the Ridgeland Challenger Baseball League celebrated its 20th season. The league has grown from the original 18 to 125 players ages five to 67 playing on four youth teams and six adult teams. The adult teams were formed, Paul explains, “because the original kids grew up and didn’t want to stop playing.” The season runs from April through June, with each team playing two games per week at Ridgeland’s Hite Wolcott Park. The Challenger League is open to any child or adult with a disability who wants to play, at no cost to the players or their families. While most of the players are from the Jackson Metro area, the league

## INTENTIONAL WALK

In its early days, the Challenger League included an eight-year-old player named Dustin who had always used a wheelchair. Dustin began working with a physical therapist to learn to walk, asking his family not to tell any of his friends in the league because he was planning a surprise. On a lovely spring evening at Hite Wolcott Park, Dustin’s father pushed him to third base in his wheelchair. Then, as the spectators and his teammates looked on, Dustin rose from his chair and walked to home plate on his own, a smile breaking over his little face as the stunned crowd rose to give him a standing ovation.



PAUL ROGERS '86 AND HIS WIFE, MANDY, "COMMISSIONERS" OF THE RIDGELAND CHALLENGER BASEBALL LEAGUE

includes several players who travel up to 100 miles for the opportunity to take a swing.

The Rogers and a dedicated group of volunteers work hard to give the games a Major League atmosphere. For two hours, children and adults who are relegated to watching from the bleachers during "regular" sporting events are transformed into superstars. The stands are packed with cheering spectators, and a photographer is on hand to snap team pictures and capture action shots.

As he or she approaches the plate, each batter's name is announced over the public address system and walk up music blasts across the field. When "Brown-eyed Girl" plays, the crowd knows it's Kayla Weaver up to bat. Jon Thomas Barnes takes the plate to the tune of "Big Bad John." Hearing his name called over the PA system and walking up to the theme from "Superman" is especially important to "Superman" Tyler Cannon, who is visually impaired. The first time he heard his name called, Tyler stopped in his tracks, turned to his father and said, "Did you hear that, Dad? He said *my name*."

Every player has a chance to bat. Players who cannot hit the ball or run the bases on their own are assigned a volunteer buddy who bats for them and assists them from base to base. No score is kept; the inning ends when every player has had a turn at bat.

It's a simple concept built around a simple game, but the results are nothing less than profound.

"The first two years, we just sat in the stands and cried because it was so wonderful," says Geri Clark, whose 29-year-old son, Jimmy, has Down syndrome. Jimmy has played with the Challenger League for 19 years. "Even after all these years, I can't describe it without crying. Most of the time, it's like these children and adults are in their own world looking in on our world. For those few hours every week, it's *their* world and we're the ones looking in. We're the observers and they're the focus."

"I like to catch, batter, and outfield," Jimmy Clark says with a wide smile. "I'm a good player and I have a lot of friends on the team. I can't wait for baseball season. *Can't wait.*"

Almost every parent describes that same sense of anticipation as the opening game approaches. Players ask about baseball weeks before the season begins, and some families have been known to arrive at the field hours early on game day because their player was just too excited to wait at home. The Challenger League eases the frustration and sense of "missing out" that children with disabilities feel when they can't participate in extracurricular activities at school, and the games add some normalcy to the lives of the players and their families.

Tim Matheny's 28-year-old son, Daniel, has an undiagnosed condition that may be a form of autism. Daniel still has the ball from the 1996 Challenger game in which he hit his first home run. Today, Daniel plays on a Challenger adult team and Tim Matheny serves as a volunteer coach.



"When I ask people to come out and help, I promise them that I'll only ask them to come once. Some people say, 'I don't know, I don't think I have the heart for that,' but once they come out, they see that the players have more than enough heart for both of them. If I can get them to come one time, they always come back. When you work with the Challenger League, you get so much more back than you give. There's just so much of God's love out there on that ball field."

COACH ANDY ETHERIDGE  
Challenger Adult League Coach of 14 Years

"The Challenger League has meant everything to us," Tim Matheny says. "What other opportunity are these children ever going to have to play ball? Plus they have the camaraderie of playing with friends who are like them. It tickles me to see them enjoy themselves so much. The gleam in those eyes is something else. Even the ones who can't talk seem to be saying, 'Hey, hey, I'm on the ball field! Look at me!'"

The Challenger League could not operate without the generosity of corporate sponsors who provide uniforms and year-end trophies and cover other operating costs, or without the dedicated volunteers who serve as coaches, buddies, and

cheerleaders. Volunteers come from all walks of life and include individuals, families, and groups from local churches and high schools.

"We target the high school girls," Mandy Rogers says with a smile, "because then we get the high school boys."

Laura Sue McClure is a science teacher at Madison Central High School and the faculty sponsor for the Interact Club, the high school version of the Rotary Club. McClure sends club members to volunteer at the Challenger games every season.

"I tell my students, 'If you hate school, if you're mad at your parents, if you're upset that you don't have a nice car,

### STEALING HOME

Cerebral palsy may have confined Claire Myers to a wheelchair, but it couldn't stop her from reaching home plate. Now 23, Claire played in the first Challenger League game in 1991 and continued to play for the next several years, hitting and running the bases with the help of a buddy who pushed Claire in a jogger, a cloth-bottomed, reclining wheelchair. Claire's fondest baseball memory was made when she was eight years old. Claire was on third base when the batter hit the ball. The crowd cheered as Claire and her enthusiastic buddy charged toward home. Just as they reached home plate, the buddy gave Claire's jogger one last, wholehearted push – and sent both the jogger and Claire sliding sideways along the baseline. Claire tumbled along the ground, coming to a stop at home plate in a cloud of dust. The buddy cried out in horror. The spectators gasped. Claire Myers lifted her dirt-covered face and laughed out loud. A sigh of relief went up from the crowd and from Claire's mother, Charlotte, who later said with a smile, "I never thought I'd be able to say that my daughter slid into home plate."



**BATTER UP!**  
If you'd like to volunteer with the Ridgeland Challenger Baseball League or you know someone who might be interested in joining the league as a player, visit [www.rcbaseball.com](http://www.rcbaseball.com) for more information.



go over there and volunteer. You'll come back with a whole new perspective," McClure says. "It's really something to see these high school students – including the big, tough football players – go to a game, meet the players, and just melt. Once they've gone to volunteer once, they all want to go back again."

"What makes these [young volunteers] so special is that they go to school with our kids," says Ken Weaver, whose 16-year-old daughter, Kayla, has cerebral palsy. "No adult can take the place of these girls and boys. The interaction with peer buddies is invaluable to our kids' self-esteem and frankly, warms the parents' hearts like nothing else. Every parent knows that one day we won't be there to look after our kids, but knowing there are kids like these buddies out there helps."

One of those kids was Dustin Crum, who began serving as a Challenger League buddy when he was eight years old and continued to volunteer for more than a decade. Dustin was so inspired by the experience that he decided to make assisting the disabled his life's work. Today, Dustin Crum, now 27, is a recreational therapist with the North Mississippi Regional Center, a residential facility for people with intellectual disabilities located in Oxford, Mississippi. Crum has also launched an Oxford Challenger Baseball and Softball League modeled after the program begun by Paul and Mandy Rogers.

"Volunteering with the Challenger League gave me my first taste of the joy that comes from doing something for someone else," Crum recalls. "Without the Challenger League and Paul and Mandy Rogers' guidance, I would not be where I am today. I am so blessed to have this career and the opportunity to make an impact on the lives of people with disabilities."

The Rogers' efforts on behalf of those with disabilities made national headlines in 2006, when *USA Weekend* recognized them as among the three most "caring coaches" in America. The Rogers were chosen from among 700 youth sports coaches nationwide. The accolades are nice, but for Paul and Mandy Rogers, the enthusiasm of the players and the gratitude of their families is what truly make it all worthwhile.

"I have a longtime association with some of the adult players that means so much to me," Paul Rogers says. "If I walk into the Mustard Seed, they all call out, 'Hey, Coach Paul!' and want to high-five me. Parents tell me their kids start putting their baseball hats on in January. They are just

so appreciative for the opportunity to participate in something ordinary that the rest of the world takes for granted."

The Challenger League players have that opportunity because Paul and Mandy Rogers never equated "disabled" with "hopeless." Their belief that individuals with disabilities can lead productive, joyful lives is exemplified in their sons.

Today, Nathan "Nate" Rogers is 25 years old and works at the Mustard Seed, a vocational center for developmentally disabled adults. In his free time, Nate enjoys working on his computer and predicting who will be the next couple to be eliminated from "Dancing with the Stars."

Twenty-two-year-old Ben Rogers works for the City of Ridgeland Recreation and Parks Department as a groundskeeper, keeping the ball fields where he loves to play tidy. Ben is proud of his recent blood donation, made in honor of a friend in need; he smiles when he shares that while *he* had no problems donating blood, his mother, a former nurse, got sick. In 2011, Paul and Ben Rogers will travel to Greece, where Ben will participate on a bowling team in the Special Olympics.

Nate and Ben both play in the Challenger League, and Nate has also served as a buddy for some of the other players. Both young men are graduates of Madison Central High School, where both won the Jaguar Spirit Award as seniors. Ben was the manager of the Madison Central football team and still contributes to the school's athletic booster club.

Of course, Paul and Mandy Rogers can't help but wonder how life would have been different if their sons had not faced so many challenges. They know they won't

celebrate the traditional milestones, like seeing their sons graduate from college or get married, and they will never know the joy of having grandchildren. But at the end of the day, the Rogers choose to focus not on the difficulties, but on the blessings.

"As an attorney, I see a lot of families with children who have made bad decisions and caused their parents terrible pain," Paul Rogers says. "I know our boys won't do that."

"I guess the thing that upsets me the most is low expectations," Mandy Rogers says. "One of the few things that can still frustrate me is when I hear someone say that a person with a disability can't work or play or have a meaningful life. We look at the players in the Challenger League and we look at our own sons, and we see proof that that is absolutely not true."

**CREDIT CHALLENGER WITH THE ASSIST**

The Challenger League has benefitted from the generosity of many sponsors and volunteers. Just as they have been blessed, Paul and Mandy Rogers have encouraged the Challenger League players to bless others. The Rogers have had their players collect donations for Madison Countians Allied Against Poverty and other local charities. "People have been so giving to the Challenger League," Paul Rogers says. "We want our players and our own children to understand the importance of giving back."

 For more on this story, visit [www.mc.edu/beacon](http://www.mc.edu/beacon).



## Teacher, Coach, Mentor

Professor Brian Anderson's three point score

PROFESSOR BRIAN ANDERSON IS PROOF THAT YOU DON'T NEED CHILDREN OF YOUR OWN IN ORDER TO BE A FATHER FIGURE. The director of MC's social work program, Anderson has dedicated his life to mentoring young people. When he's not inspiring MC students in the classroom, Anderson serves as a volunteer coach for the Callaway High School Chargers basketball team. The 2010 Chargers finished the season 22-11, won the Mississippi Class 5A state championship, and finished second in the overall state championship. • But while there's no doubt Anderson is a savvy basketball coach, his biggest influence on his players is off the court. In the three years that Anderson has been volunteer coaching, every senior on every Charger team has graduated from high school and attended college. • "I've always felt the need to help others. This is what we encourage our social work students to do as public servants – put an altruistic mindset to work," Anderson says. "Selfishly, it's very rewarding to work with kids as a potential mentor, academically and athletically. Coaching is about the passion to help kids as well as a personal love of the athletic environment. If I can positively impact one player or say one thing that could be of benefit in a kid's life, then I've served my purpose."

Every member of Brian Anderson's family played sports, including his brothers, his father, and even his mother, who once starred in a faculty vs. PTA basketball game at her son's school.

"When I was born, I think the first thing my family members said was, 'Okay, which sport is he going to play?'" Anderson says. "I grew up playing basketball and football and while I always loved the games, I also developed an appreciation of the bonds you can build through sports and the impact one person can have on another. I was blessed with coaches who helped frame a secure foundation for me in sports and in life."

As a student and standout basketball player at Tougaloo College, Anderson originally planned to pursue a career in physical therapy.

"I pictured myself standing around in scrubs while I watched injured athletes ride stationary bikes," Anderson recalls. "Then I took a lab course that required me to dissect something. The smell of the lab convinced me that was not the field for me."

