

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Spring Board Meeting

April 9th, 2026

In-Person/Hybrid

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

President Ashley Dean called the Mississippi University for Women Alumni Association (MUWAA) meeting to order at 3:43PM.

Nicole was unable to fulfill secretary duties due to traveling, JJ was appointed to as secretary pro tem.

MUWAA Board Members present in person:

- Jonathan Cumberland
- Ashley Dean
- J'Markus Dubose
- Anne White Foster
- Clare Haefner
- Deborah Hodges
- Dana Jackson
- Jermarra Jones-Price
- Elysa Harvey Maclellan
- Carrie Niemet
- Annie Oeth
- Terri Stewart
- Bayleigh Vick
- Sydney Pittman
- Wesley House Garrett

MUWAA Board Members present via teleconference:

- Nicole Rensink
- Andrea Germany

MUWAA Board Members absent:

- Trey Harper
- Bridget Pieschel

- Debra Sturgis Stamps

Guests:

- Heather Fasciocco Stone
- Troy Lewis
- LeAnn Alexander
- Kristen Pate

Ex-Officio Members present:

- Cathryn Vaughn Borer, Director of Alumni Relations and Donor Engagement
- Elise Wislon, Executive Director of Development and Alumni
- Nora Miller, University President

II. Adoption of the Agenda

President Ashley Dean called for a motion from the floor to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion to adopt the agenda was presented by Dana Jackson. The motion passed with 16 of 19 board members approving.

III. President's Welcome

President Ashley Dean welcomed everyone to the 2026 MUW Homecoming. Thanked those for attending the spring board meeting and for showing passion, pride, and presence this board year. She shared enthusiasm for Homecoming, describing it as a favorite time of year marked by energy, connection, and celebration. Ashley emphasized the value of experiencing this time together as a community, and she expressed her appreciation for the team's collaboration as preparations continue to welcome the Long Blue Line home and to celebrate the traditions and qualities that make The W so special.

IV. Ratify Votes

Since our Winter 2026 Board Meeting, we have held one electronic vote. No new votes were required for this meeting.

- Fall 2025 board meeting minutes approved by email on February 11th with 18 out of 19 votes in favor.

V. Alumni Office Report

Cathryn presented the Alumni Office report, welcoming attendees to Homecoming 2026 and providing updates on recent activities and initiatives. She noted that the

MUWAA sponsored the meal for the 100th Night celebration for students and staff in attendance.

Cathryn shared that the Alumni Office participated in a conference from February 7–10 and hosted W Charter Day on March 12. She also announced that Mississippi on the Mall is scheduled for June 6 and invited interested individuals to attend.

She reported that the Alumni Office is currently down seven staff members for Homecoming and expressed gratitude to the volunteers assisting with preparations. Additionally, she noted that the office is actively recruiting for a foundation accountant. Cathryn also attended the Denver Chapter Meeting in Colorado in February.

VI. Foundation Report

Foundation Chair Deborah Hodges reported that the foundation is currently short-staffed but commended Elise for doing an excellent job managing operations. She shared that the foundation recently sold a property in Tampa, Florida, generating nearly \$600,000, which has funded a professorship and will also help seed an endowed scholarship.

Deborah noted that alumni giving is currently below expectations and encouraged everyone to consider making small monthly contributions to support the foundation's growth. She also recognized Nora Miller, the first Alumni President, for establishing a scholarship and encouraged others to contribute to it in her honor.

VIII. MUWAA Officer Reports

Parliamentarian

Wesley House Garrett had nothing to report for Parliamentarian.

Secretary

Jermarra Jones-Price had nothing to report for the Office of Secretary.

Treasurer

Dana Jackson presented the following report:

Year-end account figures are included in the packet as of December 31.

Restricted accounts: \$72,823.90

Endowed accounts: \$227,449.77

Combined: \$300,273.57

IX. Standing Committee Reports

Nominations & Elections | Chair Jermarra Jones-Price

Chair Jermarra Jones-Price presented the following report:

The committee reported two primary goals: to coordinate the nominations and elections process and to solicit candidates for four open committee positions. As an immediate next step, the committee will finalize and publish the solicitation timeline to begin outreach for the four nominations and elections committee seats. This will include managing the solicitation process, collecting nominations and applications, and preparing materials for candidate review. The committee will also begin planning for the fall nominations and elections kickoff, including logistics, a communications plan, and oversight of the election cycle. An update was provided on the recent general elections, which were held January 12–25. A total of 160 eligible members participated, voting for one president-elect and five board members. The incoming leadership includes President-Elect Bridget Smith-Ellis, along with newly elected board members Lynne Lott Schneider (Class of 1991), Leta Giuseppe Palmitre (Class of 1997), Ariel Sewell (Class of 2013), Mary Beth Thorman (Class of 2019), and Kristen Pate (Class of 2006). The new board members are scheduled to be sworn in tomorrow.

