

New JSU student pres elected

Andross Milteer arrived at Jackson State University as a stranger from his hometown of Long Beach, Ca.

But it didn't take long for him to become well-known around campus.

The junior Biology/pre-med major was elected student body president last month from a field of three candidates.

He's now working to increase school spirit, lobbying for more funding and trying to ease students' transportation needs.

"Everything we do, we're going to give it back to the students," Milteer said.

A shuttle system is near the top of Milteer's agenda. He said students need better access to sites on and off campus, and a shuttle program could help transport them to class or to get groceries.

"One of the other things I want to implement is a program to increase school pride," Milteer said.

He said he plans to buy T-shirts for students to wear to athletic events, and he also wants to schedule programs "to get the students excited about going to Jackson State."

Milteer will also spend some of his energy off-campus as he lobbies state lawmakers for help in an uncertain economy. All of Mississippi's universities face future budget cuts.

"We need more money for scholarships and books," he said. "Legislators will know Jackson State and our student body."

*At press time in April, the SGA president had not been elected.

MSU CVM meets class goal

■ Students raise money to help further college

The College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) at Mississippi State University always "gives back" on graduation day.

But Keith Youngblood's Class of 2010 decided to take the tradition a step further by committing to raise \$10,000 for the Pegasus Partners Endowment Fund, which was established by early graduates from the college and supports activities at CVM.

In April, after all the donations were tallied, Youngblood, CVM class president, and his colleagues learned that they met their goal.

"This was really important to us because the money will be used for things like new labs or classroom equipment," Youngblood, 36, said. "What better way to pay our respect to those that have come before us than to help those that come after us?"

Youngblood, 36, originally from Laurel, is now living in Weatherford, Texas. The CVM

is part of the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine at MSU.

Student donations made up the bulk of the contribution. An overwhelming majority of the CVM students who graduated this year agreed four years ago to give \$500 a year from class dues.

"We wanted everyone to be able to say, 'I had a part in this,' regardless of income level," Youngblood said.

At the time, Dr. Robert Cooper, associate dean at the college, said the administration was "speechless."

"No entering class had ever proposed an ambitious undertaking such as this one," he said.

Youngblood said this project was important for the class because "if it hadn't been for some of the people who originally set up this endowment, we wouldn't be here today."

AMBITIOUS UNDERTAKING



The Mississippi State University CVM Class of 2010 raised \$10,000 for the Pegasus Partners Endowment Fund which was established to support activities at the college.

USM graduation celebrates 100 years of tradition

In years past, the University of Southern Mississippi has split spring commencement into three separate ceremonies: Two in Hattiesburg and one on the Gulf Coast.

But this year, as part of the institution's ongoing Centennial Celebration, about 1,700 students, faculty and staff gathered on the field of M.M. Roberts Stadium for the largest commencement in university history.

"Commencement is the pinnacle of the collegiate experience and despite the size of the ceremony, we still wanted it to be a personal, meaningful experience for the graduates," said Jennifer Payne, Centennial Celebration coordinator. "We saw this

special ceremony as an opportunity for us to come together to acknowledge how Southern Miss has changed individual lives and impacted the state, region and nation."

All attending students participated in a formal processional and received a unique commemorative medallion.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a video that included birthday messages and well wishes from a number of well known friends and alumni including Lieutenant Governor Phil Bryant, Jimmy Buffett and Brett Favre, was played on the stadium's JumboTron.

Planning such a large ceremony presented

some challenges, most specifically being the uncertainty of the weather," Payne said.

However, being in the stadium allowed students to invite an unlimited number of guests, she added.

The public was also invited, as the major Centennial theme centers on giving back to the communities of south Mississippi that have supported the university throughout the last century.

"The ceremony demonstrates the unity that makes Southern Miss unique. We are a family coming together to celebrate a century of determination and achievement," Payne said.

THE **U** REVIEW

May 2010



Degree production on the rise in Miss.

GRADUATION DAY!

In six academic years, Mississippi's public four-year institutions have seen almost a 5.75 percent increase in the number of degrees awarded.

In all, the state's eight universities will give out nearly an estimated 15,500 degrees at commencement ceremonies this year — a record amount for the system.

Moving Mississippi forward depends on continuing that trend, Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Hank Bounds said.

