

MILLSAPS

M A G A Z I N E

SPRING-SUMMER 2007





From the President

One of the hallmarks of a Millsaps education is the emphasis that we place on service—to the College, to our neighbors, and to those everywhere in need of our assistance. It is through service that we really come to know who we are. Many of the students who enroll in college start their journeys with the thought of simply preparing for a career. While that is certainly important, it seems that at Millsaps something unexpected happens along the way. A fire is lit, a bell clangs, a door opens. Our students begin to see the world in a whole new way.

In this issue of Millsaps Magazine, our alumni talk about the imperative to serve that influenced their experiences here and after. Shane Townsend, B.A. 2000, says that “at Millsaps, they really teach students to pay attention to the big questions and not to take things at face value. . . . They taught me to challenge everything.” Shane, whose life was altered forever by Hurricane Katrina, has created a career in emergency preparedness and disaster relief.

Here on campus, the men of Lambda Chi Alpha stepped in to help Stewpot when it was burglarized in November. They provided food and money to an organization in dire straits. The efforts of these young men have increased every year—leading them to collect thousands of pounds of food for the homeless.

There are as many ways to serve as there are people. George and Lynn Pickett have served Millsaps since their graduation, through their extensive volunteer efforts with the Annual Fund, advisory boards and committees, and their generous gift to the school of a substantial life insurance policy.

You will also read about distinctive alumni service commended by Livesay Awards, Gerald Gafford’s gift of waterfront property in Oxford, Baker Harrell’s dedication to a nonprofit youth organization, and the life-altering inspiration provided by such stellar faculty members as Dr. George Bey and Dr. Darby Ray.

It seems to me that at Millsaps, we live by the Methodist creed of “open hearts, open doors, open minds.” I like to think that when students graduate from Millsaps, their hearts and minds are opened, and they are prepared to open doors for others for the rest of their lives.

Warmly,

Francisco Lucas

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Binding a community, one string at a time

Operation Shoestring's relationship with Millsaps traces four decades.



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Does a historical perspective clarify or cloud the perception of events?

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COVER PHOTO BY SHANNON FAGAN
COVER MODELS: HARVEY HUNT, 2008,
AND MARY IRVING

MILLSAPS MAGAZINE

SPRING-SUMMER 2007

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MILLSAPS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED
BY MILLSAPS COLLEGE,
1701 NORTH STATE STREET,
JACKSON, MS 39210-0001,
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO ALUMNI,
PARENTS OF STUDENTS,
AND FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE.
PLEASE SEND ALUMNI UPDATES
AND ADDRESS CORRECTIONS
TO MILLSAPS MAGAZINE,
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OnCampus

STEWSPOT Community Services

"Faith Meeting Needs in Our Community"



Members of Lambda Chi Alpha donated \$4,118 and five cases of food to Stewspot Community Services after it was burglarized.

After Stewspot loss, a stirring gesture by LXA fraternity

In mid-November, the Gallatin Street warehouse for Stewspot Community Services was burglarized. The culprit escaped with around \$4,000 worth of food, clothing, and other items. Word spread quickly around town and soon to Millsaps, and one group of generous men could not sit idly by.

Members of the Theta-Eta chapter of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity at Millsaps have long considered Stewspot their primary philanthropy. In fact, the North American Food Drive, LXA's national philanthropy, was started by the efforts of the LXA chapter at Millsaps. The break-in occurred just three nights into the food drive this year. The men sprang to action and immediately brought over all the money they had collected up to that point—\$4,118—and five large cases of packaged food.

From there, they continued with the food drive, and throughout the week they would deliver to Stewspot whatever funds were collected. They distributed bags with fliers that explained their mission and

attached envelopes addressed to Stewspot so that donors could mail in their checks directly. "We even had people from the immediate neighborhoods and a doctor from a local hospital come by our house to drop off donations," said Luke Darby, the LXA vice president of external relations.

