

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING of the MEMBERSHIP
Hybrid: In-Person at Plymouth Bluff and Zoom Call, 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, April 17, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Rebecca Rogers called the annual meeting of the Mississippi University for Women Alumni Association (MUWAA) to order at 10:06 a.m.

II. ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT’S WELCOME

President Rogers welcomed all attendees to the meeting and reminded them that they will hear lot of information today. She charged attendees to pay attention to information reported and asked them to acknowledge the work that has been accomplished this year, to thank the Board members who have served and to encourage friends and classmates as well as themselves to participate in Board service.

III. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Katherine Shell Benson moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as presented. Motion carried.

IV. RECOGNITION OF 2020-2021 MUWAA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President Rogers recognized Board Officers and Directors as well as Non-Director Committee Chairs with slide presentations and thanked them for the amazing job done this year. She says that she does not know what she would have done without this team.

V. MUWAA ANNUAL REPORTS

A. OFFICER REPORTS

- **Parliamentarian**
Wesley Garrett, Board Parliamentarian, had nothing to report at this time.
- **Secretary**
Jermarra Jones-Price, Board Secretary, had nothing to report at this time.
- **Treasurer**

Dawn Kershaw Gibbons, Board Treasurer, reported that all accounts are in great standing and that all except for the Mortar Board Faculty of the Year Award are fully endowed. Dawn says that the figures shown do not reflect this because money has been added to the endowed accounts since the audited figures were captured. There is a total balance of \$222,455.22 across all account balances as follows:

Restricted Accounts:

Alumni Association Activities Fund (26062)	\$18,142.24
Long Blue Line Auction Fund (26108)	\$12,922.08
Mortar Board Faculty of the Year Award Fund (28107)	\$2,000.00
MUW Faculty Enhancements Grants Fund (28108)	\$1,009.40
MUW New Faculty of the Year Award Fund (28109)	\$1,651.00
BLUE Event Fund	\$5,161.83
TOTAL	\$40,886.55

Endowed Accounts:

Culinary Arts Advisory Board Scholarship (35287)	\$26,073.32
Southern Grace Scholarship (36062)	\$47,876.81
MUWAA Faculty Enhancement Grants (36109)	\$14,680.46
MUWAA Mortar Board Faculty of the Year Award (36110)	\$10,042.41
MUWAA New Faculty of the Year Award	\$15,854.65
MUW Legacy Scholarship	\$67,041.02
TOTAL	\$181,568.67

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS- STANDING

- **Finance**

Dawn Kershaw Gibbons, Chair, just wanted to say thanks for another great auction last year. Thanks to efforts and funds raised, all but the Mortar Board Faculty of the Year account was able to be fully endowed. She says this was a great accomplishment for the Board along with the reporting being changed as needed so it is transparent for everyone reading and that all can see how the funds are being used.

- **Bylaws**

Kacey Keeton, Chair, reported that there have been several changes made over the course of the year to the Bylaws with the biggest being language changes for which more were voted on yesterday in the Spring Board Meeting. These changes were a collaborative effort between the Strategy

and Support as well as the Diversity and Inclusion Committees. She says overall, there has just been a lot of reading and editing.

- **Chapters and Constituencies**

Ashley Dean, Chair, reported that there are still updates being worked on for gaining contacts for all chapters and groups listed on the MUW website. She says that her committee have successfully confirmed 52 contacts. Along with that, her committee has assisted New Orleans in formalizing a chapter, hosted a virtual Chapters and Constituency Groups Workshop and are hoping to end the year with all group contacts confirmed in order to pass along a more streamlined How-To's process for submitting Chapter reports and initiating further Board service.

- **Elections**

Kimberly Griffin, Chair, was not in attendance to report and President Rogers asked attendees to refer to the packet for committee details.

- **Nominations**

Kristi Hipp Mosley, Chair, was not in attendance to report and President Rogers asked attendees to refer to the packet for committee details.