Still feeling led to a career that would involve helping others, Anderson switched his major to sociology, eventually discovering his calling in social work. Following his graduation from Tougaloo, he earned a master's degree in social work from Louisiana State University and a doctorate in social work from Jackson State University. Prior to joining the MC faculty in 2006, Anderson held positions as assistant professor of sociology at Tougaloo College, assistant professor of social work at Jackson State, instructor of physical education and athletic training and assistant men's basketball coach at the University of West Alabama, and instructor of sociology at Tougaloo College.

All of those positions involved working with young people, but Anderson's toughest mentoring challenge was serving as one of three social workers at the Capital City Alternative School. From 1995-98, Anderson counseled students who had been expelled from public school for a range of behavioral problems. Their offenses included excessive absences, doing or selling drugs, having sex on campus, fighting, acts of violence, and weapons violations. One student was there for hot-wiring a bulldozer.

While many of the students were eager to straighten out their lives and return to public school, others clearly felt they had little left to lose. Anderson worked with students who stashed alcohol and drugs in the classroom ceiling tiles and took bets on how quickly they could harass a substitute teacher into going home. He recalls one student who came to school clutching a stuffed teddy bear; teachers later discovered that she was using the toy to conceal a knife.

"There was a hostile atmosphere on campus," Anderson says. "These kids were troubled, but they were also smart and

### A HEART *for* SERVICE

In addition to his fulltime job at MC and his volunteer coaching position at Callaway High School, Brian Anderson serves as an adjunct professor of sociology at Hinds Community College, volunteers with Stewpot Ministries and Youth Leadership Jackson, and serves on the board of directors of the Mississippi chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Anderson has also served his country as a dental specialist in the Army National Guard and as a medical combat service support commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Reserves.





**AND THE AWARD GOES TO...** Brian's Anderson's efforts in the classroom, on the court, and in the community were recognized last October when he received the Mississippi Social Work Educator of the Year Award. Anderson also received the 2009 Invisible Giant award from the Jackson-based Mary S. Nelums Scholarship Foundation. The annual award is presented to individuals who work behind the scenes to make life better in their communities. • "I see these awards as a means of encouraging others to get involved," Anderson says. "It's definitely an honor and privilege to have been acknowledged for my work, but this has truly served as a motivation for me to do more. Life isn't about earning academic degrees or awards. It's about making a difference in the lives of others. The first is a plaque or certificate that hangs on the wall, but the latter is an ongoing process that potentially inspires people to do as you have done or to reach even higher aspirations."

they could sometimes be manipulative. I was fortunate to have worked with some innovative, committed teachers and two outstanding social workers whose patience, guidance, and mentoring taught me a lot. We always had to be very careful and on point and understand the kids' mindset."

Anderson spent most of his days in one-on-one or group counseling sessions with students and their parents, helping families work through the issues that had brought the students to the alternative school and providing follow-up counseling when they returned to public school. It was an emotionally draining, often heartbreaking job, but one that Anderson loved.

"I was very sad when I left because I knew the impact I had had on some of those kids," Anderson says. "I'm still very proud to have been a part of that."

Anderson still visits the Alternative School today as a guest speaker.

"I talk to young males about making good decisions and the connection between doing well in school and success in life," Anderson says. "Some seem to be listening, some are clearly not. But if I can reach just one, I've done something."

Anderson brings all of his life experiences to play in his role as a volunteer basketball coach. Callaway is not the first high school to benefit from his leadership. From 1996-98, Anderson was an assistant coach at Provine High School in Jackson, where he helped lead the 1998 Provine basketball team to the first Class 5A state championship in school history. When Wayne Brent and Charles Wansley, the same coaches he had worked with at Provine, invited Anderson to coach with them again at Callaway High School, Anderson jumped at the chance.

The 17 to 18 members on each year's Callaway team come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some live in stable, two-parent homes, some are being raised by single mothers and benefit from having a positive male role model. Others come from tough situations in which violence is the norm; more than a few have lost friends to senseless acts.

"The greatest challenge in coaching these young men is realistically connecting academics, athletics, and life experiences for them, especially since many of them come from environmentally challenged situations," Anderson says. "Our mission as coaches is to challenge the student-athletes and help them to be as prepared as possible for life experiences. Our goal is to build a competitive team and win basketball

games, but more importantly, it's to get these young men to stay in school and to go to college."

Structure is key to achieving that goal. Callaway basketball players are required to attend study hall or tutorials before or after school and to keep their grades up. Every basketball practice is also an opportunity to learn a life lesson. In addition to teaching players how to make a three-point shot or play better defense, Anderson and his fellow coaches teach them the importance of being on time, how to dress properly for different situations, appropriate ways to resolve conflicts, and how to better articulate themselves when they have a point they want to make. A reality Anderson emphasizes to his players is that education, not basketball, is the key to their futures.

A 2010 graduate of Callaway High School, Jason Gibson was a star basketball player, a member of the Honor Society, Student Body President, and Mr. Callaway High School. This fall, he will attend Holmes Community College on a full basketball scholarship. Gibson is a role model for many

*"I talk to young males about making good decisions and the connection between doing well in school and success in life. Some seem to be listening, some are clearly not. But if I can reach just one, I've done something."*

BRIAN ANDERSON



*"Coach Anderson didn't just focus on the game. He was way more to us than a basketball coach. He saw potential in me, and not just in sports. He was all the time encouraging me in school. I'm going to major in social science education because I want to be a teacher, too, and Coach Anderson is a big part of that. Knowing you can have that kind of impact on a kid is what made me want to be a teacher."*

JASON GIBSON

of his younger classmates, thanks in part to the role model he had in Brian Anderson.

"Coach Anderson didn't just focus on the game. He was way more to us than a basketball coach," Gibson says. "He saw potential in me, and not just in sports. He was all the time encouraging me in school. I'm going to major in social science education because I want to be a teacher, too, and Coach Anderson is a big part of that. Knowing you can have that kind of impact on a kid is what made me want to be a teacher."

Gibson won't be the first former player to follow Brian Anderson's lead. Several of his players from Provine High



#### BRINGING THE REAL WORLD INTO THE CLASSROOM

Brian Anderson brings a wealth of real world experience and a genuine concern for his students to his Mississippi College classroom. • "Social work is not about black or white, it's about life experiences," Anderson says. "I try to share some of my life experiences with students before they go out into the world." • Heather Vines earned a bachelor's degree in social work from MC in 2008 and went on to receive her master's degree from Baylor. Today, Vines is the client care coordinator at Comfort Keepers, an organization providing non-medical in-home care to older adults. Vines credits her passion for the work in part to Dr. Anderson's inspiration. • "One thing that I really admire about Dr. Anderson is his work ethic. I don't think the man ever sleeps," Vines says. "He is constantly finding ways to contribute to society, impact those around him, and serve in some capacity. Being a student of Dr. Anderson's taught me much more than just what was in the textbooks. He taught me to give everything that I have to the best of my ability inside and outside the classroom. We need more Dr. Andersons in the world."

School have become teachers and coaches. Otis Gaines played basketball under Brian Anderson at Provine, then again as a student-athlete at the University of West Alabama. Today, Gaines is the head basketball coach at Long Beach High School and is working towards his Ph.D. at the University of Southern Mississippi. Though he eventually found himself following in Anderson's footsteps, Gaines confesses that as a student at Provine High School, he originally didn't care for Coach Anderson.

"He would never let me take a break from working hard and he always had me running extra laps for trying to take short cuts," Gaines confesses. "But as time passed and I became more mature as a person and a player, I saw how his persistence paid off for me. I don't know whether he knows it or not, but Brian Anderson really helped me to jumpstart my career."

"Brian was always honest and he cared about his players. I know for a fact he stayed on my case because he knew I could do better on the court and off the court," says Markeith Brown, a former Provine player who is now the head women's cross-country coach and assistant women's basketball coach at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas. "Brian encouraged me to do my best and to keep striving for the top. I can still remember all the positive things he said to me, because there weren't too many people besides my family telling me good things back then."

"My greatest reward is to see the impact I have had on these young men," Anderson says. "Many of them still come back to visit and attend games or practices. We instill in the players that even after they graduate and move on to college or the workforce, we are still a family."

That's a lesson that Otis Gaines has taken to heart.

"Coach Anderson has been one of the biggest influences on my life," Gaines says. "I look at him as more than just a coach. I consider him family. I've even thought that if I ever find the right girl, I might ask Brian Anderson to be the best man in my wedding."



CLOSE-UP  
*ON*  
MICHAEL  
CATT

THE PASTOR/PRODUCER

ON THE NEW MOVIE

*Courageous,*

THE ROLE OF FATHERS,

AND HOW TO REACH THE

NEXT GENERATION

“HE WILL TURN  
THE HEARTS OF THE  
FATHERS TO THEIR  
CHILDREN, AND THE  
HEARTS OF THE  
CHILDREN TO  
THEIR FATHERS...”

*Malachi 4:6*

With production on his latest feature film underway, executive producer Michael Catt has a busy schedule. His morning begins on the set before daybreak and ends with a look at the dailies after dark. In the hours between, he'll review script changes, meet with the production staff, grab a quick lunch with the lead actors, and still find the time to prepare his Sunday sermon.

More important than his role as producer is his role as pastor. Dr. Michael Catt '75 is senior pastor at Sherwood Baptist Church, the Albany, Georgia-based center of worship best known for forming its own production company, Sherwood Pictures, and producing the inspirational films *Flywheel*, *Facing the Giants*, and *Fireproof*.

In April 2010, filming began on Sherwood Pictures' latest film, *Courageous*. The movie tells the story of four law enforcement officers who give their best on the job, but who find “good enough” to be all they can muster as fathers. When a tragedy strikes close to home, the men find themselves wrestling with their faith and asking what God really expects of them as fathers. The inspiration be-

hind *Courageous* was Malachi 4:6; the film's title echoes God's call for men to “rise with courage” in their homes and as leaders.

“For more than a year we've prayed to be sure that we're pursuing God's idea and not our own,” Dr. Catt says. “With action, drama, and humor, this film embraces God's promise in the Bible to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers.”

Like Sherwood Pictures' previous releases, *Courageous* will be shot entirely in Albany with a cast and crew made up primarily of volunteers from the church. A town of less than 76,000, Albany is a far cry from Hollywood, and Dr. Catt is far from the stereotypical movie producer. Then again, Sherwood Pictures was formed to meet goals far more important than ticket sales.

“Michael has always had a vision that this church could touch the world from Albany, Georgia,” says Sherwood Baptist Church's Executive Pastor Jim McBride. “Some people think you have to be in a big city to impact the world, but the Lord did something pretty miraculous in a little town called Bethlehem.”



“WITH ACTION, DRAMA, AND HUMOR, THIS FILM EMBRACES GOD’S PROMISE IN THE BIBLE TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN TO THEIR FATHERS.” — DR. MICHAEL CATT



## A FAMILY MINISTRY

MICHAEL CATT’S WIFE, TERRI, and their adult daughters, Hayley Catt and Erin Bethea, are all involved in the Sherwood Pictures ministry. Terri, who also attended Mississippi College, is the costume designer for the films. A photographer and graphic designer, Hayley handles design for Sherwood Baptist Church and shoots still photos of the movie production. The lead actress in *Fireproof*, Erin is an entertainer at Disney World and is considering other film projects.

WHEN ASKED HOW HER LIFE CHANGED after *Fireproof*, Erin jokes that she can’t go to the grocery store without make-up. On a serious note, she acknowledges that the film changed the way she thought of both acting and ministry.

“ACTING IS WHAT I LOVE doing the most, and to be able to combine that passion with ministry was an amazing opportunity,” Erin says. “When I hear from people who tell me that *Fireproof* saved their marriages, I realize this ministry is so much bigger than a movie or whether or not my acting gets good reviews.”

*Fireproof* ALSO GAVE ERIN the opportunity to act alongside Kirk Cameron, the first professional actor to appear in a Sherwood Pictures production. Erin confesses that while she enjoyed working with Cameron, she had never seen an episode of *Growing Pains*, the 1980s TV sitcom that made him a star.

