

Meridian Community College connections

a magazine for friends of MCC • Spring 2007



*The new
MCC
Foundation Chapel
Student built-Foundation funded*

MERIDIAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 MCC honors top-notch alumni

4-5
Chapel dedicated



6 Howard Barnett remembered for pioneering efforts

7 Softball team has new home

8 University of Florida applauds its alumnus

Dr. Scott Elliott, *president*
Dr. Tommy McDonald, *vice president, operations*

Pam Harrison, *vice president, finance*
Dr. Kathy Baxter, *associate vice president, research, development and governmental affairs*

Shirley Nell Goodman, *associate vice president, workforce development*

Soraya Welden, *dean, student services*

Barbara Jones, *dean, academic affairs*

Dr. Richie McAlister, *dean, occupational education*

Billy Beal, *dean, learning resources*

Janet Heggie, *dean, community and business development*

Kathy Brookshire, *director, institutional advancement*

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On the cover: The MCC Foundation chapel serves as a tribute to the work of students and the philanthropic efforts of donors.

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A Tribute to "Mr. MCC" - Dr. Tommy McDonald

I suppose that there are good points and bad points to moving around the country, trying to build a career. Working in Tennessee, Texas, Florida and Mississippi these past 30+ years has afforded me the opportunity to experience different cultures and diverse topography and climates. Most of all, I've gotten to come to know and work with all manner of people.

In all that time and in all those places, I can honestly say that I've never had a more up-standing, capable colleague than Dr. Tommy McDonald, MCC's vice president for operations. These last couple of years have been especially productive ones for Dr. McDonald at MCC, an institution he's been an integral part of for some three decades as a student and employee.

Tommy has been inducted into the MCC Hall of Fame, had the Board of Trustees name the Lady Eagles' new softball field after him, helped to coordinate the design and construction of the MCC Foundation Chapel, and played a major role in facilitating the acquisition of MCC's Magnolia Hall, a multi-purpose meeting place adjacent to Highland Park. That's just to name a few highlights during that time frame.

I can tell you that any recognition that has come Tommy's way, he richly deserves. I have often called Tommy "Mr. MCC." He truly loves the institution from which he earned his first college degree, and he ardently believes in MCC's mission to "help improve the quality of life in our community."

Tommy is the consummate people person. He has been blessed with a very engaging personality, and he has a wonderful knack for helping his colleagues to understand sometimes difficult institutional issues. He has a background in counseling – something that has served him and MCC well as a leading administrator.

Most important of all, Tommy has throughout his life, as a father, husband, and professional educator, set a very positive example for all who know him. He has lived his life in accordance with the Golden Rule, always treating others as he himself would like to be treated. He is a man of great integrity and honor.

Tommy always seems to be a happy guy. I think that's because he walks with God and keeps his priorities straight – God, family, friends, and MCC – in that order. And he is blessed with a truly wonderful wife in Pam, herself a superbly talented career educator. Together they raised three high-achieving sons – Jonathan, Jason, and Justin. Two more and they would have had a pretty darned good basketball team because the boys are all tall, and it's in the genes – Pam being a standout player in high school.

I consider it a blessing in my life to have become associated with Tommy McDonald. I was in a real pinch when I became president of MCC nine years ago, following in the footsteps of Dr. Bill Scaggs – an icon in the annals of the Mississippi Community College system. I knew very little about Mississippi public education and the Meridian culture when I came on board. I needed someone with the knowledge, experience and wisdom to help me transition into a new setting. Tommy, more than any other of my fine colleagues at MCC, became that person. And if this administration has been at all successful, it is in no small part due to his considerable contributions.

I'm really tickled that the MCC Board named the new softball field after Tommy. Now, every time I go to a game or drive by the field – even after I'm retired - I will be reminded of the fine man with whom I've had the privilege to work. The following is a poem that I wrote in honor of Tommy for his birthday two or three years ago. I entitled it *Mr. MCC*.

Scott D. Elliott



MR. MCC

by Dr. Scott Elliott

Once our good friend Tommy
fell down and gashed his head,
and all who rallied 'round him
would have thought his blood was red.

But much to their amazement
what sprung from Tommy's bean
was a candy cane-type liquid
Striped in white-and-green.