- **Past Presidents**

Katy Canion Pacelli, Chair, reported that due to the restriction of in-person events, her committee has not done a lot but were able to sponsor the No-Show Welty Gala and Long Blue Line Auction this year. She says there have been Past Presidents who are still active and that have made their voluntary contribution to their fund and are all awaiting the day they can be together on campus again.

- **Public Relations**

Elizabeth Yoste Whittington, Chair, reported that her committee developed a record number of press releases, Visions magazine articles, emails, social media posts and multi-media content this year. She gave a huge shout out to this wonderful committee who she says leaned heavily into digital marketing during the pandemic along with social media posts and word of mouth to support the many virtual endeavors of all committees this year. Elizabeth says she looks forward to seeing the work of next year's Board, and that she is thankful to everyone who has supported the Board as well as the successes of MUW this year.

- **Recruitment and Retention**

Jane IZard Turner, Chair, reported that she had a great committee this year and the year's activities for them looked quite different starting with the virtual New Faculty Orientation. There was assistance distributing gifts in person and the main goal this year was to handle the Alumni Awards process. Jane reports there was a record number of awards with 35 nominees and several committee members that worked on a really tight time frame to contact those nominees and overall, everything went very smoothly.

- **Special Events**

Cynthia Kittrell, Chair, reported that even though they are in the middle of the auction right now, this committee has been wonderful this year. She says her team started working with last year's committee to plan the second virtual auction and there has been a total of twelve meetings completely virtual to plan the Long Blue Line Auction this year. Cynthia shared that since her support was submitted, the auction now has 34 sponsors totaling \$14,350 and 230 packages logged into the Greater Giving site with the last one coming in when the auction went live last night. She says we are just shy of \$10,000 in online bidding and that includes \$565 in online donations. She ended by assuring attendees to bid often, bid high and to be kind to fellow bidders.

C. COMMITTEE REPORTS- SPECIAL

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

Symone Bounds, Chair, reported that this committee has had a great year with good goals in place. This includes distributing an alumni survey that gained great participation with over 200 contributors and there is an infographic that can be found in the packet, hosting a Diversity and Inclusion Workshop and providing a Diversity and Inclusion presentation in collaboration with several other committees. This committee was able to provide feedback to the Bylaws Committee about inclusive language changes to the MUWAA Bylaws and Policies and Procedures, suggestions to the University about inclusive events for future Homecomings and direction to the Chapters and Constituency Committee about group formations for specialty groups. Symone ended by congratulating committee members Jermarra Jones-Price for serving as Vice Chair, Nick Wright on being selected to the new MUWAA Board Director Class, Ciara Peoples for earning her Master's Degree and Tshering Lama-Sherpa for earning her Doctorate Degree.

- **Membership Recruitment**
Antwann Richardson, Chair, was not in attendance to report and President Rogers asked attendees to refer to the packet for committee details.

- **Mentoring**
Christie Jones Lawrence, Chair, was not in attendance to report and President Rogers asked attendees to refer to the packet for committee details.

- **Strategy and Support**
Katherine Shell Benson, Chair, reported that this committee has been very busy with changes including bringing forth a motion that passed to change the MUWAA calendar year from January-December to a Fiscal Year, updating the Nominations Committee's timeline, creating a Fundraising Guidelines cheat sheet for MUWAA Chapters and Constituency Groups which is in final review, the motion which passed yesterday to combine the Elections and Nominations Committees and the development of Branding Guidelines for the MUWAA which is currently in draft form. Katherine ended stating the committee has had a great year full of great changes and she highlighted the suggestions of Kristi Hipp Mosley, Jayne Perkins Brown and Christie Jones Lawrence that went into creating the framework for these changes this year.

D. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Rogers recapped her journey from second generation student at MUW to the now President of the MUWAA. It was a memorable effort to show attendees that no matter your social connections, major or service interests, there is a difference to be made for our beautiful institution and you have the ability to leave an imprint if you just trust the process. She reviewed this last year's highlights from all committees and how their separate efforts have made a collaborative impact, addressed accomplishments as a Board that were still made possible in such a unique year, excitedly announcing the Board's vote to create a fourth student scholarship and jokingly made all attendees aware that there are still two and a half months remaining in both her Presidency and the Board Director's terms for work to be done.