“IT’S PROBABLY GOOD that I never watched the show or had a crush on Kirk,” Erin says with a laugh. “It would have been hard to play his wife in *Fireproof* if I’d grown up with a poster of him on my bedroom wall.”

### PRAYER, LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION: THE SHERWOOD PICTURES BACKSTORY

A native of Pascagoula, Mississippi, Michael Catt planned to attend the University of Mississippi, but when God called him into the ministry, he enrolled at Mississippi College instead, accepting a partial scholarship provided by a church and working his way through college. Catt attended Luther Rice Bible College and Seminary and Trinity Seminary, then served as a youth minister and pastor at churches in Oklahoma, Texas, and Georgia before assuming the leadership role at Sherwood Baptist Church in 1989.

The Sherwood Pictures ministry began with a conversation between Dr. Catt and Alex Kendrick, the church’s minister of media, during a back-lot tour of Disney World. Kendrick had recently read a survey that indicated people were more influenced by TV and the movies than by church. He told Dr. Catt that his dream was to make movies about real people dealing with issues of real faith, but he didn’t think he could do that as a member of a church staff.

“I asked him, ‘Why not?’” Catt recalls. “It was one of

those moments in life where your answer determines opportunities. I asked Alex to bring me a script.”

Kendrick responded with the script for *Flywheel*, the story of a used car dealer whose life changes when he decides to do business in a way that honors God. That first film was produced on a donated, \$20,000 budget that Dr. Catt describes as “our five loaves and two fishes.” The crew shot the entire film with one camera, using a pipe from Home Depot as the camera dolly. Filming took place at a real car lot in Albany. Business could not shut down for shooting; every time the telephone rang, filming stopped. The final edit on *Flywheel* was completed 30 minutes before the film premiered in a movie theatre in Albany. The film ran for six weeks and was picked up by two other theatres in the area; the only movie to top *Flywheel* at the Albany box office during those weeks was *The Matrix Reloaded*.

A year later, the Sherwood team prepared to produce *Facing the Giants*, an inspirational movie about a high school football team. The second time around, the donated production budget was \$100,000.

## The Long and Short of It

FROM HIS DAYS AS A STUDENT AT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE, Michael Catt has been more interested in reaching people than in adhering to tradition. When he was still in college, Michael and a fellow MC student traveled to a church in Louisiana to help with a youth revival. They arrived at the church just as heavy sleet began to fall. The pastor at the church took one look at the young men’s long hair and said, “You guys have to get a haircut before you can preach in my church. I refused, and that pastor sent us home, several hours’ drive in the sleet,” Dr. Catt recalls. “I decided then that I would never have a legalistic church or judge people based on their outer appearances.”



“WE NEVER FORGET THAT WE ARE A CHURCH WITH A PRODUCTION COMPANY, NOT A PRODUCTION COMPANY WITH A CHURCH.”

DR. MICHAEL CATT



## ON THE BIG SCREEN

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE STUDENT TOMMY MCBRIDE and his brother, former MC student Jimmy McBride, appeared in the movie *Facing the Giants*. Members of Sherwood Baptist Church and former Choctaw football players, the brothers portrayed members of a high school football team that overcomes seemingly insurmountable obstacles on the way to a state championship. The boys' father, Sherwood's executive pastor Jim McBride, played the opposing team's coach.

“With *Flywheel*, the attitude of those first donors was ‘Bless your heart, you’re trying to make a movie,’” Dr. Catt says. “*Flywheel* proved that it could be done, so we had even stronger support the second time around. Our goal was to get the movie into 12 theatres, maybe even on some screens in Atlanta. That would allow us to call it a ‘theatrical release’ before it went straight to DVD.”

A big break for *Facing the Giants* came when the Sherwood team sought permission from Provident Label Group to use a song by Third Day on the soundtrack. The request and a rough cut of the film made their way to the desk of a Provident executive, who passed the film on to a contact at Sony, Provident's parent company. The Sony executive was so impressed with *Facing the Giants* that Sony picked the film up for national distribution. Far from the original goal of 12 screens, *Facing the Giants* appeared on 441 screens nationwide.

Sherwood Pictures continued to build on that success with *Fireproof*, which focused on a fireman seeking God's help to save his marriage. A grassroots marketing effort saw action teams nationwide pre-selling tickets in order to guarantee *Fireproof* would be shown in their local theatres. The effort was wildly successful; *Fireproof* debuted at number four nationwide and became the number one independent movie of 2008 based on box office sales.

The key to the success of all of the movies is prayer. “We pray as we work on the story,” Alex Kendrick says. “We pray before each day of shooting. We pray during the editing. God has repeatedly used the prayers and the passion of this church to bring the movies to completion.”

### *Courageous*: HONOR BEGINS AT HOME

More than 15,000 people have contacted Sherwood Pictures to say they've been saved after seeing one of the company's films, and Dr. Catt estimates five times that many people have shared stories of marriages saved by a screening of *Fireproof*. The Sherwood team's hope is that *Courageous* will have the same impact on fathers and their children.

“*Courageous* follows four fathers who are present, but not really *there* – kind of like me as a student at MC,” Dr. Catt says with a laugh. “Seriously, the movie follows these men as they move from just being present to really being

### Break Out the Popcorn

#### *Flywheel*

Sherwood Pictures' first film, released in 2003  
\$20,000 production budget  
Six-week run in local theaters  
200,000 DVDs sold

#### *Facing the Giants*

Released in 2006  
\$100,000 production budget  
Opened in 441 theaters  
\$10 million box office gross  
1 million-plus DVDs sold

#### *Fireproof*

Top independent film of 2008 based on box office receipts  
\$500,000 production budget  
Opened in 800 theaters  
Debuted at #4 on opening weekend  
\$33 million box office gross  
1 million-plus DVDs sold  
A companion book to the film, *The Love Dare*, debuted as a *New York Times* bestseller and has sold more than 3 million copies

#### *Courageous*

Sherwood Pictures' fourth release will hit theaters in 2011.

- The films have been bootlegged for illegal distribution in China, a crime that Dr. Catt describes as, “fine with us.”

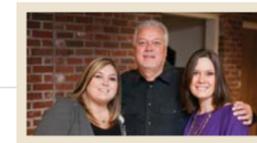
- Sherwood's profits from the films were used to construct an 82-acre sports park open to the entire community. The park features tennis courts, ball fields for multiple sports, a walking/running trail, equestrian center, and a fishing pond, and is marked by a 110-foot cross. Seventy-five percent of people who use the sports park facilities are not members of Sherwood Baptist Church.

- Profits from the movies also support international missions and other local ministries, including a food pantry, crisis pregnancy center, and drug and alcohol treatment center.

left: photos by Hayley Catt and Todd Stone

“THE MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC A GOOD FATHER CAN HAVE IS INTEGRITY, SO THAT HIS CHILDREN ARE NOT EMBARRASSED OR CONFLICTED BY HIS CHOICES.”

DR. MICHAEL CATT



## MICHAEL CATT ON FATHERHOOD

MICHAEL CATT LAUGHINGLY DESCRIBES life years ago with his wife, Terri, their daughters, Erin and Hayley, and two female Labrador retrievers as akin to “living in a girls’ dorm.” His daughters are now adults, and when Dr. Catt looks back on their upbringing, he’s glad he made being a father his top priority.

“I was active in their lives,” Catt says. “I resigned from the International Mission Board because I was missing Hayley’s basketball games and Erin’s cheerleading. I realized that other men could do IMB, but I was the only man who could be Erin and Hayley’s dad. You have a very narrow window to build memories. You can’t go back and do four years old again.”

DR. CATT SEES A FAILURE to listen to their children as one of the biggest shortcomings among fathers today.

“I MADE SURE MY DAUGHTERS and I had actual conversations,” Dr. Catt says. “Too many dads are uncomfortable talking to their own kids. During a drive, they’ll put a DVD on in the car instead of using that time to talk to their children. Kids talk when they want to talk – not when we want to talk. My kids would sometimes start talking two blocks before they had to get out of the car because they knew they wouldn’t have to talk for very long. They learned pretty quickly that if they started talking, I’d just keep driving.”

THE RESULT OF THAT TIME SPENT listening is an extraordinarily close relationship between Michael Catt and his adult daughters. Before she accepted her fiancé’s proposal, older daughter Erin told her prospective groom, “If my father had not approved, I could not have married you.” When asked if he cried during Erin’s wedding last fall, Dr. Catt replies, “Yes, but I cry over ground beef. And I still don’t know how much that wedding cost.”

engaged as fathers. As a former youth minister, I’ve seen a lot of phantom parents who are not really involved in their children’s lives. Every kid wants a dad who not only leads, but who does it consistently. One of the biggest challenges I see facing fathers today is that need to be consistent. Fathers make an effort for a while and then quit. If you start it, you have to stick with it.”

Like *Fireproof* and *Facing the Giants*, the *Courageous* project will include Bible studies and a curriculum for pastors based on the movie.

“The movie is a two-hour event, but the materials make it a process,” Dr. Catt says. “For example, with Bible studies and the sermon series, we estimate the life of influence for *Fireproof* to be 15 years.”

With each film project, the budget has increased, the team has gained more experience, the end product has improved, and audiences have grown. But with success comes a new level of challenge. The expectations placed on *Courageous* are high, but the public’s expectations are not Michael Catt’s primary concern.

“The spiritual stakes are higher now,” Dr. Catt says. “We’re a bigger target now. We’re not ignorant of Satan’s

devices or of the dangers of success. When we made *Fireproof*, we prepared for Satan to attack our marriages. Now, shooting a movie about fatherhood, we are prepared for attacks on our families. With every film, there’s more need for prayer and unity.”

An important part of maintaining that unity is keeping egos in check. Those working on the film can’t begin to see themselves as “stars,” nor can they let negative reviews dampen their enthusiasm for the mission behind the movies.

“I do not believe in flattery or in flattening,” Dr. Catt says. “Neither are true. Success for us is when God is pleased with what we do, when we hear stories of people being saved and lives being changed. We don’t let anyone strut. No one struts at the foot of the cross. I am the negative nanny on the team, with constant reminders that it’s not ‘my’ movie or ‘our’ movie, it’s God’s movie.”

Dr. Catt gestures to a row of houses across the street from the church.

“The people who live in those houses don’t care that we make movies. They’re worried about losing their jobs, about caring for their children, about the real life issues they’re facing,” Dr. Catt says. “Our outreach begins here, at home.”

## “Aren’t you that guy from the movie?”

PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY come to Albany, Georgia, to see Sherwood Baptist Church, the place where the movies are made. “They’re surprised and a little disappointed that there’s no shrine to the movies here,” Dr. Catt says. “But they do get a kick out of realizing that the usher who’s greeting them at the door is the same guy they saw on the big screen.”



“WE PRAY AS WE WORK ON THE STORY. WE PRAY BEFORE EACH DAY OF SHOOTING. WE PRAY DURING THE EDITING. GOD HAS REPEATEDLY USED THE PRAYERS AND THE PASSION OF THIS CHURCH TO BRING THE MOVIES TO COMPLETION.”

ALEX KENDRICK, CO-WRITER AND DIRECTOR OF *Courageous*



“The church dies when it tries to reach people where they *should* be. Instead, you have to go where they *are*.”

DR. MICHAEL CATT

If we lose Jerusalem to get the world, we have not done much. It would be very sad if all we were known for is making movies. We never forget that we are a church with a production company, not a production company with a church.”

#### REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION

Sherwood Pictures has attracted its share of critics and cynics. For those who question what a church is doing making movies, Dr. Catt has an answer.

“Look at the great cathedrals of Europe,” Dr. Catt says. “The church once *owned* the arts. An illiterate person could see a painting of Jesus as the Good Shepherd or a stained glass window depicting the parable of the prodigal son, and they could understand and share that story with their children. Movies are simply the stained glass windows of this century.

“Secular people will receive a Christian message in a secular vehicle,” Dr. Catt continues. “Get their attention in a movie, and they’ll come to a Bible study at the church. We’re not handing out tracts in front of the theatre and we don’t preach to the camera. We give them a story they can identify with and pray that it moves them.

“The church dies when it tries to reach people where they *should* be. Instead, you have to go where they *are*. Whoever wants the next generation the most will get them.”