Now that's, of course, a metaphor
'bout Tommy's college spirit
for no one loves the Eagles more,
No, no one quite comes near it.

MCC's been a major part
of Doctor Tommy's life.
There's nothing that he loves so much,
except his sons and wife.

So, happy birthday to Tommy,
A wonderful man is he,
If we held a school election
He'd be voted Mr. MCC!

Alumni take center stage at Hall of Fame ceremony

“A common denominator for recipients of this year’s MCC Hall of Fame was servant leadership.”

That’s how MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott described the five honorees, Ralph Young Jr., C.D. Smith Jr., Wallace Strickland, Mark McPhail and Norma Bourdeaux, as they were introduced during the homecoming reception held in the campus’ Dulaney Room of Webb Hall.

A student at MCC in 1961, Young earned his bachelor of business administration degree and juris doctorate from the University of Mississippi. He began practicing in Meridian in 1968, specializing in corporate law, real estate and probate. Young has served on the MCC Board of Trustees since 1984. In 2003, MCC named its Board of Trustees meeting room in honor of Young. Along with Tom Bourdeaux and Bob Rea, Young was one of the “founding fathers” of the MCC Foundation. Young has long been an outstanding community servant. Besides his involvement with MCC, he has contributed his time and resources to the Meridian Museum of Art, the Key Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the Sonny Montgomery Foundation. Moreover, he has long served as general counsel for the Meridian Airport Authority. In 2006, Young’s career was highlighted by being named to Law & Politics Magazine’s “Mid-South Super Lawyers” elite list, being considered in the top 5 percent of all attorneys in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas. He and his wife, Martha, have one son, Ted Young.

A student at MCC in 1990 majoring in accounting, Smith earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Mississippi State University. He began serving on the MCC Board of Trustees in 1991, and has served multiple terms as its chairman. Smith is regional manager of the East Central-Golden Triangle District for BellSouth/AT&T, for which he has worked for 30 years. Smith has contributed to numerous civic organizations, including the East Mississippi Business Development Corporation, the Montgomery Institute, Kiwanis Club, Rotary International,

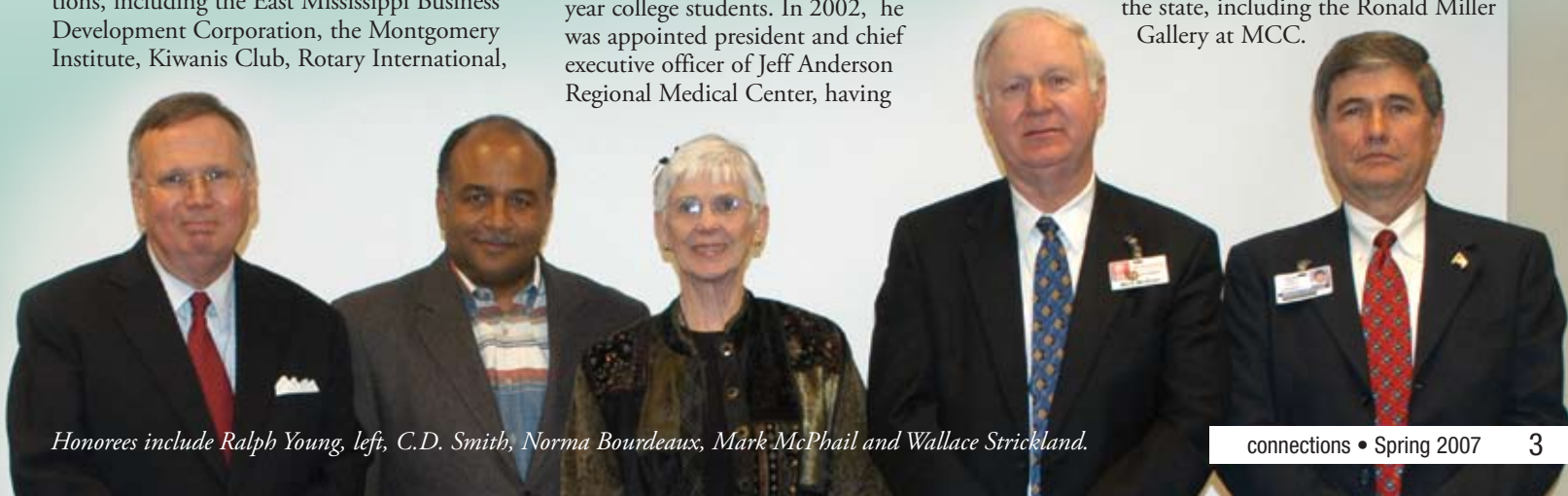
the Meridian Little Theatre, State Games of Mississippi and the Meridian Area Navy League. He is a past recipient of the Meridian Star’s “Citizen of the Year” and “Man of the Year” awards, as well as the Liberty Bell Award from the Lauderdale County Bar Association. Additionally, Smith is a past recipient of the “Service to Mankind” award from the Mississippi District Sertoma. Smith has served in the Mississippi Air National Guard since 1972, rising to the rank of master sergeant and state command chief. He and his wife, Linda, are the parents of three children, Cynthia, Drew and Danielle.