Another break-in occurred later that week. There wasn't much left for the thief to take, but some of the losses included a piece of furniture and some canned tomatoes. "We actually found out about the second break-in while we were doing another run" of food collection for the shelter, remembered Darby. "I was talking to a couple of women at one house; one of them mentioned it and even showed me an article on it in *The Clarion-Ledger*."

The loss wasn't great, and the hard work of the men of LXA wasn't affected. They continued to press on to help.

The totals for the LXA food drive have gone up every year, and for each of the past three years the surrounding neighborhoods have helped collect more than 100,000 pounds of food for Stewspot.

—Becca Day

After the Stewspot break-in,
the men of LXA sprang
to action and brought over
all the food and money
they had collected.

Else School sharpens the business end of the liberal arts

From the time children are very young they are encouraged to follow their dreams. The mantra that “you can be anything you want to be” echoes through homes across America.

But often when the child-turned-college-student does follow his or her passion and chooses to study philosophy or Greek or the arts, parents will sometimes demand, “But, darling, what can you do with that?”

The Millsaps Business Advantage Program can help students and parents find a balance. The premise for this certificate program is that, regardless of their undergraduate major, students will probably end up working in some type of business environment. This training can help nonbusiness students gain an edge over a competitor in the same field.

“Our basis for this program was to help these students understand the fundamentals of how organizations work, whether they are nonprofit or for-profit,” said Dr. Kim Burke, professor of accounting and the chair of business administration. “Nonbusiness students can learn those skills on the job, or they can take advantage of this program and enter an organization already introduced to these concepts.”

The program will take place during the regular summer session and last for four weeks. Students will explore key topics in accounting, economics, finance, marketing,

and management. They will also have the opportunity to take part in business communication and career development workshops.

The faculty of the Else School of Management will teach these courses, and students will take part in simulated business experiences with professionals—true experts in the field. Each week, a different business leader will serve as either a guest lecturer or as a host at a company or business.

“The Millsaps Business Advantage is an intense program,” said Howard McMillan, dean of the Else School. “This nongraded, elective course minimizes culture shock

while introducing students to the basic concepts of business. Liberal arts majors who complete this program will be better equipped to relate the subject matter of their chosen disciplines to the professional community and to present themselves to potential employers as well-rounded candidates.”

The Ramey Agency, an advertising firm that developed the Else campaign

“Business for people with no business in business,” uses a lighthearted, humorous approach to market the program. One ad features a young artist with a headline that reads, “It could mean the difference between a starving artist and a visionary.” Another ad features a student dressed in business attire while sporting an idiosyncratic hairstyle. The headline explains, “We are not asking you to sell out, just diversify.”

Marketing efforts will target current Millsaps students during this first year. The goal is to expand the program to include students from other colleges and

universities as the program progresses. Rising juniors and seniors, as well as recent graduates, are encouraged to participate.

“The program is incredibly exciting because it capitalizes on the liberal and business education offered by the College,” Burke said. “Students at Millsaps are encouraged to follow their passions, and for nonbusiness students this program supplements what students learn in their various disciplines with the basics of what they will need to know—whether they work in a retail organization, a doctor’s clinic, or an artist’s studio.”

This year’s program has been set for June 4–29. To register, or for more information, contact Martha Lee in the Else School of Management at 601-974-1250 or visit www.millsaps.edu/esom/bap/index.shtml.

—Lisa Purdie



An introduction to Millsaps by way of Yucatán campus

Millsaps College is preparing to open doors and minds in a whole new way to a whole new generation. Over winter break, Harvey Fiser, assistant professor of business law, and admissions staff members traveled to the College’s southern campus in Yucatán. They spent five nights at the Else School of Management’s new facility, the Center for Business and Culture in Yucatán. Located in Mérida, this house, with its open-air atrium, stucco walls, and terra-cotta tile floors, serves as the home base for many of the College’s international programs, as well as the International Business Advantage for High School Students.