Profits from Sherwood Pictures’ films are funneled back into ministries, including an 82-acre sports park built with profits from *Facing the Giants* and open not only to church members, but also to the entire community.

“Movies and sports parks are simply tools to bring people to the Gospel,” Dr. Catt says. “The message of the Gospel doesn’t need to be changed or enhanced, but sometimes our tools for delivering it can be.

“I don’t know how long we’ll keep making movies,” Dr. Catt continues candidly. “Many churches are guilty of

finding something that works, then just repeating it over and over, but I’m not big on the idea of the 87th Annual Singing Christmas Tree. Everything has a season. Right now, we’re in a season in which God has us making movies. All we can say with certainty right now is that we’re making *Courageous*. Then we’ll wait for God to show us what He wants us to do next.”

#### The Numbers on Fatherhood

- 36 percent of children in America live without their biological fathers.
- 40 percent of children in fatherless households have not seen their fathers for at least a year.
- 50 percent of children living apart from their fathers have never been to their father’s home.
- Children without their biological fathers are more likely to be poor and to have educational, health, emotional, and psychological problems than their peers who live with a married mother and father.

Fatherless homes produce:

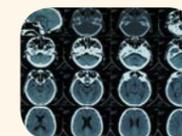
- 63 percent of youth suicides
- 90 percent of runaway children
- 85 percent of children with behavioral disorders
- 71 percent of high school dropouts
- 75 percent of adolescents in chemical abuse treatment centers
- 85 percent of youths in prison

For the latest updates on *Courageous* and interviews with the cast and crew, visit [www.courageousthemovie.com](http://www.courageousthemovie.com).

left: photos by Hayley Catt and Todd Stone | For more on this story, visit [www.mc.edu/beacon](http://www.mc.edu/beacon).

# A PICTURE PERFECT GIFT

DR. SAM MAXWELL HONORS THE FATHER WHO INSPIRED HIM WITH A SCHOLARSHIP AT MC



An experienced radiologist with St. Jude Medical Center in Fullerton, California, Dr. Sam Maxwell can read an x-ray like a book. But Dr. Maxwell's professional skills aren't limited to medicine. He can also tell you how to remove a stain from a favorite dress or exactly how much starch is needed to make a collar stand at attention. Dr. Maxwell '69 spent much of his youth working at Maxwell Cleaners, his family's dry cleaning business in Drew, Mississippi. While laundry and radiology may not appear to have much in common, Sam Maxwell credits both fields with helping him cultivate the work ethic that's led to his success.

DR. MAXWELL'S GRANDFATHER GRADUATED FROM MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE. Dr. Maxwell's father, Lowry Maxwell, also found himself drawn to MC. Lowry Maxwell attended Mississippi College from 1926-27, a time when two years of college was the requirement to attend dental school. Lowry Maxwell enrolled in dental school at the University of Louisville, but the Great Depression forced him to give up his dream of becoming a dentist. Instead, he returned to his hometown of Drew and opened Maxwell Cleaners.

"I never once heard my father complain about having to leave dental school," Dr. Maxwell says. "In fact, I never heard him complain about anything."

Sam Maxwell worked alongside his father and mother in the dry cleaning business six days a week, putting in an hour before school, three hours after school, and up to 15 hours on Saturdays.

"That experience was very important to the formation of my work ethic," Dr. Maxwell says. "I was paid for my work, so in a sense, I had a share in the profits of the business. When my friends would complain about their allowances, it wasn't a concept I understood. Working there taught me that you get paid for what you *do*, not for who you are."

When he wasn't working at the dry cleaning shop, Sam Maxwell was hitting the books. He graduated from Drew High School as valedictorian and found himself considering scholarship offers from some of the nation's most prestigious universities, including Harvard and Yale. He was also offered the Carrier Scholarship to the University of Mississippi and the Hederman Scholarship to Mississippi College, both of which were full scholarships. After much prayer, deliberation, and interviewing of alumni from the various institutions, Sam Maxwell chose Mississippi College.

"In the back of my mind, I always wanted to go to MC," Dr. Maxwell says. "Yes, Harvard and Yale had some prestige value, but what would it *really* have meant to go there? I knew that MC had

the core values and academic program that would be a good fit for me. I would not have chosen MC if I hadn't been certain I could accomplish my goal there, which was to get into medical school.

"I've never once wondered, 'What would my life be like if I'd gone to Harvard or Yale?'" Dr. Maxwell continues. "I had a fantastic experience at Mississippi College and I have never once regretted my decision."

"I'VE NEVER ONCE WONDERED, 'WHAT WOULD MY LIFE BE LIKE IF I'D GONE TO HARVARD OR YALE?' I HAD A FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE AT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE AND I HAVE NEVER ONCE REGRETTED MY DECISION."

**HAMMERING OUT THE DETAILS** Dr. Sam Maxwell was filling up his car in Las Vegas, Nevada, when the man at the next pump noticed his MC baseball cap. "Hey," the man called out. "MC!" "You know MC?" Dr. Maxwell replied, thinking perhaps he'd met a fellow alumnus. "Oh yeah," the man replied with a wide grin. "I just *love* MC Hammer."

The only thing Maxwell sacrificed by attending MC was sleep. In addition to completing a rigorous pre-med program that included hundreds of hours of lab work, Maxwell served as the editor of the student newspaper. He describes his senior year as “a blur. I stayed up all night at least one night a week.”

Following his graduation from MC, Maxwell found himself again considering schools, this time medical schools.

Once again, he was accepted to Harvard. During his interview at Harvard Medical School, one of the professors asked Maxwell if he had applied to Harvard for undergraduate school. When Maxwell replied, “yes,” the professor asked him if he had been accepted. Again, Maxwell replied, “yes.”

“Then why the [expletive deleted] did you choose a little school like Mississippi College?” the professor asked.

Maxwell responded with a description of the outstanding pre-med program and dedicated professors at MC. He went on to mention that MC was founded in 1826 and was the first American co-educational college to grant a degree to a woman, and shared several other notable facts and figures about his *alma mater*.

The professor finally said, “Okay, okay, I think I understand why you chose Mississippi College. Now, do you have any questions for me?”

“Yes sir,” Maxwell replied. “Did you apply to Harvard for undergraduate school?”

“Yes,” the professor replied.

“Then why didn’t *you* attend Harvard?” Maxwell asked.

The professor said sheepishly, “I didn’t get in.”

Maxwell continued to display a phenomenal work ethic as a medical school student, working for minimum wage as an autopsy assistant at a Boston hospital while completing

his studies. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1973, then went on to complete a surgical internship and a one-year residency in obstetrics and gynecology before deciding that radiology was his calling.

Dr. Maxwell completed a residency in radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, a fellowship in cardiovascular radiology at Tufts-New England Medical Center in Boston, and a fellowship in neuroradiology at

*Universitätsklinikum der Johannes Gutenberg Universität* in Mainz, West Germany. Dr. Maxwell also taught radiology at Harvard Medical School and at Tufts University School of Medicine.

Today, in addition to his work as a staff radiologist at St. Jude, Dr. Maxwell chairs the hospital’s credentials committee, vetting the credentials of prospective doctors who wish to join the hospital staff.

Lowry Maxwell passed away in 1985, living long enough to see his

son well on his way to a successful career in medicine. In honor of the father who inspired him and taught him the value of hard work, Dr. Samuel Maxwell created the Lowry Maxwell Memorial Scholarship at Mississippi College. The scholarship is awarded annually to an outstanding chemistry or pre-med student.

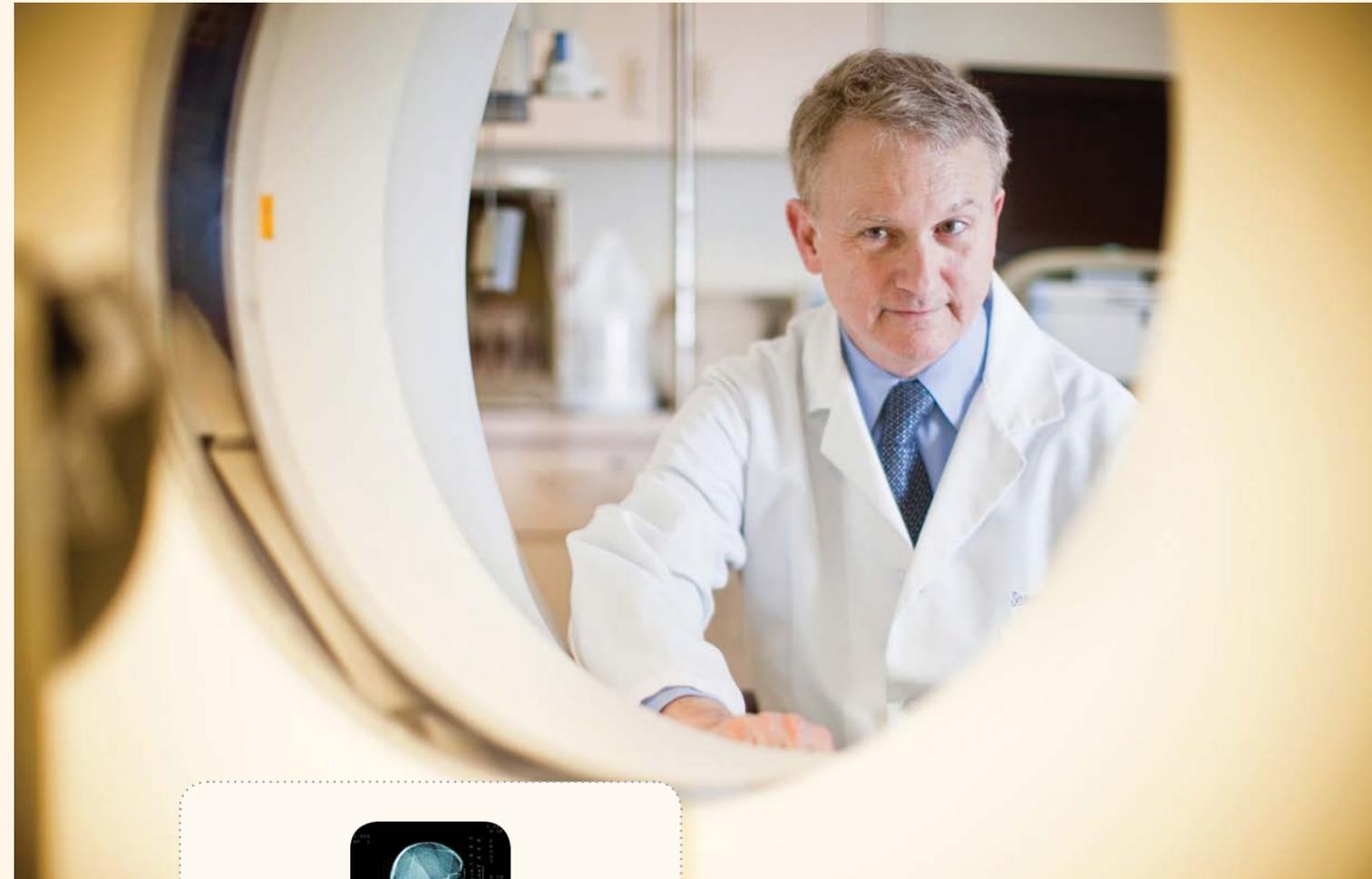
“Receiving the Hederman Scholarship helped me attend Mississippi College, and I wanted to give something back to MC,” Dr. Maxwell says. “I hope this gift will help MC to attract and retain academically talented students. I can’t think of any other institution more deserving than Mississippi College. I never considered supporting any other school.”