A student at MCC beginning in 1971, Strickland serves as president and chief executive officer of Rush Health Systems. He began his career with Rush in 1970, and has since been regularly promoted to positions of increasing responsibility. In addition to his studies at MCC, Mr. Strickland earned an associate degree at East Central Community College, a bachelor’s degree from Mississippi State University, and a master’s degree from the University of Alabama. Strickland has served as chairman of the East Mississippi Business Development Corporation during which time several new businesses were recruited for Lauderdale County. He also was instrumental in the establishment of the State Games of Mississippi and serves on its board of directors. Strickland’s support of MCC is evidenced by Rush Health System’s donation of numerous student scholarships, sponsorships of countless student extracurricular events, and four campus buildings, including the Rush Hall science facility. Moreover, he and fellow CEOs in the local hospital community formed a consortium that resulted in the expansion of MCC’s nursing and radiological technology programs, as well as the establishment of a surgical technology program. Strickland and his wife, Judy, have two children, Julie and Jason.

An honor student at MCC in 1969-70, McPhail earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in business administration from the University of Southern Mississippi. While at MCC, Mr. McPhail was a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year college students. In 2002, he was appointed president and chief executive officer of Jeff Anderson Regional Medical Center, having

been associated with JARMC since 1974 in positions of increasing responsibility. Among numerous community service activities, McPhail has served on the EMBDC board of directors, the MCC Foundation Board, and the Volunteer Hospitals of America Board. McPhail’s support of MCC during his tenure at JARMC includes numerous student scholarships, the MCC telecommunications facility on campus, a clinical simulation laboratory and support of the Tuition Guarantee program. McPhail, along with other local hospital CEOs, formed a consortium that resulted in the expansion of two MCC medical programs – nursing and radiological technology, and the establishment of a surgical technology program. McPhail and his wife, Wanda, are the parents of three children, David, Haley, and Morgan. McPhail has served his church in several leadership roles, including chairman of the pastor-parish relations committee.

Bourdeaux began her studies at Meridian Junior College in 1947 and earned an associate degree from Stephens College and bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Mississippi. Bourdeaux has invested a lifetime in public service, including service in the Mississippi House of Representatives (1992-2000). In representing Districts 81 and 83, Bourdeaux served on several legislative committees, including Appropriations, Military Affairs, and Universities and Colleges. Additionally, Bourdeaux has been an outstanding contributor to civic affairs, serving on numerous state and local commissions such as the Governor’s Commission for Children and Youth. Bourdeaux and her family have been strong supporters of MCC through the years. Her husband, Tom, was one of the founding fathers of the MCC Foundation. Bourdeaux served as vice president of the MCC Foundation, taught art at MCC, and served as curator of the artwork estate of the legendary Homer Casteel. Bourdeaux continues to grow as an accomplished artist herself, winning several awards for her painting and exhibiting her work at venues across the state, including the Ronald Miller Gallery at MCC.



Honorees include Ralph Young, left, C.D. Smith, Norma Bourdeaux, Mark McPhail and Wallace Strickland.

Circle continues to fulfill mission with nursing donation

MCC Foundation Board President Gerry Purvis accepts donation from Virginia Hodges and Tillie Mattox



Thanks to members of the Earnest Workers Circle of the International Order of King's Daughters and Sons, Meridian Community College nursing students will have a financial helping hand with their studies.