International Business Advantage is a two-week summer program designed to cultivate cultural awareness and an international understanding of business in a developing market. The program offers exemplary high school students the opportunity to understand the international



Remembering King With a Day of Service

Some 200 members of the Millsaps College and Tougaloo College communities convened on the Millsaps campus in January for a breakfast meeting of fellowship and commemoration in honor of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Speakers (above from left to right) included Dr. Beverly Hogan, president of Tougaloo College; the Reverend Ross Olivier of Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church; and Dr. Frances Lucas, president of Millsaps College. Following the breakfast, which included an Indian dance performance (top), the communities were invited to participate in a day of service in the Midtown area and a prayer vigil held at Tougaloo College.

—Becca Day

dimensions of business by allowing them to interact with business faculty and to immerse themselves in an emerging economy on a five-day trip to Yucatán.

Students will spend the first week of the program on the Millsaps campus studying international business and culture. Then they will fly to Mérida, a city of nearly a million people and home to a wealth of educational resources. While in Mérida, students will have the opportunity to speak with government authorities about the challenges of international business, as well as Mexico's goals for international investors.

Side trips will include a night in the jungle at the Helen Moyers Biocultural Reserve, which incorporates an excellently preserved Maya city. At the reserve, the group will experience ecotourism as they sleep in hammocks and explore a working archaeological dig. Not for the faint of heart, the observation tower, located at one of the highest points on the property, provides a breathtaking view of the reserve and surrounding jungle.

En route, students will travel through the village of Oxkutzcab and explore its local market, where vendors and families sell everything from live pigs to flowers to shoes. Here, students will experience the culture of rural Mexico in contrast to cosmopolitan Mérida. Students will also visit Chichen Itza, a magnificent display of enormous Maya ruins, including an ancient pyramid. A trip to the Port of Progreso, home to one of the world's largest piers, will give students the chance to see the operation of a major international port.

This program is designed for rising high school seniors with cumulative grade point averages of at least 3.4. These students should have an interest in business and be considering attending Millsaps. Those students who complete the program and are subsequently admitted to Millsaps will also receive a scholarship.

By opening Millsaps to high school students, the International Business Advantage program shares the quality of education and extraordinary range of

experiences that the College has to offer. Meanwhile, the Else School is providing a mind-opening opportunity for high school students by immersing them in the economic, cultural, and legal aspects of international business.

—Heather Anderson

For the café set, a new atmosphere for work and play



A buzz has been brewing on campus during the past several months over plans to

transform the cottage next to John Stone Hall into a coffeehouse and restaurant. The Student Body Association has given its input on the café to the Division of Student Life, the project is nearing the construction phase, and the current schedule has the opening slated for fall 2007.

“We have an ongoing desire to create spaces that have not traditionally been available for students to gather on campus,” said Todd Rose, vice president for campus programs and alumni.

The coffeehouse is a significant step toward achieving that goal. “The majority of our residential students live on south campus,” Rose said, “so we looked for something that would provide a great opportunity for them to get together and a place that seems reasonably closer to them. We also wanted to provide alternatives for late at night, because the Kava House was not open and wasn't seen as central to the students.”

The cottage is the lone surviving structure in what was once a row of residences south of the Christian Center. Dave Woodward, the head chef at the

Caf', grew up there when his father, Jack Woodward, B.A. 1951, was dean of students. When Dr. Rushton Johnson, current assistant dean of students and director of residence life, recently moved from the cottage to another residence on campus, it provided an opportunity to create an unusual space.

"The cottage has two bedrooms," Rose said. "The master bedroom is going to be a room that people can reserve for a meeting on campus; everything else in there is going to be open seating. It has wireless internet access like the rest of the campus, and we're going to put in power outlets so that people can plug in their computers and save battery power. It's going to end up being a kind of low-key, informal gathering spot."

Meetings with contractors and builders have already taken place, and plans for renovation are extensive. "We're going to build a front porch," Rose said, "so on the majority of days you could be outside, enjoying the outdoors and being part of the campus, but still feel like you're somewhere that's very different from anyplace else."

Part of the appeal of the project lies in the decision to sell a limited selection of beers to students, faculty, and staff who can drink legally. Rose characterized the decision as an "experiment" but expressed optimism about its implementation.