"By creating a better educated citizenry we increase our tax base, attract more business and industry and increase quality of life for all Mississippians," Dr. Bounds said. "Increasing the number of students enrolling and graduating from our universities is imperative if we are going to get out of this recession and compete in a global economy."

Recent changes to some system policies, campus practices and university focuses could be contributing to the increase, said Dr. Al Rankins, IHL Assistant Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs.

In 2004, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning approved a new policy capping the number of hours required at 124 for baccalaureate-level degrees. The goal was to ensure all students receive a quality, well-rounded education that is able to be completed in an appropriate amount of time.

Over the past several years, many of the universities have reevaluated and ramped up first-year experience programs and student services, created unique residential learning communities, and offered more need-based financial aid opportunities in an effort to attract and retain students.



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The system has also focused on engaging nontraditional students through online programs, accelerated and weekend programs and re-admittance programs for students who never finished college but have a significant number of hours completed.

Universities across the system will have to adjust in order to continue to be competitive

and productive in the future, Dr. Rankins said.

"We need to be fluid enough to be able to respond to the inevitable changes in the educational environment," he said. "We also have to be able to respond to the needs of the state and that means taking a hard look at the degree programs we offer too."

New JSU grads recite pledge

Hundreds of Jackson State University graduates this year received much more than a diploma to mark their special day- they also got a traditional pep talk reminding them of their duties as new alumni.

The Jackson State University Alumni Induction Pledge, led by the National Alumni President, is said in unison by new graduates following the awarding of degrees at every JSU commencement exercise.

"Honesty, integrity, service" are the

themes used to induct JSU graduates into the National Alumni Association every year, according to association president Hilliard Lackey.

"It's a pledge, an unbroken allegiance to their alma mater for the education afforded to them, and a promise to go out and live up to these high ideals," he said.

JSU graduates receive one year of free membership in the National Alumni Association. A motivational speech is written

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'PRINTZ' EDITOR NAMED

The 2010-11 *Student Printz* editor is Samantha Schott, a junior from Metairie, La. Schott is a student in the Southern Miss Honors College.

*At press time in April, the editor had not been named.

Lyceum Bell rings for UM grads

Graduates at the University of Mississippi this spring heard a sound they don't hear very often — the ringing of what is believed to be the oldest collegiate bell system in the United States.

The Lyceum bell, installed in 1848, is rung only on special occasions. It tolls before each Ole Miss commencement ceremony to mark an important event for graduates and the university. Provost Emeritus Gerald W. Walton said the bell was probably constructed in 1847.

"For a long time, it was not rung, then they started ringing it for special occasions," he said. "At one time, it served not only as a bell but as a clock, and it rang on the hour and the half hour."

The bell rang 150 times on the university's 150th anniversary in 1998. It also rang during the ceremony commemorating the 40th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at Ole Miss.

The Lyceum bell has been a source of practical jokes over the years. Some students said that if the bell failed to ring on April Fool's Day, classes would be cancelled. They often secured the hammer so that it wouldn't strike the bell.

Ole Miss began celebrating commencements even before any students graduated from the university.

DSU awards special diplomas

Delta State University students who were the first to receive their undergraduate diplomas this year studied hard to participate in a tradition that dates back to the university's first commencement.

Nine DSU graduates received the academic honor of First Diploma and Second Diploma during DSU's Spring Commencement ceremony.

The First Diploma is presented to four-year graduating seniors with the highest grade point average on a minimum of 112 hours of academic credit.

The tradition began at Delta State's first commencement in 1928.

The Second Diploma is presented to two-year graduating seniors with the highest grade point average on a minimum of 62 hours of academic credit at Delta State University.

This policy allows a transfer student with

'Mag Chain' MUW tradition

■ Treasured part of commencement ceremony

Graduation day begins on the steps of Orr Chapel at Mississippi University for Women with one of the institution's oldest, most honored traditions.

It ends with the hope that each graduate will have luck in life after leaving MUW. "We're a very historic place, rooted in our traditions. Students really care about that; it is the reason many of them come here," said Sharon Holcomb, MUW Class Council Advisor.

Class Council is made up of five students in each classification — for a total of 20 students — who are elected by their peers and responsible for upholding university traditions.