Bylaws | Chair Debra Sturgis Stamps

Chair Debra Sturgis-Stamps was absent, but her report is in the packet.

Recruitment & Retention | Chair LeAnn Alexander

Chair LeAnn Alexander presented the following report:

All alumni and faculty award recipients have been selected and notified via email and social media, with announcement posts published this week. The award winners will be formally recognized at convocation this Saturday to ensure campus-wide visibility and acknowledgment. The committee has completed its primary responsibilities for this cycle, including the selection and notification process. Appreciation was expressed for the committee's hard work and dedication throughout this effort. The next priority is the formation of the student scholarship committee. LeeAnn will collaborate with Cathryn to determine committee membership, after which scholarship application packets will be distributed for review over the summer.

Chapters & Constituency Groups | Chair Ariel Seawell

Chair Ariel Seawell was absent, but her report is in the packet.

Special Events | Chair Kristen Pate

Chair Kristen Pate presented the following report:

The committee reported ongoing coordination of formal programs, including the Magnolia Mingle and the Long Blue Line Auction. The 13th Annual Long Blue Line Auction, held on September 25, exceeded its fundraising goal. Planning for the 5th Annual Magnolia Mingle is underway, with drawdown ticket sales nearing capacity (153 tickets sold) and merchandise sales continuing. Ticket sales will pause at 6:00 p.m. today and resume tomorrow prior to the event at approximately 3:30 p.m. The committee requested additional support to help meet the remaining ticket goal before the pause. Additionally, the committee approved the creation of an intern position to assist with auction item coordination and event logistics. The position is expected to be posted in late April or early May to ensure support is in place ahead of key event activities.

Finance | Dana Jackson

Chair Dana Jackson presented the following report:

The committee reported that responsibility for developing and managing the association's budget, which had temporarily shifted to the president, is in the process of being transitioned back to the committee. Ashley, Cathryn, Bayleigh, and Dana met following the last board meeting and later convened with the Finance Committee via Teams on February 9. During that meeting, the group reviewed check requests and other items from the current quarter and addressed several procedural questions related to funding sources and allocations. Dana noted limited prior experience with budgeting in higher education and government settings but expressed appreciation for the committee's expertise and enthusiasm for continued collaboration. The committee plans to reconvene to complete a comprehensive budget review and address any outstanding items. The goal is to finalize the budget and restore effective financial oversight, ensuring that processes and allocations are aligned and back on track. The overall outlook remains constructive and optimistic, with a clear commitment to completing budget responsibilities under the committee's leadership.

Public Relations | Troy Lewis

Chair Troy Lewis presented the following report:

The committee reported completing four news releases since the last board meeting. These releases were developed in coordination with multiple committees, including Mentoring, Nominations and Elections, the Alumni Association, and Faculty Programs, to ensure accuracy and alignment.

The releases covered a range of updates, including the Blue event (in partnership with the Mentoring Committee), preparations for the upcoming MUWAA Board of Directors elections and president-elect nomination, the announcement of Alumni Association award recipients, and recognition of Faculty Enhancement Grant and Faculty Award Grant recipients. All materials were carefully reviewed in collaboration with Claire and the Digital Marketing Committee to ensure high-quality, publish-ready content. Finalized releases were submitted to the Spectator on time and accepted for publication. The committee also finalized key details for the upcoming elections process, ensuring clear communication and transparency through a dedicated news release. The PR team highlighted strong collaboration with the Digital Marketing Committee and the Spectator, noting that all submissions met required deadlines and are expected to appear in upcoming print and digital editions. The committee concluded by inviting any additional input from other committees and welcomed questions.

Past Presidents | Heather Fasciocco Stone

Chair Heather Fasciocco Stone presented the following report:

The committee reported that it was assigned four goals by the President, focused on strengthening traditions, enhancing events, and supporting facility improvements. The committee is currently approximately halfway through these objectives and anticipates completing about 75% of its goals by Homecoming. Key initiatives include a refresh of Puckett House alongside a related giving campaign, planning the Past Presidents Brunch, reordering Homecoming ribbons, and establishing the Gavel Pass as a new inaugural tradition at Convocation. The committee will continue progressing toward Homecoming milestones, with plans to launch the Puckett House refresh campaign in the near term.