VI. RECOGNITION OF ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

President Rogers honored the following Alumni Award winners from the past two years which she says will be recognized at Homecoming in August:

2020 Alumni Award Winners

- *Alumni Achievement Award*
Bonnie Camp, MD, PhD; Class of 1949
- *Alumni Service Award*
Phillip 'Flapp' Cockrell, PhD; Class of 2003
- *Outstanding Recent Graduate*
Jennifer Seuss, Class of 2006

2021 Alumni Award Winners

- *Alumni Achievement Award*
Bridget Wells Brown, Class of 1995
Ashley Dean, Class of 2006
- *Alumni Service Award*
Carolyn Wilson Byrd, Class of 1976
- *Recent Graduate Award*
Symone Bounds, Class of 2012
- *Distinguished Achievement Award*
Danny C. Chandler, Friend of the University

2020-2021 MUWAA Scholarship Recipients

- *Legacy Scholarship*
Olivia Eubanks
- *Culinary Arts Advisory Board Scholarship*
Megan Beard
- *Southern Grace Scholarship*
Addison Holland (*she has received one MUWAA scholarship for each of her four years on the MUW campus*)

2020 MUWAA Mortar Board Faculty Member of the Year

- *Assistant Professor of Education*
Dr. Kelly Bennett

2020 MUWAA Faculty Grant Recipients

- *Faculty Enhancement Grant*
Dr. Travis Hagey, Assistant Professor of Biology
Dr. Brandy Larmon, Department Chair and Professor of Nursing
- *New Faculty Grant*

Brett Pickens, Assistant Professor of Nursing

2021 MUWAA Faculty Grant Recipients

- ***Faculty Enhancement Grant***
Dr. Travis Hagey, Assistant Professor of Biology
Dr. Brandy Wilson, Assistant Professor of English & Creative Writing
Dr. Jill Drouillard, Assistant Professor of Philosophy
- ***New Faculty Grant***
Victoria ‘Vic’ Jones, Archives and Special Collections Librarian

VII. MUWAA PRESIDENTIAL COMMENDATIONS

President Rogers recognized the following superlatives for exemplary service to the Association & Board of Directors:

- ***Excellence in Board Service***
Jermarra Jones-Price, Board Secretary
Wesley House Garrett, Board Parliamentarian
- ***Excellence in Chapter Engagement***
Jackson Metro Chapter, *Highest attendance with 38 participants in “Southern Grayce” with Barbara Black Travis*
Lowndes County (LoCo) Chapter, *Highest number of events held during the Pandemic year with 5*
- ***Excellence in Committee Leadership***
Christie Jones Lawrence, Mentoring Committee
Symone Bounds, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
Cynthia Kittrell, Special Events Committee
Katherine Shell Benson, Strategy & Support Committee
Kacey Keeton, Bylaws Committee
- ***Recent Graduate Engagement***
Julie Gibbons, Class of 2019, Mentoring Committee
John Jacob Miller, Class of 2020, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

VIII. INSTALLATION OF 2021-2022 MUWAA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President Rogers installed, by oath, the following new Officers and Board Members:

MUWAA President to Serve for the 2021-2022 Term

- Katherine Shell Benson, Class of 2003

MUWAA President-Elect to Serve for the 2021-2022 Term

- Symone Bounds, Class of 2012

MUWAA Board of Directors to Serve for the 2021-2022 Term

- Ashley Dean, Class of 2006
- Bridget Smith Ellis, Class of 2004
- Michelle Featherston, Class of 2007
- Kym Golden Gore, Class of 1997
- Nick Wright, Class of 2014

IX. RECOGNITION OF DEPARTING MUWAA BOARD MEMBERS

President Rogers thanked the following departing Board members for exemplary service to the Association and Board of Directors:

- **Dawn Kershaw Gibbons**, Class of 1997
- **Kimberly Griffin**, Class of 1993
- **Cynthia Williams Kittrell**, Class of 1976
- **Antwann Richardson**, Class of 2008
- **Pat Stutsy-Waldrep**, Class of 1989
- **Jayne Perkins-Brown**, Class of 1977
- **Kristi Hipp Mosley**, Class of 1999

X. OPEN FORUM

President Rogers called for any questions, comments and updates on the Long Blue Line Auction. Cynthia Kittrell, Special Events Committee Chair, announced that we had passed the \$20,000 mark in online donations. President Rogers reminded attendees that if they had not activated their Greater Giving account, there was still time left to get those bids in and to not forget the Scout Bag donation.