The Magnolia Chain, crafted from the state flower by the underclassmen, symbolizes the purity of achievement and the growing experience that graduates experienced during their time at the university, Holcomb said.

Some form of the ceremony has been a part of commencement since 1890, though, until 1905, daisies were used. Daisies are still carried by the Senior Class Council president, who leads the chain.

This year, about 100 students got up early to carry the chain from the chapel to Cal-laway Lawn. During the ceremony, several outstanding students are recognized and a speaker is selected by the senior class officers.

This year, MUW President Claudia Lim-

bert, who will end her tenure at the university in June, served as the Magnolia Chain speaker.

After the formal ceremony, graduates try to pick one of the blossoms from the chain in hopes that it will grant them good fortune and romance.

"Among traditional events, this one is the most well attended," Holcomb said. "It certainly is a very unique, treasured part of the MUW experience."

BLOSSOM LUCK



Students at MUW participate in the 'Mag Chain' ceremony as part of commencement.

ALUM: 'Charge' builds support for Jackson State

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into each commencement program every year.

Lackey says it's "a charge" given to all graduates, regardless of whether they have always attended JSU, transferred from another university, or received a previous degree or degrees elsewhere.

"The whole idea is that you're going to go out there and do some good for the university, and you're going to promote the core values into the world," Lackey said.

The mission of JSU National Alumni Association is to help support the university's success in recruiting students, retaining and expanding alumni programs, raising money and doing community outreach.

ASU Golden grads get diploma too

When Jessica Hinton enrolled at Alcorn State University four years ago, she had no idea when she would finally earn her diploma, her grandparents would get theirs too.

The recent graduate participated in commencement a couple of weeks ago with her grandparents, Peter and Thelma Hinton, 76, both members of this year's Golden Class.

"This is such a special way to recognize alumni and introduce them to students," said Hinton, who was crowned Miss Alcorn this year.

Every year, the institution invites graduates celebrating the 50th anniversary of their own graduation to join the current class in commencement festivities.

Participants don't walk across the stage but they do wear golden robes and are given special seating at the graduation ceremony. At the end, they receive a special diploma acknowledging their achievements at Alcorn and beyond.

Golden Classes also set a fund-raising goal for the year they celebrate their anniversary in an effort to give back to their alma mater.

"When I was applying, I had no idea that it would work out this way," Hinton said. "Being with my grandparents made this a really special event. It's something that I will always remember."

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Distinguished faculty selected as MSU mace bearer

Most — if not all — universities select a mace bearer to participate in commencement ceremonies.

In recent years, Mississippi State University has chosen an outstanding faculty member for one specific reason, Dr. Jerry Gilbert said.

"Selecting a faculty member to bear our university mace is symbolic of the respect placed on the faculty for their role in shaping students' lives and careers through education," said Dr. Gilbert, MSU provost. "The faculty are the heart of the university. Without faculty, we would have no graduates and thus no ceremony."



Alumni of the MVSU Class of 1960, in honor of their 50th anniversary of their own commencement, present a check to help the university's alumni program raise money.

Some MVSU grads are golden

■ Alumni invited back to participate in ceremony

Graduates at Mississippi Valley State University celebrated their walk across the stage this year with a dozen people who did the same thing a half-century ago.

The MVSU Class of 1960 joined the Class of 2010 for commencement ceremonies. MVSU alumni celebrating their 50th commencement anniversary are invited to participate in graduation ceremonies each year.

Robert Young, 71, was one of a dozen alumni who participated in this year's commencement.

"I'm on (MVSU) faculty, so I march every year and I don't think much about it," said Young, a Greenville native. "But after my friends were coming from California and other places, I got excited about it."

The alumni arrive on Friday for a Golden

Reunion. On Saturday, they wear gold regalia as they are presented with certificates during commencement ceremonies.

"It's a time for them to reminisce and see each other," said Yvette Totten, MVSU Director of Alumni Relations.

"When the President makes the announcement that there are students here who walked across the same stage 50 years ago, the audience is always very receptive," she said.

This seven-year tradition also offers a chance for Valley alumni to give back to the university they love. They are given a monetary goal to help the university's alumni program raise funds for an endowment.

This year's class raised more than \$3,000, Totten said.