The Meridian-based circle established an endowment and a scholarship will be awarded this fall. Meryl Lee Nunnery, president of the board of King's Daughters, said this was a way for the group to continue their philanthropic endeavors in the community.

Nunnery noted this was the first scholarship at MCC the organization has funded.

The King's Daughters and Sons is one of the oldest Christian service organizations in North America. To support its three-fold purposes (religious, philanthropic, and educational), members across the continent have a myriad of projects which help tens of thousands of people throughout the world each year. Whether it is hospitals, childcare centers, nursing homes, scholarships, or Christian leadership programs, the members are constantly serving others.

Dedication offers prayers, reflects on dreams

After decades of planning and dreaming, a place for quiet respite and for reflection has come to fruition in the form of the MCC Foundation Chapel. "Since I'm away from home and don't get to my home church, I have a place to worship," said Brandi Cooper, a freshman from Forest.

The 19 year old nursing major said her schedule doesn't always allow her to attend Baptist Student Union meetings. "But the doors here will always be open for me to come and talk to God," Cooper said. The chapel is located on the MCC campus between Montgomery and Smith Halls. "We are very excited to finally be officially opening the doors on our chapel," said Dr. Tommy McDonald, MCC vice president for operations who served as chairman of the MCC Chapel Committee. With the chapel, students have a place for faith-based meetings and activities.

McDonald noted that the MCC Foundation Chapel will not be the first such facility on a college campus in Mississippi, but he said it may be the first of its kind.

"There are several chapels on university and community college campuses in our state, but this may be the first one that was constructed, for the most part, by students," McDonald said. "To me, that's what makes it really unique."

The Foundation Chapel, which features a sanctuary, multi-media activity room, office, restroom facilities and a kitchenette, is the product of a collaboration of several MCC occupational programs, among them Construction Trades, Industrial Maintenance, Electronics, and Horticulture. Students in those programs provided most of the labor for the project. The core of the work was accomplished by the Construction Trades program, under the direction of Howie Schiedel and Olin Thomas.

"Our instructors and students in those programs just did an outstanding job," McDonald said. "Those programs normally collaborate each year in building a house. For the last two years, they have focused on building our chapel. Our foremost concern in initiating the project was for our students to obtain the construction competencies that they normally would derive from a

house project. I think what they received in building a chapel was to be exposed to even more competencies, extending into commercial construction. This was the biggest project in the history of our technical programs, but our students and teachers proved that they were up to the task."

"It was awesome to work on this," said Frank Floyd, 20, of Mendenhall. Floyd, who is now an Industrial Maintenance Program student, was one of many students from the Construction Trades Program to build the facility. Brandon Crawford, 20, also of Mendenhall, said, "It was a great experience. If I had to do it over again, I'd do it."

"Literally, there were hundreds of people involved in the building of this chapel," said McDonald during the dedication. And, the goal was to insure the chapel was built entirely through private investment. "The MCC Foundation's

involvement in the project was central to its success," McDonald said. "Many Foundation members gave above and beyond what they might have ordinarily provided in support of programs like Tuition Guarantee to make certain this chapel got built. The College didn't want to use public funds for the project for several reasons. First, we felt philosophically that a facility of this nature needed to be a product of the private sector. Second, at a time when community college funds were being cut by the state, the college did not feel it prudent to use public funds for anything other than traditional curricular activities. So, when the MCC Foundation stepped in and assumed responsibility for the project, that's what put it over the top from multiple perspectives."



Pictured: Susan Ellis, left, with Stewart & Kathy Parrish, 1990

The Susan Margaret Ellis Memorial Scholarship Endowment

By Kathy and Stewart Parrish

This scholarship endowment has been created to honor the memory of our cherished friend Susan Margaret Ellis. Susan was from Franklin, TN. and her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Ted Ellis. Stewart and I met Susan when we were in college at Ole Miss. She was a beautiful person both inside and out with a tender heart and an infectious laugh. Her big brown eyes and sweet freckled face always lit up when she smiled. Susan loved to dance and was an accomplished member of the Showstoppers Dance Troupe at Ole Miss. She also loved her family and friends, and had a special place in her heart for children.