XI. PASSING OF THE GAVEL AND INCOMING PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

MUWAA President, Rebecca Rogers, passed the gavel to newly elected MUWAA President, Katherine Shell Benson. In return, President Benson presented Past President Rebecca Rogers with a branded MUW lapel pin.

Incoming President Benson thanked Rebecca for her leadership over this last year and reminisced over the many collaborations they have had the opportunity to partake together. President Benson stated that if her future term as President could be themed, it would be titled Community, Connection and Communication. Her hope is for the

upcoming year to continue building on the work of Past MUWAA Presidents and Boards. She stated that the plans for the upcoming Board year have been designed to further strengthen our community by enriching the open and ongoing lines of communication between the MUWAA Membership, Board and the University in order to encourage the creation of even stronger support systems and connections between each other and with our University. It is with better communication that we make stronger connections that develop into a more successful community. President Benson deems the shared history that binds together every person that has attended our Mississippi University for Women creates a community built with a diverse group of individuals that are just the best and brightest people she has ever come to know. This MUW community has faced moments of great triumph and challenge together, especially in this past year, and each time in the truest testament to The W spirit, we have shined. She ended by sharing she is so proud to have this small moment in time to lead the MUWAA and the most awesome community of alums she knows.

XII. PRESIDENT'S CLOSING AND ADJOURNMENT

President Rogers says this year has changed the definition of what it looks like to serve on the MUWAA Board, and she thinks things will continue to evolve. She is hopeful that with this group and the encouragement of this group in the future, we will really sustain that nature of adaptability and flexibility and be able to turn on a dime to adjust what we are doing to serve to the best of our abilities. President Rogers says she knows she gave Board Directors and committee members high-level charges and goals for the year and she is proud that everyone rose to the occasion and knocked off every single item on the to-do list this year. She says she does not know how we did it, given the year's circumstances but she hopes that everyone is just as proud of themselves as she is. Even though this will be her last meeting leading the Alumni Association, President Rogers wants everyone to remember not only the quantity of things accomplished this year but the quality as well.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m. followed by remarks from MUW President, Nora Miller.

XIII. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Nora Miller thanked the room and welcomed all alumni in attendance. She shared recent national and local recognitions the institution has received including but not limited to campus beautification, degree program ranking, tuition costs, military friendliness, and sports program accolades. We were also briefed with fact and figures updates with Nursing and Health Sciences having the highest enrollment at 45% and

female enrollment being 80% and men 20%. Within this last year, fewer than 25% of students lived in the residence halls, 53% of classes were online, availability of tele-counseling and remote learning resources has increased, overall enrollment dropped by almost 4% but New Freshmen enrollment increased by almost 9%, and the virtual presence of campus events, planning and overall learning has been widely encouraged and heavily engaged. President Miller says the campus and its staff are really looking forward to being back on campus in the Fall with safety precaution in place as it pertains to Spring Commencement Fall Housing and classes, and Homecoming in August. She says with vaccinations on the rise, hopefully students and alums will begin to feel comfortable again with face-to-face activities. Among the many highlights shared by President Miller was the inclusion of five new study concentrations. President Miller closed by making attendees aware of how they can get involved with changes on campus and what they can do to support the University through these transitions. She asked that we continue chapter involvement with the MUWAA, share the good news of University achievements and progress, encourage involvement from other alumni, participate in the Long Blue Line Auction which funds student scholarships, participate in the August Homecoming, share new student recruit information, communicate with the University as often as possible and through social media platforms and most importantly, remember to donate.