“This scholarship has come at a perfect time,” says Dustyn Baker, an MC sophomore and the recipient of the 2010 Lowry Maxwell Memorial Scholarship. “College is expensive and any financial support is wonderful, but it was a

**DR. SAMUEL MAXWELL  
ATTENDED MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE  
ON THE HEDERMAN SCHOLARSHIP,  
WHICH PAID FOR HIS TUITION,  
ROOM, AND BOARD. IN THE  
MID-1960S WHEN MAXWELL WAS  
A STUDENT, THE TOTAL ANNUAL  
VALUE OF THAT FULL RIDE  
SCHOLARSHIP WAS \$1,000.**

### Sam Maxwell and the Great Provine Protest

While Sam Maxwell was a student at MC in the 1960s, the administration made the decision to demolish Provine Hall, the old brick building that had housed MC science programs for more than 50 years. • As a pre-med student, Maxwell had spent many hours in Provine Hall. He was intimately familiar with the aging construction, the creaking and groaning of the walls and floors, the lack of air conditioning that left students broiling in the summer and the open space heaters that barely kept the building habitable in the winter. Still, there was something special about the stately old science building where he had spent so much of his college career. • “I had a love/hate relationship with Provine,” Dr. Maxwell recalls. “It was the scene of a lot of hard work and late nights, but the building had come to feel like home.” • Deciding the building should be preserved, Maxwell led a petition drive to save Provine. Alas, his efforts were in vain. The night before the building was razed, Maxwell entered the building, turned on every light in every room, then stepped outside and snapped one last photo of the building “with the lights ablaze on its final night of glory.” Today, some four decades later, Dr. Maxwell still treasures that photo, along with a brick he retrieved from the demolition site and a set of metal letters reading, “Provine Hall.”



### IN ONE EAR AND IN THE OTHER

Dr. Sam Maxwell has had his share of odd jobs, from working in the family dry cleaning business to serving as an autopsy assistant. Early in his medical career, Dr. Maxwell moonlighted as an ear piercer. In Massachusetts in the 1970s, state law required a physician to be present when ears were pierced. So, Dr. Maxwell, a graduate of Harvard Medical School, observed as a nurse pierced ears in a shopping mall, eventually graduating to piercing them himself. It’s not a career path he’s interested in reviving. “These days,” Dr. Maxwell says, “there’s just no telling what I’d be asked to pierce.”

Godsend for me. My mother is ill, and having to carry the burden of college debt is no easy task for her. This scholarship will alleviate some of that burden.

“Receiving this award is a tremendous honor,” Baker continues. “The Maxwell scholarship is for those that the administration feels have what it takes to finish this race they’ve started. It’s an honor to be thought of in that respect.”

Dr. Maxwell trusts MC to choose the scholarship recipient, specifying only that the scholarship be awarded on the basis of merit.

“I’ve met a lot of doctors who have lived very privileged lives and really don’t know what hard work is,” Dr. Maxwell says. “They believe they should get paid just for being a doctor and not for the effort they put in. One of the lessons reinforced at MC was that hard work leads to good results. I still believe in a day’s work for a day’s pay and I wanted to help a student who shares that belief. As for me, I enjoy what I’m doing and I’m hoping never to quit. We have an 82-year-old in our practice who is one of our best workers, and I tell him, ‘When I grow up, I want to be just like you.’”

# HICKMAN x10



## Allen and Amy Hickman and Sons Prove that More Really *is* Merrier

ALLEN HICKMAN VIVIDLY REMEMBERS THE MOMENT HE found out he was going to be a first-time father. A center for the Mississippi College Choctaws, Allen was sweating it out at a grueling practice when he spotted his young wife, Amy, walking toward the field.

"The coach was screaming and yelling, really giving it to us, when I saw Amy coming over the hill," Hickman recalls. "She stopped at the top and gave me a big smile and a thumbs up. I started laughing and the coach went ballistic. He was up in my face, yelling, 'What, Hickman? You

think this is *funny*?' I just grinned and said, 'Hey Coach, I'm gonna be a daddy!'"

Over the next 17 years, Amy would give her husband the big thumbs up not once more, not twice more, not even thrice more, but nine more times. Allen and Amy are the proud parents of 10 sons – Micah (22), Caleb (20), Jacob (19), Jonathan (17), Benjamin (16), Samuel (14), Josiah (12), Elisha (10), Isaac (7), and Nathan (5). Twenty-three years after that day at football practice, Allen and Amy Hickman are raising a family that's just one player short of a football team.

Allen Hickman '88 is the senior pastor at Resurrection Life Worship Center, a non-denominational church in Picayune, Mississippi. Amy Hickman '88 is a chauffeur, counselor, laundress, chef, economist, teacher, and prayer warrior – in other words, a stay-at-home mom. The Hickmans' 10 sons span every stage from kindergarten to college.

Allen and Amy never planned to have such a large family. When they were engaged, Allen would often tease his fiancée by saying he was planning to have at least six children.

"I never joked back about that," Amy says. "At that time, I was 4-foot-11 and weighed 95 pounds. I told him, 'There will *never* be six kids coming out of this body.'"

When their second son, Caleb, was born, Allen and

Amy thought their family was complete. Then Amy had a divinely inspired change of heart.

"The Lord put it in my heart that I was supposed to have a lot of kids and have them close together," Amy says. "But my definition of 'a lot' was maybe five. I never, never dreamed we'd have 10."

But the babies kept coming, including, Allen says, "five that we were actively trying to prevent. People felt free to say some really pointed things to us."

Allen's response was to begin one of his Sunday sermons with this message from the pulpit: "Yes, Amy is pregnant again. And yes, we *do know* what causes that."

The Hickmans could only conclude that God wanted them to have a large family. And while they clearly adore

**ROOM FOR MORE** With 10 children of their own, the Hickmans have also opened their home to other children in need of a family. On three separate occasions, they have welcomed young people into their home for periods ranging from a few months to four years, prompting people to ask, “What were you thinking?” • “There was no thought process,” Amy says. “You see someone in need and your heart just opens up.” • “God put those kids in our lives and in our boys’ lives,” Allen adds. “It was a good lesson for our sons. We want our boys to make a difference in this world and to help other people, not just get theirs. This was leading by example.”



“I’ve always heard the youngest child in most families gets spoiled, but that’s not true in our family. I think mom and dad treat Nathan just the same as they treated us older boys. Of course, if he’d been a girl, we’d probably be having an entirely different conversation.” — CALEB HICKMAN, Son #2

“I love tax season. It’s the one time of the year when having 12 dependents is a good thing financially.”

ALLEN HICKMAN



each and every one of their boys, they candidly admit that it hasn’t always been easy.

“I wish I could honestly say that every time I found out I was pregnant, my reaction was, ‘Oh, thank you, God,’ but that wouldn’t be true,” Amy says. “Instead, I was saying, ‘God, we’ve already got so many. And don’t You know we’re not millionaires?’ After about number six, I was actually embarrassed to go back to the doctor. But God was looking out for us. He directed me to a doctor named Dr. Care, and that name was perfect for him. Dr. Care kept telling me that God was gifting us with these babies, and that God would take care of us, too.”

While God has indeed taken care of the family, Allen and Amy have also done their part; raising 10 children means adjusting to a way of life that most people can’t imagine. The Hickmans have converted two rooms in their four-bedroom house into additional sleeping areas, but every child still has at least one “room-mate.” The family car is a well-used, 15-passenger van. Amy is an expert on shopping sales, and for sons two through 10, hand-me-downs are a wardrobe staple. The Hickmans rarely go out to dinner, instead dining on spaghetti, casseroles, and other dishes that allow Amy to stretch their \$1,500 per month grocery bill to the breaking point. When the boys bring friends home for dinner, they caution them with a smile to, “Get what you want to eat the first time around ‘cause there won’t be a second chance.” The Hickmans describe the occasional dinner out at Chili’s as “an investment.”

“On really special occasions, we get to order sweet tea,” Amy says.

“I can save \$25 if we all drink water,” Allen explains with a shrug.

But while the Hickmans may not have a lot of cash on hand, they also have very little debt. The family maintains a simple lifestyle that revolves primarily around school and church activities and the boys’ many sports teams. The Hickmans’ sons have grown up placing more value on the things money can’t buy than on having the latest electronic gadgets or fashions.

Still, Allen Hickman confesses to having “fits of realization,” moments when he realizes all over again that he is responsible for supporting 12 people, and that sometimes, he doesn’t see how he and Amy can do it. Those are the moments when God steps in. On numerous occasions, the Hickmans have been blessed with unexpected funds, which usually arrive in the eleventh hour. Members of their community have provided out-of-the-blue gifts ranging from used cars for the older boys to plane tickets for a family vacation, and their orthodontist gave one son a free set of braces – his version of a frequent flier discount.

“God has been so faithful,” Allen says. “If He took care of one million people in the wilderness, He can certainly take care of this family.”

The biggest challenge the Hickmans face isn’t finding enough money, but finding enough time.

“If you want to do parenting right and raise men of

**LOST AND FOUND**

While Allen and Amy always try to take a head count before boarding their van, they have lived a few anxious moments reminiscent of the movie *Home Alone*. The Hickmans have briefly misplaced a child at an Applebee’s, a Chick-Fil-A, and the Dixie National Rodeo.

10

Number of sons born to Allen and Amy Hickman

7.5

Total number of years Amy Hickman has been pregnant

47,020

Approximate number of diapers changed in the Hickman household over the past 22 years

48

Pieces of chicken purchased from Popeye’s for a Hickman family lunch

1

Number of gallons of milk consumed when breakfast includes cereal

**SUGAR AND SPICE AND EVERYTHING NICE** “When God calls you,” Amy Hickman says, “He gives you grace.” • As the only woman in a house with 11 males, Amy has definitely earned her share of that grace. • “I am a very girly girl, all about lace and frills. I never imagined that I would live my life without a daughter,” Amy says. “Sometimes I do get frustrated. There’s the noise, all that talk about sports, and the smells. More than once I’ve said, ‘Okay, this house is too full of testosterone! I’m going to line you all up and give you estrogen shots!’” • But over the years, Amy has found subtle ways to inject some feminine touches into home life. • “I was about 12 before I realized that all little boys didn’t have tea parties with their mother,” 19-year-old Jacob, a strapping Ole Miss football player, confesses. “She would make us drink tea from little cups with our pinkies stuck out, and I thought that was perfectly normal.”



“Our father is the same man at home as he is in the pulpit. He’s not perfect, but if he makes a mistake he always says he was wrong and apologizes. I’ve learned more from that example than I would have learned if he were perfect.” — JACOB HICKMAN, Son #3

good character, you have to use the gift of your influence,” Amy says. “Our biggest challenge has been reaching that level of involvement with each of the boys, pouring that much of ourselves into all 10 of them when each one is in a different stage of life. It’s a constant challenge to make them all feel loved and special and to make sure no one ever feels left out.”

The Hickmans have indeed poured themselves into their children, from periodically taking each boy on special excursions with mom or dad to attending sporting events in shifts to make sure every boy had someone cheering at every game. Evenings at the Hickman home include an organized family time, which finds Allen reading aloud from the Bible and each son sharing something for which he is thankful. Family time ends when Allen counts down to the shared family vision, which is recited in unison: “We pray that we may be a sweet aroma to Your nose, a joy to Your eyes, and in all things bring glory to Your name.”

According to those who would know best – their sons – Allen and Amy have done an outstanding job.

“I never felt neglected or that I was getting the short end of the rope,” oldest son Micah, a student at Delta State University, says. “Sometimes I wondered what it might be like if I had two or three brothers instead of nine, but I never wanted to be an only child. I had friends who didn’t have brothers and they usually ended up at our house, where there was always someone to play with or a kid to pick on. We have a bond as a family that I wouldn’t trade for anything.”

“Mom and Dad did a great job of raising each and every one of us,” number two son, Caleb, agrees. “We’re all well-behaved. Out of the 10 of us, there aren’t any brats or whiners in the bunch.”



**FROM THE ROUGH TO THE FAIRWAY**

Allen Hickman confesses to having moments when he wonders how he can possibly provide for all of his sons. One of those challenging moments stemmed from Allen’s love of golf. He wanted to share his passion for the game with his boys, but realized there was no way he could afford to purchase golf clubs for all 10 sons.

“I was very frustrated and overwhelmed,” Allen recalls. “I told God, ‘Lord, you gave me these 10 boys and I can’t even give them clubs to play a game. How am I supposed to pay for cars and college and everything else they’ll need? How?’”

The next day, Allen was approached by a man on the golf course.

“Brother Allen, I’ve been thinking about your family,” the man said. “I make golf clubs and I’d like to make some for your boys.”

The day after that, Allen bumped into the golf pro at the local country club.

“He’d been cleaning out the pro shop and found two sets of golf clubs made for little boys. He wanted to give them to my kids,” Allen recalls, his voice cracking as he shares the story. “Within two days of my questioning God, all 10 of my sons had golf clubs. All I could say was, ‘Lord, I’m sorry I doubted.’ He has been unbelievably faithful.”