"Beer will of course be served only to those 21 and older," he said, "and it will be served in bottles or aluminum cans so we can see who is drinking what. The last thing we want to do is to set ourselves up for an unsuccessful stab at this. If the students obey the rules and we all play by the same rule book, then it will work out and will turn out to be a very minor part of the facility."

Rose said he thought there might be an "initial luster" to the availability of beer on campus, but that ultimately the coffeehouse would become what it had been designed to be. "I think as time goes on students will gather there, and one student will have a beer and another student may have a cup of

coffee," Rose said. "Or there may be just a bunch of individuals sitting around typing on their laptops and doing other things.

"My hope is that you will see faculty members meeting with students there, or faculty committee meetings, or staff members meeting there for lunch. I hope it will be one of the best places for everybody to come together. I hope to see a coach with a recruit down there, I hope to see a faculty member with an advisee going over an honors paper, I expect to see the president down there having a cup of coffee with a trustee or showing a campus visitor around."

Rose summed up his vision, saying, "I

supportive of the idea," he said. "They're the ones that are saying, 'We've been wanting something like this for a long time. . . . This is great!'"

One of those suggestions involved making the sound system iPod-friendly. "Ashley had the idea," Rose said, "so that a student can come in on a given night, plug in his iPod and play whatever playlist he wants to play and provide the music for the night. So it can be a much more personal and up-to-date environment."

McPhail and other students have also contributed concepts for the menu, which Rose promises will be unlike anything already available on campus. "Valley Foods



expect the coffeehouse to be pretty central to what happens informally on campus—a place where everybody can find something or someone interesting"

"I am really excited about the coffeehouse," said Ashley McPhail, a senior who started working on the project as first vice president of the SBA in 2006, and who continues to work closely with the student government and Rose. "I feel that our campus needs some other social settings, and the coffeehouse will be able to provide that. There will be a room that different clubs and groups can rent out. It will also have room for acoustic groups to play out on the porch."

Rose praised McPhail and the SBA for their input on the project. "Students have been really good at giving creative ideas and suggestions, and they have been very

provides our food service on campus," he said, "and we've asked them to come up with a menu that is very different. So Chef Dave has created a menu with things like sweet potato fries and other items that some people might call 'bar food'—kind of nontraditional food that you would have the munchies for late at night. There will be some salads, there'll be some unique sandwiches."

A few details remain to be worked out, but the project is moving ahead. "We're going to work with student government on naming the cottage, which we are going to do this spring," Rose said, adding with a laugh, "Once we start drilling holes and moving walls, I'll be much happier. We're just about to get to that point."

—Jason Bronson



College recognized for Millsaps Magazine

Millsaps College won an award for its magazine at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District III Conference in Nashville in February. *Millsaps Magazine*, published by the Office of Communications, received a Special Merit Award in the category of alumni magazines among institutions with fewer than 5,000 in enrollment.

Millsaps Magazine was among 1,100 entries submitted in 46 categories. CASE officials announced that 275 of the 1,100 entries received recognition in the awards ceremony. CASE District III is made up of educational institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

The two most recent issues of *Millsaps Magazine* were submitted for judging.

Millsaps Magazine also won the top PRISM Award at the Public Relations Association of Mississippi's 2006 conference in Oxford.

Spengler honored at Founders Day for his legacy to Millsaps



In February, Millsaps College celebrated Founders Day, an annual commemoration of the founding of the College in 1890 by Reuben Webster Millsaps, Charles Betts Galloway, and William

Belton Murrah. The celebration included a luncheon to honor Founders Society members and those who have established scholarships at the College. Scholarship donors and their recipients had the opportunity to become acquainted over lunch.

The Millsaps Founders Society comprises people and organizations who have played a profound role in shaping the future of the College through lifetime gifts to Millsaps of \$1 million or more. This year, Founders Day recognized the late Thomas Spengler, B.A. 1942, who left the majority of his estate, including his Belhaven home, to Millsaps. His gift established the Thomas L. Spengler Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund to benefit students majoring in English or theatre.