In the mid 1990s Susan was diagnosed with lymphoma and battled through radiation to beat it. Susan went on to graduate school and got her Master of Arts in Teaching. She loved to teach early elementary children, and they loved their Miss Susan. She once had a little boy tell her that he would marry her if she would wait for him. One of her little girl students told her, "Miss Susan, you are the Bomb!" A few years later the lymphoma returned, and it was aggressive. This time Susan went through chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant with her own stem cells. Susan passed away five days after her 30th birthday on September 19th, 2000. She will always be remembered as "Miss Susan the Brave" by her students as she was so strong and brave through her illness.

Although neither Stewart or I have any ties to Meridian, it is where we make our home now as we raise our three children here. It is important to us to share our friend Susan's legacy with our community and provide opportunities to MCC students with a passion for teaching children. On the back of Susan's funeral program there was a poem called "The Legacy" and one line reads, "Then let me live on in your eyes, your mind and your acts of kindness."

Alternate schedule for nursing program at MCC meets needs of non-traditional students

Weekends are typically thought of as a chance to rest and relax. For Vickie Hester, it's an opportunity to get an education.

Hester, who works as a buyer for the surgery department at Rush Foundation Hospital, is enrolled in the College's evening and weekend program for associate degree nursing. Logging in 34 to 36 hours a week in her part-time job at Rush, Hester attends classes three hours on Thursday evening, three hours on Friday evening and 10 hours on Saturdays.

Hester said this program has been very beneficial to her; she can do the work/study program through MCC and keep her benefits at Rush.



Vickie Hester

Meridian Community College has a commitment to meeting the needs of the community. One area currently being addressed by the College is the workforce needs created by the critical nursing shortage.

To increase enrollment in the Associate Degree Nursing Program and facilitate additional registered nurses entering practice, Meridian Community College has instituted an evening/weekend program. In January 2007, 30 additional students were admitted into a class which has an alternate schedule,

designed to facilitate the lifestyle of many non-traditional students. Classes are held on Thursdays from 4:30-7:30 and Fridays from 2:30-5:30; hospital experiences are on Saturdays, typically for a 10-hour shift. Students in this course report being extremely satisfied with the schedule. Most are able to continue working and/or meeting family obligations while pursuing a dream of becoming a registered nurse.

As has occurred for the last 40 years, traditionally scheduled nursing courses continue to be offered. These classes are held during the Monday-Friday, daytime hours. In January, 75 students were admitted into the traditional class format.

Meridian Community College continues to strive to meet the needs of our community. Increasing enrollment in the nursing programs is just one example of that.

Cable-TV pioneer, philanthopist remembered

The legacy of a native New Orleanian and a former Meridian resident lives on through a scholarship he founded for City of Meridian employees as well as gifts he gave to Meridian Community College.

Howard Barnett, a cable-TV pioneer and art aficionado, died Jan. 14, 2007 at his New Orleans residence. He was 80.

Barnett moved to Meridian after earning a degree at Tulane University. He came to the Queen City to work in the family fabric business and sewing machine distributorship. He sold the business in 1960 and opened a real estate company. Three years later, after investigating a new television technology, he acquired a cable TV franchise for Meridian, making it one of the first cities in the South to get cable. Encouraged by this venture, Barnett then purchased the Cable TV franchise for Jefferson Parrish in Louisiana in 1978.

He began promoting cable television, when its principal function was to provide service to people who had no other way of getting TV signals.

Barnett, in partnership with Cox Cable of Atlanta, nurtured and expanded this cable system until 1985 when he sold the

franchise to Cox. He was then elected as a member of the National Cable Television Association Board, representing nine Southern states. During his tenure, he made important contributions transforming cable TV from a small service of local television signals to the broad satellite networks.

"He had a very, very keen marketing sense and people sense," said Lynda Freidmann, who was community assessment director of the New Orleans cable team. "He saw the future of cable," she added.

By the time the mid-1980s rolled around, Barnett delved into the world of art; he and his wife, Ann Hall Barnett opened the Hall-Barnett Gallery in New Orleans. "He helped a lot of people," said

his secretary and office manager Joycelyn Exnicios. The Barnetts sold the gallery after Barnett suffered a heart attack and stroke, and Barnett returned to his alma mater and took up pottery. His family noted he encouraged his classmates to develop their own styles.