**\$100**

Average cost of a Hickman family trip through the McDonald’s drive-through

**8**

Loads of laundry done per day in the Hickman household

**1**

Number of hours per day Amy Hickman spends sorting socks

**3**

Number of children enrolled in college before the Hickmans qualified for any level of financial aid



**ALLEN & AMY PLUS 10? GUESS AGAIN.** Allen Hickman’s opinion of reality shows focused on large families, including the now-defunct *Jon & Kate Plus 8*, is simple. • “I hate those programs,” he says. “The family is the most important institution God made, and in my opinion, treating it like a TV show cheapens the family and how important it should be. If I succeed at a career, or a TV show, or anything else, but I sacrifice my family to do it, I’ve failed.” • Jacob Hickman, son #3, has another observation. “I’ve watched that show and I think they’re amateurs. But then again, they only have eight.”

“It’s been a lot of work, and honestly, sometimes I don’t know how we’ve done it,” Allen says. “It’s the Lord, by far. He gave us an understanding of what we’d need to do and an understanding of discipline. We couldn’t have done it if they hadn’t been good boys, but then again, ‘good’ doesn’t just happen.”

“As the oldest, I got a lot of whippings, but Dad seems to have mellowed a little,” Micah says with a smile. “Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to be the youngest. I think I might be able to get away with a little more.”

The 10 boys themselves are close friends, attending one another’s sporting events and offering a reliable sounding board when one of them is facing a tough issue. There is no jealousy among the boys, although Micah has been known to joke that his inheritance is getting smaller with every brother. The boys also learned at an early age to serve others.

“I’m 20 years old and single,” Caleb says, “and I’ve already changed more diapers than most men will in their lifetime.”

While many fathers today feel pressure to be good role models, Allen Hickman sees fathering his 10 sons as an incredible opportunity.

“I look at it as a privilege to pass on the good stuff,” Allen says. “I know my sons are watching me. I can look at that in a negative way and say, ‘Wow, I’m under so much pressure,’ or I can look at it and say, ‘Wow, I get to affect the future.’ The world needs good Christian men of integrity and honor. I do the best I can, trust the Lord, and remember that love covers a multitude of sins.”

Third son Jacob jokingly points out that the Hickmans are just two men shy of the disciples, but Allen and Amy believe their family is complete, primarily because the five years since Nathan’s birth is the longest they’ve gone without having another son. When asked what the words “empty nest” mean to them, Allen replies, “I don’t think we’re ever going to have it.” The Hickmans are considering building another house, and Amy has already suggested they build one large enough to accommodate not only their 10 boys, but also their future daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

“I’ve told her, Baby, they have that already, and it’s called a hotel,” Allen says. “Besides, when it comes to babysitting, I’ve already told the boys I’m sending their rug rats home.”

He pauses then adds with a smile, “Unless one of them has a little girl. I might just have to keep that one.”

4

Number of bedrooms in the Hickman house

2

Number of other rooms converted into bedrooms in the Hickman house

3

Number of children fostered by Allen and Amy Hickman in addition to their own 10 sons

Infinite

Amount of faith Allen and Amy Hickman have in God to care for their family

For more on this story, visit [www.mc.edu/beacon](http://www.mc.edu/beacon).

# Class Notes

50s



Dr. Sam Marshall Gore

Dr. Sam Marshall Gore (B.A. ’52) was commissioned by the Women in the Profession Committee of the Mississippi Bar to sculpt a bronze bust of the late Mississippi Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Gandy. Unveiled in March, the sculpture of Gandy is on display in the Old Supreme Court Chamber at the Mississippi Capitol.

Rev. Stanley D. Stamps’ (B.A. ’54) book, *Following the Vision: A History of Baptists in Honduras*, was

published in Spanish this year. The book was originally published in 2007 in English with CrossHouse Publications. The Spanish edition is available from Libreria Bautista (Baptist Bookstore) in Honduras.

Ken Toler, Sr. (B.S. ’56) has been inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2010. Toler was inducted into the Mississippi College Sports Hall of Fame in 1998 and the Mississippi Tennis Hall of Fame in 1996. He has been ranked in tennis tournaments more than 60 times since 1966 and holds the record for having the highest number of Mississippi tennis rankings.

60s

Dr. Larry Allen Drawdy (B.A. ’63, M.Ed. ’65) has been appointed as the interim deputy state superintendent of school improvement, oversight, and recovery. Drawdy will be responsible for the Mississippi Department of Education’s Division of Safe Schools and School Improvement. He has served as superintendent of education of the Biloxi Public School District and the Meridian Public School District. Drawdy was selected as Mississippi College’s distinguished alumnus for the department of teacher education in 2000.

Dorothy Davis Miley (M.Ed. ’64) was honored by the Hinds Community College Development Foundation for her service to the school and foundation. The Mississippi Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals recognized her at the 2009 National Philanthropy Day luncheon held in November.

Gary Walters’ (B.S. ’69, M.S. ’83) newest book, *Delta Dreamin’*, contains 90 of his Delta paintings. The book was published by Quail Ridge Press and can be found in stores and online.

70s

Ernest “Ernie” Myers (B.A. ’74) is an executive officer with the Generosity Advisors Network. This partnership provides solution-based coaching to local congregations and faith-based non-profits in the area of biblical generosity/stewardship.

Pat Baugh (B.A. ’76) has been named Scott County’s Teacher of the Year. Baugh has been in education more than 34 years and is currently the librarian at Morton High School (MHS). Outside the classroom, she remains busy as a member of the Mississippi Library Association, the sponsor of MHS’s student council, coordinating blood drives, and staying active in the community. Baugh was named MHS Teacher of the Year in 2004, 2006, and 2009, as well as the Mississippi Economic Council Teacher of the Year. She and her husband, Randy, have three children.

Rev. Keith M. Stamps (B.A. ’78) and his wife, Penny, live in Antigua, where they serve among several ethnic groups in Central America and the Caribbean area as consultants in the “chronological method” of teaching through the use of Bible stories. With their colleagues they have prepared manuals that use Bible stories to teach evangelism, discipleship, and stewardship to new believers and churches.

Andy Taggart (B.A. ’79), Jeff Rimes (J.D. ’00), and Lisa Usry (B.A. ’96, B.S.B.A. ’96, M.B.A. ’00, J.D. ’00) announced the formation of their new law firm in Ridgeland, Mississippi. Taggart, Rimes & Usry, PLLC opened in January.

80s

Chris A. Gillespie (B.S.Ed. ’80) is director of athletic training education at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. In 2003, Gillespie founded TEAM 413 - a labor of love for runners worldwide. Whether challenging others to walk a lap around a track or run a mile, change an attitude or improve a relationship, Gillespie shares a message of confidence, perseverance, courage, and strength. His goal is to exhibit in his own life and to impart to others the truth of Philippians 4:13 - “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Lisa Hughes Headrick (B.S. ’83) was named 2009 Woman of the Year in Education by the American Biographical Institute. With this honor she is invited to attend the World Forum in Science and Education at Cambridge University in England in August. Headrick is a biology instructor at Jones County Junior College, where she has taught for more than 20 years.

Rhonda Lynn Stamps Cole (B.S. ’84) works for Onslow County Schools as a lead school social worker. She and her husband, Lawrence, live in Jacksonville, North Carolina, and have a son and daughter who are both in college.

Dr. Jet Davis, BCNP (B.S. ’84) was recognized as a board certified nuclear pharmacist by the Board of Pharmaceutical Specialties. Certification requirements include a minimum of 4,000 training/practice hours in nuclear pharmacy and a passing score on the Nuclear Pharmacy Specialty

Certification Exam. Dr. Davis is one of only three board certified nuclear pharmacists in Mississippi and one of 516 worldwide. Davis is a hospital pharmacist at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and a partner with NuMedRx Pharmacy Solutions, an independent nuclear pharmacy in Jackson.

Cynthia Harmon (B.S.Ed. '84) was the winner of the 2008-09 Golden Apple Teacher Award sponsored by *The Huntsville Times*. She was one of only 10 chosen from more than 200 teachers nominated by students and parents. Harmon was the 2008-09 Teacher of the Year for Valley Fellowship Christian Academy.

Dr. Mark Reed (B.S. '85), otolaryngologist at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, was recently featured in *Northside Sun* for his photography hobby. His idea for photographing downtown Jackson landmarks started from a desire to help raise money for charity. Reed is now recognized among the area's up and coming artists.



Dr. Peggy Brassfield Wright

Dr. Peggy Brassfield Wright (B.S. '86) will serve as the assistant director of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center's Human Capital Initiative. Wright is a member of the Armed Forces Communication and Electronics Association. Her achievements include being awarded the Meritous Civilian Service Award, Superior Civilian Service Award, and the Vogel Award for Scientist of the Year. Wright expects the human capital process to be fully operational by 2012.

Billy D. Stroupe (Ed.S. '86) will serve as the interim superintendent for Prentiss County Schools until a special election set for November. Stroupe has 27 years' experience in education. He previously served as superintendent of the North Tippah School District.

Donna Smith (J.D. '86) is a private practice attorney currently serving as one of four felony public defenders for Lowndes County. In a recent interview in the *Commercial Dispatch*, she discussed her job and what has led her to where she is today. A video of the interview, "Defender: Job has its 'shining moments'" can be found on YouTube.



## WATERS' COLORS WIN AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Congratulations to popular Mississippi painter Wyatt Waters '77 of Clinton, who received a prestigious 2010 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts.

The Mississippi Arts Commission teams with the Governor's Office to annually recognize outstanding writers, artists, performers, craftsmen and educators who have made significant and lasting contributions through their work. More than 300 people attended a February 25th ceremony at Galloway United Methodist Church in downtown Jackson, where Waters was presented with the Award for Artistic Excellence.

Waters had always had a talent for painting, but never considered it as a profession until Dr. Samuel Gore at Mississippi College encouraged him to make art his life's work. Today, Waters is known for painting his watercolors of Mississippi landmarks and everyday Mississippi life on location. When he's not in his gallery in Clinton's Olde Towne, he can often be found on the streets and back roads of Mississippi, palette and brush in hand. A believer in supporting his community, Waters has donated thousands of dollars worth of his art to area non-profits for fund-raising efforts. Waters has published books of his own work, collaborated with writers to illustrate the work of others, and distinguished himself and the state of Mississippi with the overwhelming popularity and accessibility of his art.

## 50-YEAR CLUB REUNION

HONORING THE CLASS OF 1960

The Class of 1960 will celebrate its Golden Anniversary during Homecoming 2010, and the 50-Year Club will welcome new members into the club at that time. Traditionally, the 50-Year Club has welcomed new members in April; this year, the club's officers plan to instead host an event on campus during the Homecoming weekend.

Robbie Godwin (B.S. '96) has joined the staff at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Golden Triangle. Godwin is an interventional radiologist. Previously employed at South Central Regional Medical Center, he is a member of the American College of Radiology, the Society of Interventional Radiology, and the Mississippi State Medical Association.

Chip Mabry (B.S. '96) is earning national acclaim as a documentary filmmaker. Mabry's film, *Brutal Beauty – Tales of the Rose City Rollers*, an independent documentary based on Portland, Oregon's roller derby league, was awarded top honors at the Crossroads Film Festival in Jackson, Mississippi, and at the Indie Spirit Film Festival in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The film captured the Programmers' Choice Award at the Crossroads Film Festival and the Festival Director's Choice Award at the Indie Spirit Film Festival this April. Both awards were best of show honors.

Stephen S. Ashley, Jr. (J.D. '97) was selected for the third consecutive year to *Business North Carolina* magazine's "Legal Elite" in the field of intellectual property. Ashley is a registered patent attorney and owner of Ashley Law Firm P.C. in Charlotte, North Carolina, specializing in patent trademark and copyright law.

Linda Maris Perez (M.Ed. '97), librarian at Madison Station Elementary School, was the recipient of the 2009 Kaigler-Lamont Award presented at The Kay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival at the University of Southern Mississippi. The award recognizes accomplishments in bringing children and books together.