Dr. Frances Lucas, president of the College and host of the Founders Day festivities, invited Cari Taylor, a senior from Long Beach majoring in psychology, to address the crowd of nearly 170 guests. Taylor described how much her scholarship and her time at Millsaps meant to her.

"Thank you for giving us a chance to change our lives—a chance to find the true purpose of our lives," said Taylor, choking back tears. "Thank you for giving us a chance to succeed in this world. I don't

know what my life would have been like without Millsaps College, but I know, and I'm sure that you all agree, that I will never want to find out what my life would be like without Millsaps College."

Following Taylor's speech, Spengler was posthumously inducted into the Founders Society. Lucas spoke warmly of him, saying that he was "a dear friend to Millsaps College and a true original." She described his impact on the city of Jackson, his lengthy career in advertising, his involvement in New Stage Theatre, and his love for Millsaps. Attending on behalf of Spengler were his friends Miriam Weems, Ann Brock, and Marjorie Underwood, the women he called "the three reasons why I never married."

The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. T. W. Lewis III, professor emeritus of religion at Millsaps. Lewis, a beloved member of the faculty, is known as an academic innovator for his work in developing the Heritage program (*see related story, page 35*). He has been a mentor to students, a moral and spiritual leader, and a devoted alumnus.

"In a Founders Day celebration, it is appropriate to recall the founders' challenge," said Lewis, "as well as the way their work and gifts call and challenge us." Lewis stated his belief that we should "be knowledgeable and deep enough in our own faith that we may be able to explore and understand the faith and cultures of all world citizens."

The luncheon was adjourned to the Millsaps bell tower for the unveiling of Spengler's plaque. "Tom would have loved this," Weems said, smiling, "all these friends gathered here on this beautiful day."

Dick Wilson, another of Spengler's friends, wore a bowtie that had belonged to Spengler so that "a little bit of his history and character" would be tangibly present at the ceremony.

—B. D.

Picketts' life insurance to benefit Else School and the liberal arts

George, B.A. 1966, and Lynne, B.A. 1965, Pickett have strong ties to Millsaps College. A number of their family members attended Millsaps, especially on George's side of the family. In fact, his grandfather, Robert Ezelle, was chair of the Millsaps Board of Trustees in the 1950s. His mother's two brothers, Robert Jr. and Fred, attended Millsaps. George's father, George Sr., along with five of his six siblings, attended Millsaps and was honored as *Alumnus of the Year* in 1972. Five of the Picketts' nieces and nephews are Millsaps graduates, and George met Lynne at Millsaps.

This past year, Lynne and George Pickett made a gift to Millsaps in the form of a substantial life insurance policy. The premium payments are made by the College and funded by the Picketts' yearly contributions. The gift will benefit both the Else School and the College's liberal arts programs because "quality of life doesn't start and end with the business school," George said.

Why a gift of life insurance? "Life insurance is synthetic capital," George explained. "Some people can give current capital from their surplus, but for people who don't have surplus capital, they can create capital by leveraging life insurance to give the kind of gift they'd really like to give."

The gift strengthens a long-standing relationship. "We've been closely involved with the College for a long time," George said. Lynne agreed, describing her volunteer work with Millsaps after they graduated. Both George and Lynne were members of the Millsaps Singers and Troubadours during their college years, and Lynne directed the Troubadours in the mid-1970s, even taking a group of students to Romania in 1974.



George Pickett, chair of the Else School Advisory Board, and his wife, Lynne, who has been a volunteer for the College.

George is a past chair of the Millsaps Annual Fund and currently serves as chair of the Else School Advisory Board. As a partner in the life insurance company of Pickett, Bradford & Associates, George is mindful of the role the economy plays in our society, and he is proud of the Else School's combination of a liberal arts curriculum with a progressive business mission.

"The key components of society are human, social, political, and certainly economic," George said. "If you're not intentional on that front, you're missing the boat."

George, who earned his law degree from the University of Mississippi after graduating from Millsaps, believes that his liberal arts education was the springboard for his business career. "If all Millsaps alums went into 'liberal arts' careers, Millsaps would not be the institution it is today," he said. "Millsaps began because of the vision of its founders *and* the capital of Major [Reuben] Millsaps."