Countless City of Meridian employees have taken advantage of Barnett All-America City Scholarships in which a city worker can take a class at MCC tuition free. Barnett established the endowment in 1991.

The Barnett All-America City Scholarships serve primarily to upgrade the performance of city employees and the standards for hiring future employees. However, the benefactor specified that the use of the scholarship funds should not be limited to work-related or college credit courses.

In an interview conducted in the 1990s, Barnett said, "Education as a whole should enhance the employee's learning skills as well as outlook, resulting in an improved lifestyle and in the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. Any interest in education and self-improvement will serve to create more favorable role models for younger



Barnett and his wife, Ann, at their home

Rosenbaum portrait takes place of honor in Webb Hall

An advocate of education was honored when the portrait of the late Lucile Reisman Rosenbaum was hung by her husband's picture in Webb Hall's Rosenbaum Room.

Former Meridian Mayor I.A. Rosenbaum, with the help of MCC Board of Trustees member Tommy Dulaney and Director of College Promotions/Production Ray Denton, placed the framed photo adjacent to Rosenbaum's portrait during a brief ceremony.

"I'm humbled by this occasion," said Rosenbaum, as he thanked the crowd for honoring his wife, "she was a big proponent of education. We only tried to do our jobs."

It was also announced Rosenbaum established a scholarship in his wife's memory through The MCC Foundation. It is earmarked for MCC students who will attend a senior institution of higher learning.

The Rosenbaums were married 63 years, "and it was great," he said.

Rosenbaum died July 19, 2006, in her home. Born in Chattanooga, Tenn., Rosenbaum graduated from Girl Preparatory School in Chattanooga

and Vanderbilt University. She was a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy and served in World War II. She taught navigation to prospective aviators.

Upon completion of the war, she came to Meridian with Alfred to raise their family and serve the community. Her community roles included president of Meridale Girl Scouts and a member of the National Board of Directors for Girl Scouts of USA. She served for more than 10 years on the Meridian School Board with one term as school board president. She was president of the Mississippi-Arkansas Temple Sisterhood and president of Temple Beth Israel.

Rosenbaum's pride came from leading the efforts to restore the Dentzel Carousel in Highland Park and the establishment of the Friends of the Park endowment to fund the continued maintenance of the historical facility.

Her daughters, Ann Stewart and Lauren Brown, were on hand Thursday for the ceremony. Their son, Mark Edward Rosenbaum lives in Tuscaloosa, Ala. They have five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



Daughter Lauren Brown and I.A. Rosenbaum at the unveiling of Lucile Rosenbaum's portrait.

Lady Eagles play ball at new home at McDonald field

"We've had a great tradition in women's softball, winning national, regional and state championships, but our ladies have never had a field that they could truly call their own, until now."

That's what MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott said about the Lady Eagles getting their new home, the Tommy McDonald Field. The field, formerly known as Lions Field Dixie Boys Baseball Park, which is located in an anchor position of Meridian's Highland Park, was dedicated in honor of McDonald, who serves as the College's vice president of operations.

"This is truly a humbling experience," McDonald said. "I have been very blessed. If you find something you love to do, you will never work a day in your life," McDonald said about his life's work at the College, before throwing out the first pitch during the ceremony.

McDonald, who has logged in some 30 years at the College as an employee and a student, said it's a privilege to work at a place where your goal is to help others achieve a better life.

Elliott said the Tommy McDonald Field is a collaboration between MCC, Meridian and Lauderdale County. "This project has been a shining example of government agencies working together to provide the public with a fine facility in the most cost-effective fashion possible," Elliott said. "The City did its part by entering into an agreement with the college to allow us to utilize an old field which was no longer in use by little league organizations. The County and City worked in concert to provide the asphalt work around the field, which really dressed the place up. The college did its part by providing in-house labor to totally renovate the facility."

Elliott said the MCC maintenance and grounds crews, under the direction of

Terry Williams, had done "an amazing job" in refurbishing the field and the press box, dugouts, fences, locker rooms and concession stand. In particular, Elliott commended the work of Lesley Harwell of the college's maintenance staff, who spearheaded the renovation effort.