Dr. Robert "Robbie" Keith Speights (B.A. '98) received his doctor of ministry degree from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) in December 2009. He has

Robert G. Anderson (J.D. '87) has been selected as a fellow of the American Bar Foundation. The exclusive honor is given to only one-third of one percent of lawyers in the United States. Anderson is an attorney with Butler, Snow, O'Mara, Stevens & Cannada, PLLC in Jackson. He focuses on white-collar crime, government investigations, complex commercial litigation, and healthcare law.

Senator E. Vincent Davis (J.D. '89) began his appointment as chancellor of the 17th District Chancery Court in December. Davis was elected to the Mississippi Senate in 2007. He has served as vice chairman of the forestry committee and was a member of the appropriations and judicial committees. He will preside over Adams, Claiborne, Jefferson, and Wilkinson counties.

Trey Phillips (J.D. '89) has been named first assistant attorney general for Louisiana. Attorney General Buddy Caldwell's office made the announcement in November. Since February 2008, Phillips has served as director of the Public Protection Division at the Louisiana Department of Justice.

**90s** Betsy Durso Branch (J.D. '90) has been named partner at McCurley, Orsinger, McCurley, Nelson & Downing, LLP. The Texas firm specializes in family law. Branch was previously an assistant attorney general in the Child Support Litigation Division of the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Brenda F. Mitchell (J.D. '90) has been appointed district attorney of the 11th Circuit Court District. Mitchell is a member of the Mississippi Prosecutors Association and the Mississippi Bar.

Dr. Michelle King (B.S.Ed. '91, M.Ed. '93) has been promoted to assistant superintendent of elementary schools. King was formerly principal of Watkins Elementary School, which has been spotlighted statewide for its exemplary academic performance rating. She is also an adjunct professor at Jackson State University and has been honored as the Junior Achievement Principal of the Year and with the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Outstanding Educator Award.

Dr. Samuel Todd Brand (B.S. '96, M.S.C. '97) was named the 2009 Humanities Professor of the Year at Meridian Community College. The award is sponsored by the Mississippi Humanities Council. Brand presented his paper, "Selling Salvation in the Information Age: Organized Religion's Use of the Mass Press," for the award.

## WHEN THE SAINT GOES MARCHING IN



Former New Orleans Saints player and MC standout Fred McAfee '91 has been "drafted" to the Saints 40th Anniversary Team. The New Orleans Saints Hall of Fame updates its all-time team every five years, choosing from players throughout Saints' history to build the best possible dream team. McAfee joins other talented players, including star quarterback Archie Manning and former wide receiver Joe Horn, on an elite 40th anniversary squad led by Coach Jim Mora. In addition to making special plays for the Saints, McAfee suited up for the Arizona Cardinals, Pittsburgh Steelers, and Tampa Bay Buccaneers during his 16-year NFL career. Today, McAfee works for the reigning Super Bowl champs as the Saints' director of player personnel. Who dat joining dat anniversary team? Fred McAfee, dat's who!

## HOMECOMING

October 14–16, 2010: Alumni Association members are gearing up for Homecoming on October 14-16, 2010. Classes celebrating reunions include: 1955, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005. A golf tournament, awards dinner, tailgating on the Quad, football game, parade, and departments' receptions 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 or visit <http://alumni.mc.edu/homecoming>.



also received the master of divinity degree with a specialization in expository preaching and the master of theology, both from NOBTS. Robbie serves as pastor of First Baptist Church, Benton, Tennessee. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two children, Jacob and Catherine.

Mike Coleman (J.D. '99) started a new position with Montgomery, McGraw, Collins, O'Cain and Coleman in January. Coleman is licensed to practice in Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. He lives in Madison with his wife, Renee, and their two sons.



J. Andrew "Andy" Gipson

J. Andrew "Andy" Gipson (B.A. '99, J.D. '02) has been elected to shareholder at the law firm of Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis. He focuses his business practice in the areas of securities, communications, and agriculture law and was listed as a Rising Star in the 2009 edition of *Mid-South Super Lawyers*. In addition to practicing law, Gipson serves in the Mississippi legislature representing citizens of Simpson, Smith, and Rankin counties in the house of representatives.

Anna Alford Nelson (B.S.B.A. '99) was recently named the development director with the Arthritis Foundation in the Birmingham/Central Alabama Region.

**00s** Stephanie R. Jones (B.S. '00, M.S. '07) received the 2008-09 Outstanding Young Lawyer Award from the Mississippi Bar Association.

Katie Jo Collins (B.S. '02) joined Cooke Douglass Farr Lemons Architects firm as an interior designer. She has eight years' experience in the field.

Carolyn (Ellzey, B.S.N. '03) Langley has moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband, Shannon, and works as a staff nurse in the cardiothoracic recovery unit at Rex Hospital.

William "Bo" T. Johnson III (J.D. '03) and Jeffrey Kirby announce the formation of Kirby Johnson, P.C. Their office is located in Birmingham, Alabama. Johnson will continue to focus on personal injury, products liability, and consumer protection matters.

Leah Bayne Buffington (B.A. '04) is the executive assistant to the executive director of the Department of Human Services in

Jackson. Buffington is currently completing a master's degree in public policy and administration from Mississippi State University. She and her husband, Brock, reside in Brandon.

Travis W. Schmitz (B.S.B.A. '04) was named director of business operations for the department of anesthesiology at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Schmitz earned his M.B.A. from Millsaps College and has worked at the medical center since 2004.

Dr. Hunter Boggs (B.S. '05) received his M.D. from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport. Hunter is married to Jackie (Weston, B.S. '05) Boggs, a former employee in continuing education at MC.

Ashley Ramage (B.S.N. '05) was named Community Service Nurse of the Year for the Mississippi Nurses Association and is a recipient of the Mississippi Nurses Foundation 2010 Mississippi Nightingale Award.

Anthony Moore (Ed.S. '06) is the new principal at Whitten Middle School in Jackson. Moore has served as assistant principal at Chastain Middle School and alternative school administrator and district textbook coordinator at Hazlehurst City Schools. He has participated in the Jackson Public Schools Leadership Development Academy and the Millsaps College Principals' Institute. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at Mississippi College.

Lindsey Carpenter (B.S.B.A. '08, M.B.A. '09) joined the audit department of BKD. She will work out of the CPA firm's Jackson office.

Scottye Adkins (M.M. '09) is the new voice teacher at The Conservatory of the Fine Arts. Adkins performs with the Mississippi Opera Chorus and the Morrison Heights Baptist Church Celebration Choir.

Brad A. Touchstone (J.D. '09) has joined the team at Bryan Nelson P.A. Attorneys at Law. He previously worked with Trustmark National Bank as an auditor. As an attorney, he primarily works with insurance defense.

## Marriages

Melva Faye Welch (M.Ed. '81) and Oliver Ray Bailey, Jr. (L.L.B. '70), April 28, 2009

Lisa Dawkins (B.A. '98) and Brad Godwin, June 20, 2009

Leah Elizabeth Baynes (B.A. '04) and Donald Brock Buffington, October 11, 2008



## BARBIE BASSETT ON FORECASTS AND FAITH

WLBT-TV's chief meteorologist, Barbie Bassett '93, provides a look at her life off camera in her new autobiography, *Forecasts and Faith: Five Keys to Weathering the Storms of Life*. The book focuses on the faith that's kept Bassett steady through every storm life has brought her way, from professional challenges to the loss of a child, from the tornado that ripped through her own neighborhood to Hurricane Katrina's impact on her home state.

"In many ways, Barbie Bassett's story is Mississippi's story," Mississippi Governor Barbour says. "It's about faith and perseverance, dealing with hardships we don't always understand at the time, and finding the answers by working through the problems."

Bassett joined WLBT in 1999 and broke new ground as Mississippi's first female meteorologist. *Forecasts and Faith* pays tribute to the many people who helped Bassett along the way to success, including MC communication professor Billy Lytal.

"Barbie knew what she wanted and achieved what she desired, yet always made those around her better for her presence," says MC Department of Communication Chairman Dr. Cliff Fortenberry. "She never compromised her beliefs and never took shortcuts. Those attributes have made her what she is today – a wonderful employee, a consummate professional, and an excellent role model. MC is proud to call her one of our own."

"We all go through storms in our lives," Bassett says. "I hope that, in some small way, folks who read my story will find comfort and peace in it."

*Forecasts and Faith* is available at local bookstores and on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

Jackie Weston (B.S. '05) and D. Hunter Boggs (B.S. '05), May 2, 2009

Micah Lee Zimmerman (B.A. '06) and Elizabeth Gabrielle Hammon (B.A. '06), April 11, 2009

LeeAnn Babb (B.S.Ed. '08) and Garrett May (B.S.B.A. '09), November 21, 2009

## Births & Adoptions

Robby (B.S. '92) and Vikki Channell, Chess Warren Channell, September 8, 2009

Jennifer (Carter, B.A. '96, M.A. '98) and Billy Kirk, Tate Carter Kirk, June 23, 2009. Tate is welcomed by brothers Tucker (8) and Tanner (7).

Dragana and Mac Alford (B.S. '97), Nikola Tesla Alford, November 17, 2009. Nikola is welcomed by big brother Stefan Phillip (3).

Tina (B.S.B.A. '97, M.B.A. '98) and Kyle Fulcher (B.S.B.A. '98, J.D. '01), Laila Charlotte Fulcher, October 22, 2009. Laila is welcomed by brother, Landon (8), and sister, Laurel (7).

Carol (Reeves, B.S. '98) and Lee Youngblood (B.S. '92, M.S. '95), Ava Annslee Youngblood, September 3, 2009

Sarah (Reeves, B.S.B.A. '99) and Brad Goodman, Karis Elizabeth Goodman, December 21, 2009. Karis is welcomed by big sister Carleigh Ann (1½).

Courtney (Neff, B.S.B.A. '99) and T.J. Williams (B.S.B.A. '00), Hadley Elizabeth Williams, August 11, 2009. Hadley is welcomed by big brothers Lawson (2) and Cannon (4).

Dr. Michael (B.S. '99) and Scarlet Dial, John Luke Dial, February 12, 2010

Jennifer (Miles, '02) and Matthew Weston ('03), Jonathan Hayes Weston, March 5, 2008. He joins big brother James Seth.

Meg (Leech, B.S.Ed. '02) and Tom Hanes, Christopher Thomas Hanes, July 12, 2009. He is welcomed by big sister, Katie Margaret.

## TEA WITH ANITA RENFROE



Christian comedian Anita Renfroe '84 has released yet another hilarious DVD on the joys and angst of being a middle-aged wife and mother. *Big Ol' Sweet Iced Tea* features Renfroe performing stand-up comedy and musical numbers spoofing everyone and everything from Taylor Swift and Beyoncé to the title beverage, which she describes as "our tea-totaling southern table wine." Renfroe continues to perform her stand-up routine to sold-out theatres nationwide and makes regular appearances on *Good Morning America*. For a performance schedule or to order *Big Ol' Sweet Iced Tea* or Renfroe's other DVDs and books, visit [www.anitarenfroe.com](http://www.anitarenfroe.com).