X. Special Committee Reports

Membership Recruitment | Chair Annie Oath

Chair Annie Oath gave the following report:

The committee reported promoting Homecoming activities to increase engagement among alumni and students. Initiatives include the launch of a second annual line dancing competition and the introduction of a “Why Do You W” social media campaign, scheduled to begin Monday the 13th. The campaign features collected photos and videos from alumni and students highlighting their continued connection to the university, and members were encouraged to invite others to participate. As part of these efforts, the committee organized the second annual line

dancing competition during Homecoming. The event was described as highly engaging and well received, with strong student participation. Based on this positive response, the committee plans to continue the competition as an ongoing tradition.

Mentoring | Chair Bridget Pieschel

Chair Bridget Pieschel was absent, but her report is in the packet.

Strategy & Support | Chair Bayleigh Vick

Chair Bayleigh Vick presented the following report:

The committee reported distributing the Year-End Board Service Survey to all 2024–2025 Board members and Committee Chairs. The participation goal was successfully met, resulting in valuable feedback to inform future improvements. Efforts to enhance alumni engagement during Homecoming focused on improving communication tools, including the successful launch of Whova as the official Homecoming app and the beginning of user adoption. The committee completed onboarding and initial setup of the Whova platform and developed comprehensive communication materials, including email campaigns, app alerts, and direct outreach to board members. Event details, schedules, and engagement features were fully built out within the app. To further encourage participation, the committee introduced a 100% adoption challenge for board and alumni users and collaborated with the Digital Marketing Committee to support promotion through social media campaigns.

The One MUW Committee | Sonny Lemmons

Chair Sonny Lemmons was absent, but his report is in the packet.

Digital Marketing | Chair Clare Haefner

Chair Clare Haefner presented the following report:

The committee reported maintaining a consistent daily posting cadence over the past month, with at least one post each day highlighting weekend activities and Homecoming events. This increased activity has contributed to recent growth on Instagram and Facebook, where engagement has risen notably in recent weeks. Video content has performed especially well, with one Magnolia Mingle video reaching approximately 1,000 views within two days, indicating a strong audience preference for dynamic, face-focused content. Content strategy has centered on event coverage, including photos, short videos, and alumni highlights. Posts featuring alumni—such as introductions of new board members and recognition of award recipients—have emerged as top-performing content, demonstrating strong interest in people-driven stories. Moving forward, the team plans to prioritize alumni-focused and video content to sustain engagement.

The committee also discussed channel management, noting the presence of multiple affiliated platforms (including Magnolia Mingle, Long Blue Line Action, and Blue) alongside the primary alumni channel, which generates the highest traffic. A review is planned to determine whether to maintain separate channels or consolidate content into the main alumni channel to maximize reach and streamline communication. The team will continue maintaining a presence on X and other platforms as part of a multi-channel strategy. Performance data from the first quarter (January–March) was reviewed, with January reflecting lower activity as expected. The team plans to conduct a survey in the spring or summer to better understand where audiences engage with content and to gather input on future content and channel preferences. These insights will guide decisions on channel consolidation and overall content strategy.

XI. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

XII. New Business

1. Policies and Procedures updates (sent by email on 3-27-2026 with office hours on 3-30-2026)
 - W G.U.I.L.D.
 - MUWAA Alumni Awards
 - Appendix F

President Ashley Dean called for a motion from the floor to accept the updated Policies and Procedure. The motion was presented by Jermarra Jones-Price. The motion passed with 16 of 19 board members approving.

2. Annual Renewal of 501 © 3 Status

President Ashley Dean called for a motion from the floor to approve the continued status of the Association as a Mississippi non-profit corporation recognized as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code as outlined in the Affiliation Agreement between Mississippi University for Women and the Mississippi University for Women Alumni Association.

The motion was presented by Annie Oeth. The motion passed with 16 of 19 board members approving

XII. Open Forum

There were no open forum comments.

XIV. President's Closing Comments

President Ashley Dean offered closing remarks, expressing sincere gratitude as the Spring 2026 MUWAA Board of Directors Meeting concluded. She reflected on the honor and privilege of serving as President and noted that the past year was deeply meaningful, highlighting the collective accomplishments, strengthened relationships, and shared commitment to The W and the Long Blue Line.

Appreciation was extended to Board members for their trust, collaboration, and dedication. Ashley commended the group for their leadership, generosity, and intentional engagement throughout the year, and affirmed that although her term as President is ending, her gratitude and continued commitment to MUWAA remain strong, and encouraged all to remember their "why."

XV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34PM.