"In short, our maintenance and grounds crews, in conjunction with the efforts of the City and County, have produced an attractive field which would have cost tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars above that which was actually invested in the project because the college did the vast majority of the work itself," Elliott said. "I think that's the kind of collaboration and performance the taxpayers expect and deserve from us."

Up to the dedication, Lady Eagles played and practiced at Northeast Park, making it necessary to transport players 30 miles round trip on an almost daily basis during peak times in the fall and spring seasons. Elliott said that proposition was expensive and time consuming. Now,

MCC has its own field less than a mile from campus.

Members of the Meridian City Council, the Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors, Coca-Cola, MCC Board of Trustees and employees who worked to build the field, were honored before the game as well.

Meridian Community College began playing slow-pitch softball in the late 1970s under the direction of Liz Duncan. The Lady Eagles have only had four head softball coaches in their history, with current head coach Robert Eakins taking over 14 years ago and starting the fast-pitch program a decade ago.



Dr. Tommy McDonald throws the first pitch while Dr. Scott Elliott, MCC president, and Joe Norwood and Craig Hitt, Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors, watch. Photo courtesy of Paula Merritt, The Meridian Star

Foundation welcomes two new board members

David Buckner

MISSISSIPPI
POWER
A SOUTHERN COMPANY

Rush

Donnie Smith

University of Florida applauds Elliott

MCC President Dr. Scott Elliott has been presented an "Outstanding Graduate Award" by the University of Florida's Institute of Higher Education. The announcement was made recently at the institute's annual alumni awards banquet at Orlando's Walt Disney World Resort.

Elliott was informed of his selection by Dr. Linda Serra Hagedorn, director of the Institute of Higher Education at UF. In his ninth year as MCC president, Elliott earned bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from the University of Texas and Texas A&M University systems, respectively. He earned his doctorate in higher education administration from UF in Gainesville, Fla.

"I am certainly humbled to have been selected for this honor," Elliott said. "This award reflects much more upon the accomplishments of the colleagues with whom I work, rather than anything I've done as an individual. When you work with outstanding professionals like my colleagues at Meridian Community College, all the great things that they do makes the president look pretty good. So, I need to thank my co-workers for this award."

Elliott noted that he is especially proud to have been honored by the same university that produced Dr. William F. Scaggs, MCC president emeritus.

"The UF community college leadership program is generally regarded among the nation's best," Elliott said. "Over the years, UF has produced some truly iconic community college presidents, among them Bill Scaggs. So, this award is something I will always treasure."

In her written notification to Elliott of the award, Hagedorn

said, "It is with pride that we recognize your professional accomplishments within the field of higher education. I am doubly pleased that your example reflects well on us (UF) and provides a testament to our mission and work. I know that you will continue to excel and make us proud that you are a Gator for life."

Elliott mused that he was "really tickled to have been honored by UF in the same year in which the Gators won the national championship in both football and basketball."

Finalists for the award were judged by a national panel of experts, according to Hagedorn. The panel included representatives from Texas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida and the District of Columbia. The panel evaluated nominees on the basis of their job performance in such areas as strategic planning and policy implementation, professional activities and community involvement.

During his career as a college president in Texas and Mississippi, Elliott has served as president of the Texas Community College Association and the Mississippi Association of Colleges. He currently serves on the executive committees of the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges and the Mississippi Community College Foundation, as well as the American Association of Community College's national commission on economic development.

Although Elliott was unable to accept the award in person due to work responsibilities at MCC, the college was represented at the conference by Jean Willis of the Webb Center and Rush Health System's Donnie Smith. Willis and Smith were on hand at the conference to make a presentation on the Bellwether Award, won by Rush Health Systems and MCC in 2006 in recognition of their collaborations in economic development. UF annually honors three community colleges across the nation that have achieved a model program in economic development.

"Rush Health Systems, under the leadership of Wallace Strickland, has exhibited as astute an appreciation for the correlation between the community college mission and the future prosperity of local industries as any agency with which I've ever been associated," Elliott said. "Rush is a shining example of an agency that invests in MCC because it well understands that if our community is to prosper, then we must be able to muster a quality workforce equipped with contemporary job skills. That's why the partnership between MCC and Rush was recognized by the Bellwether Award judges. It's an award of which MCC is very proud, and I know Rush feels the same way."



Dr. Elliott tapped for UF Outstanding Graduate Award

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