## 2010 SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Back Row: MIKE JONES, Athletic Director / CHRIS MICHAEL, '76, Baseball / RANDALL BOONE, '57, Basketball / RICHIE TAYLOR, '93, Golf / TONY EDDINS, '87, Football / Front Row: VAN SAVELL, '87, Track/Cross Country / LORI BUSTIN TOULIATOS, '90, Tennis / DARRELL HOPKINS, '88, Football / NORMAN MINTON, '64, Football

Daniel (B.S. '02) and Melinda Watson, Linda Rose Watson, February 17, 2010. *Daniel is a mathematics instructor at MC.*

Dr. Christie (Green, B.S. '03) and Justin Rives (B.S. '03), Jason Cade Rives, April 30, 2009

## In Memoriam

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

### Alumni

- Herbert L. Carver (B.A. '37), March 7, 2010
- Betty Pope (Hillman '40), December 16, 2009
- Dr. Ernest Leonard Posey, Jr. (B.A. '40), September 16, 2009
- James Ray Coleman (B.A. '42), January 21, 2010
- Betty S. Fuselier (B.A. '44), December 25, 2009
- Lois A. Clark (Mrs. Ted R. Clark, B.A. '45), December 2, 2009
- Rev. Henry J. Bennett (B.A. '47), December 11, 2009
- Dr. Arthur E. Wood, Jr. (B.S. '47, L.L.B. '63), February 14, 2010
- Minnie Mae Mayfield Lowery (B.A. '48), November 30, 2009 (*Mrs. Lowery is the mother of Barbara Brown-King, MC Advancement.*)
- Margaret Berry "Peggy" Offenhiser (B.A. '48), January 19, 2010
- James A. Clarke (B.A. '49), February 7, 2010
- Virgie Burnham Goodson Davis (B.A. '49), March 6, 2010
- Rev. J. E. Moak (B.A. '49), June 21, 2009
- Rev. Charles Gentry (B.A. '50), November 6, 2009
- Martha Brown Lee (B.A. '50), March 3, 2010
- Ann Lipsey Kane (B.A. '51), March 23, 2010
- Rev. James T. Dunnam (B.A. '52), November 16, 2009
- Nat Johnson Hovious (L.L.B. '52), January 18, 2010
- Rev. Robert Tucker (B.A. '54), October 5, 2009
- Rev. Howard Brister (B.A. '55), March 8, 2010
- James "Jimmy" O. Nations (B.A. '57), December 6, 2009
- Barney Lynwood Porter (B.A. '60), October 1, 2009
- Kenneth L. Swarthout, Jr. (L.L.B. '60), December 21, 2008
- Perry Allen Smith (B.S. '61), January 8, 2010
- Neal Fowler, Sr. (B.S. '64), December 21, 2009
- Barry Hannah (B.A. '64), March 1, 2010
- Henry L. Denton (L.L.B. '65), October 10, 2009
- James Edward Alexander (B.S. '66), December 3, 2009
- James H. Cutrell (B.A. '66), October 28, 2009
- Alta Maye Martin (M.Ed. '66), November 22, 2009
- Billye Halbert Jones (M.Ed. '67), January 9, 2010
- Sharon Broomall Bobik (B.A. '68), January 7, 2010
- Richard D. Copeland (M.A. '68), January 11, 2010
- Jimmie L. Massey (M.Ed. '68), March 7, 2010



## THE HOLIDAYS ARE BIGGER AND BETTER IN TEXAS

The Alumni Association invites Mississippi College alumni, parents, and friends to experience a festive, holiday season getaway to the Lone Star State. This six-day, five-night tour includes stops in Houston, Fredericksburg, San Antonio, and Marshall, Texas.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
NOVEMBER 29-DECEMBER 4, 2010

Tour Inclusions:

- Five nights hotel accommodations
- Admission to the Fredericksburg Christmas Market
- Admission to the Admiral Nimitz Museum
- Guided Tour of the LBJ Ranch and Museum
- Guided Sightseeing in San Antonio – Texas Missions and the Museum of Texas Cultures
- A Tour of the Historic Alamo
- A Tour of Steves Homestead in King William District
- An Evening River Barge Cruise in San Antonio
- Guided Sightseeing and Home Tour in Marshall
- Nine meals, round trip luxury motorcoach transportation with restroom on board, and all luggage handling, taxes, and gratuities

Cost is approximately \$875 per person (based on double occupancy). A \$100 per person deposit is due by October 1, 2010. Final payment is due by October 25, 2010.

For more information, visit <http://alumni.mc.edu/> travel or contact the Office of Alumni Affairs at 601.925.3228.

- Wesley W. Miller (M.Ed. '69), December 16, 2009
- Carol Ann Reynolds Roberts (B.A. '69), October 30, 2009
- Dr. Jesse D. Drake, Jr. (M.Ed. '70), October 25, 2009
- Daniel Lewis Edwards, Sr. (L.L.B. '70), July 13, 2009
- Billy Joe Gilmore (B.S.Ed. '72, J.D. '73), November 15, 2009
- John Thomas Dawson (L.L.B. '73), September 13, 2009
- Ellis Lamar Strong, Jr. (B.S.Ed. '74, J.D. '80), December 29, 2009
- Rachel Channell Dunn (B.S. '76), January 11, 2008
- Billy W. Lambert (J.D. '76), March 13, 2009
- Jeffrey Anderson Huff (B.S.B.A. '77), February 6, 2010
- C. Eiland Harris (J.D. '78), December 9, 2009
- Walter Jean Duncan (J.D. '80), November 20, 2009
- Timothy "Terry" James (J.D. '81), December 7, 2009
- Stephen H. Leech, Jr. (J.D. '84), January 20, 2010
- Dorothy Carpenter (M.S.C. '84), March 25, 2010 (Retired Staff)
- Stephen "Bryan" Budak (J.D. '85), January 31, 2010
- Charles Christopher "Chris" Brown (J.D. '09), January 9, 2010

### Friends

- Bob Thayer, father of Charlotte Wood, MC nursing professor, September 18, 2009
- Marion Leigh, mother of Melanie Fortenberry, MHSA program director, September 29, 2009
- William Gresham, Jr., former MC trustee member, February 23, 2010
- Sarah Nell Spencer, retired MC controller, November 9, 2009
- T. West Miller, father of Dr. David Miller, associate English professor, November 18, 2009



Barry Hannah '64

Award-winning author Barry Hannah died March 1, 2010 at his home in Oxford, Mississippi. Hannah was born and raised in Mississippi. He graduated from Mississippi College in 1964 and later earned a master's degree in creative writing from the University of Arkansas.

Hannah's first novel, *Geronimo Rex*, received the William Faulkner prize for writing and was nominated for a National Book Award. *Airships*, his 1978 collection of short stories about the Vietnam War, the Civil War, and the modern South, won the Arnold Gingrich Short Fiction Award. His 1996 short story collection, *High Lonesome*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. In 2003, Hannah was presented with the PEN/Malamud Award, which recognizes excellence in the art of short fiction. Hannah also received the prestigious Award in Literature from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. He was twice awarded the fiction

prize of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters and received the Mississippi Governor's Award for distinguished representation of the state in artistic and cultural matters.

Hannah taught creative writing at the University of Mississippi for more than 25 years. He also worked as writer in residence at the University of Iowa, the University of Montana-Missoula, and Middlebury College in Vermont. He passed away just days before the annual Conference for the Book in Oxford; Hannah and his work had been selected as the focus of the 2010 conference prior to his death.

"Barry could somehow make the English sentence generous and unpredictable, yet still make wonderful sense, which for readers is thrilling...He seemed to command the short story form and the novel form and make those forms up newly for himself," said Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and Mississippi native Richard Ford. "[Barry] chose to live in William Faulkner's town, chose to stay in the South, to his great strength and credit. But he was not a regional talent. He was much larger than that."

### Dorothy Ivey Carpenter '84

Dorothy Ivey Carpenter passed away on March 25, 2010. A native of McNair, Mississippi, Carpenter was a 1943 graduate of Jefferson County Agricultural High School where she was the valedictorian. After attending Draughon's Business College, Copiah Lincoln Junior College, and Mississippi College, she returned to her high school *alma mater* to teach, where she met and married her husband of 64 years, N. W. "Wilbur" Carpenter, Jr. She later attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where she received her bachelor of religious education degree.

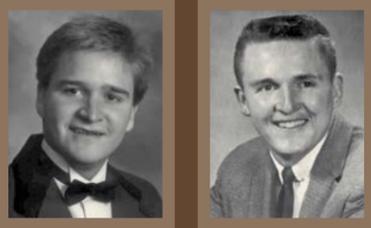
From 1954 to 1960, Carpenter served as secretary to the presidents of Mississippi College, Dr. D. M. Nelson and Dr. R. A. McLemore. She returned to Mississippi College in 1978 and worked in the graduate and continuing education offices. She attended Mississippi College and received her master of science in communications degree in 1984. She later was appointed to the post of director of continuing education, where she served until her retirement in 1992. While serving in that post, Carpenter brought the Elderhostel program to Mississippi College and served as state director of Elderhostel, a position which required her to travel extensively throughout the United States and abroad.

Carpenter was a former member of First Baptist Church of Clinton and Northminster Baptist Church of Jackson and was most recently a member of Northside Baptist Church of Clinton.

Mrs. Carpenter is survived by her husband, N. W. "Wilbur" Carpenter, Jr., her son and daughter-in-law, a granddaughter, and several other relatives and friends.

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](mailto:pr@mc.edu), or submit your news online at <http://alumni.mc.edu/classnotes>.

Photos submitted should be of professional quality.



## 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 Ken Lyle '60 and Scott Lyle '88, father and son members of the Mississippi College Hall of Fame.

Ken Lyle discovered Mississippi College in Anchorage, Alaska. A native of Texas, Lyle served in the military and was stationed in Anchorage in the mid-1950s. In the land of the Midnight Sun, he met several Mississippi College students who had come to Alaska to work for the summer.

"My dream had been to attend Texas University and study drama, but there in Anchorage, God began talking to me about the ministry," Lyle recalls. "When I left the service, I moved to Mississippi and enrolled at MC."

Lyle's many honors at MC included being one of the original four inductees into the Hall of Fame. Following his graduation from MC and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Lyle entered the ministry, serving with churches in Mississippi, Texas, Georgia, and New York. He also served as the Metro New York Baptist Association's director of missions and as the executive director-treasurer of the Baptist Convention of Maryland-Delaware before retiring as the executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England in 2000. Though he was never called overseas, Dr. Lyle's ministry was always geared toward missions.

"When we moved to New York City, there were fewer than 10 Southern Baptist churches in the area," Dr. Lyle recalls. "We focused our outreach on a diverse population of people, many of whom did not speak English. I've always had a passion for sharing God's message with people of different languages and cultures."

Today Dr. Lyle and his wife, Judy, live in Abilene, Texas, where both are active in First Baptist Church Abilene. Dr. Lyle is involved in the City Light Ministry, an outreach to the poor and homeless; is serving his final year as chair of the

church's missions committee; and offers his considerable expertise on missions to another area church working to build a cross-cultural ministry.

"Looking back over my entire career, I'm overwhelmed with gratitude," Dr. Lyle says. "My family and I had the privilege of going places and serving, and we had as much or more exposure to the people of the world as anyone, anywhere because of where God put us. I've learned that no matter where you are, making a difference all comes down to living out the Christian faith and building relationships."

All of the Lyles' four children followed in their parents' footsteps and attended Mississippi College, but son Scott took things one step further when he followed his father into the MC Hall of Fame.

Gifted in helping others find their potential, Scott quickly found success in the business world. He was working as the manager of people and leadership development with Southwest Airlines when he felt the call to full-time ministry, and once again, followed in his father's footsteps. Today, Scott Lyle is pastor of leadership and missions at First Baptist Church Forney, Texas.

"In the earlier years of my career, I saw my calling as that of a corporate missionary. Teaching in a corporate environment gave me so many opportunities to influence people," Scott Lyle says. "Over time, God began to show me the importance of those relationships. I believe the call into ministry was a natural progression and all those experiences were preparing me to do the same work in a church environment."

"It's ironic since we're talking about the Hall of Fame, but I've realized life is not so much about the certificates and plaques and pictures on the wall," Scott Lyle continues. "Those things are great achievements, but what really matters is relationships."

Like father, like son.



**KEN LYLE**  
*Hall of Fame '60*  
Mr. Mississippi  
College  
SBA  
President  
Most  
Versatile

Senior Class  
Favorite  
President,  
Freshman and  
Sophomore Class  
Judicial Council  
President, Pi  
Gamma Mu

Men's Honorary  
Leadership  
Society  
**SCOTT LYLE**  
*Hall of Fame '88*  
President,  
Junior and  
Senior Class

Senate/Senator  
of the Year  
Sophomore and  
Junior Class  
Favorite  
President, Vice-  
president, Treasurer,  
Circle K Men's Club

Society of Physics  
Students  
Pi Mu Epsilon  
Alpha Lambda Delta  
Mortar Board  
President, Omicron  
Delta Kappa

"TRAIN A CHILD  
IN THE WAY HE  
SHOULD GO, AND  
WHEN HE IS OLD  
HE WILL NOT  
TURN FROM IT."

PROVERBS 22:6





Mississippi  
College  
A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

BOX 4003 / CLINTON, MS 39058

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Jackson, MS  
Permit # 134



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SEEKS  
TO BE KNOWN AS A UNIVERSITY  
RECOGNIZED FOR ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE AND COMMITMENT  
TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.