The Picketts are pleased that their legacy will be one of helping Millsaps provide an excellent education for future generations. "Tuition doesn't cover costs at any school," George said. "We have an obligation to repay Millsaps for all we've gained and to ensure that it continues."

For more information on making

a gift to Millsaps, contact the Office of Development at 601-974-1023 or visit www.millsaps.edu.

—Nancy Seepe

On the waterfront: Gafford donates site in Oxford to Millsaps

Gerald Alexander Gafford came to Millsaps in the 1940s by way of some challenging family circumstances. Gafford lost his mother when he was only 10 years old and his father when he was 14. Saddened but determined to succeed, he graduated as the valedictorian from his high school at the tender age of 16.

"Some ladies in my church decided I needed to go to college, so they got me a scholarship at Wood Junior College," remembered Gafford. "I milked 32 cows twice a day in return for my scholarship."

During Gafford's first year at Wood, when World War II was in full swing, he met a Millsaps student who convinced him to join the Navy's V-5 Program (which later became the V-12 Program) and transfer to Millsaps College. Gafford agreed, and by age 17 he had enlisted in the Navy and enrolled at Millsaps.



President Frances Lucas and Gerald Gafford, who transferred to Millsaps in the 1940s under the Navy's V-5 (later V-12) program.

Fast-forward to this past year, when Gafford gave Millsaps College a gift of property—a waterfront lot in an exclusive Oxford subdivision. The gift, made via a simple transfer of title, will benefit the Navy V-12 Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded annually to a student based on merit and leadership.

“The V-12 Program was very important in my early life, and in the rest of my life,” Gafford said. “I wanted my gift to be a part of the V-12 Scholarship.”

In his younger days, Gafford was totally unprepared for Millsaps. His small Union County high school had never introduced him to the necessary subjects of geometry or calculus—“I’d never even heard of them!” Still, with grit, determination, and the help of a friend who “pounded calculus into me,” Gafford thrived at Millsaps.

He later transferred to the University of Oklahoma to join the Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

Gafford spent 10 years as an aviator in active Navy service before retiring his commission to enter law school at the University of Mississippi. After earning a law degree, he worked in the legal department at Shell Oil Company, but

an offer of a partnership in a law firm encouraged him to return to Oxford, where he still lives today.

When asked why he decided to give so much to Millsaps, Gafford replied without hesitation, “Because Millsaps gave me a lot!”

For more information on making a gift to Millsaps College, contact the Office of Development at 601-974-1023 or visit www.millsaps.edu.

—N. S.

From Wittel family, a scholarship based on Christian merit

Millsaps College has received a gift from the estate of Sam and Burnice Wittel to establish the Sam and Burnice Wittel Endowed Scholarship Fund. The scholarship honors the life of Mrs. Wittel, B. S. 1935, a woman of devout faith.

“Mrs. Wittel was interested in a scholarship at Millsaps, and this scholarship will benefit Christian students who are

engaged in a life of Christian faithfulness, and it will encourage them to share their faith with others,” said Calvin Wells, Mrs. Wittel’s attorney and friend.

“Scholarship giving is a top priority for us,” said Dr. Frances Lucas, president of the College, “and we are truly grateful for Mrs. Wittel’s thoughtful gift. Her life will be honored through the generations of students who will benefit from her generosity.”

The Wittel Scholarship Fund will award scholarships based on a student’s Christian faith rather than financial need. “The scholarship will assist Millsaps students who have demonstrated interest in Christian service through their home churches,” said Wells, “and I am pleased that Mrs. Wittel’s plans have been put into action.”

—N. S.



Chili bean counters

The men of the Millsaps chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon held the seventh annual Chili Bowl in March on a beautiful day in the Millsaps Plaza. The chili cook-off raised \$11,000, the most in Chili Bowl history. Proceeds from the event go to the Lifeshare Foundation, a local organization that works on behalf of Mississippi’s most at-risk and underprivileged children.

—B. D.