

26

REPORTS OF

RACISM
WHITE POWER SYMBOLS
HOMOPHOBIA
MISOGYNY
PROFILING
ABLEISM
SLURS
BIAS

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Homophobic slurs yelled at students, racist vandalism across campus, white power symbols displayed in photos and a professor telling a student to drop out of school because of a medical condition are some of the 26 incidents of bias that were reported to the university during the 2018-19 school year.

The details of the incidents — sent to the Bias Incidents Response Team (BIRT), which receives and responds to reports of bias at the university — were obtained by The Daily Mississippian in a public records request. On average, a report was filed every eight days during the fall and spring semesters.

The reports offer a look into the interactions that make some feel unwelcome or unsafe on campus, from swastikas being carved in bathroom stalls to drinks being thrown at students while homophobic slurs are shouted at them.

In one instance, a fraternity displays a group photo in which someone is expressing a white power sign in their right hand. A few days after that report was sent to BIRT, another was sent reporting a white power sign being displayed in a class photo.

In another report, a professor tells a student that she should drop out of classes and come back later in life to finish her degree because of the student's health problems.

One student reported experiencing multiple incidents of bias in the first weeks of the semester. The student reported being profiled by residence life front desk staff and by the University Police Department (UPD) after being pulled over for not using his headlights. The K-9 unit searched the vehicle and several backup officers came to the scene, according to the report. UPD did not respond to requests for comment.

Among the reports is the incident of three members of the university community posing with guns for a photo in front of a bullet-riddled Emmett Till memorial. The incident was reported to BIRT on March 7, and the Mississippi Center for Investigative Reporting (MCIR) reported on the incident on July 25. After this incident was publicly reported, a process to make changes to BIRT began.

The number of BIRT reports has increased since the 2013-14 academic year, during which 16 incidents were reported. Reports peaked during the 2016-17 year with 35 incidents. BIRT reports do not account for reports made only to other entities on campus, such as UPD or Equal Opportunity & Regulatory Compliance.

"More (reports) is not always a bad thing," Katrina Caldwell, vice chancellor for diversity and community engagement, said.

She said that more reports often mean that people feel more comfortable using the resources for them on campus. She also said that in her time at the university, there have not been any reports that were not supported by evidence upon investigation.

"I think raising awareness gives us an opportunity to address it, and so I want to make it clear that more (reports) is not an indication that there's more bias in our community," she said. "We're not capturing all of the bias in our community."

BIRT receives reports of bias on campus, works to educate groups and shares the information with other university entities, like the University Police Department, Judicial Conduct, Equal Opportunity and Regulatory Compliance and the vice chancellor for diversity and community engagement.

"BIRT doesn't punish," Caldwell said. "(Education) is its only function."

Boyce misses JPS

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The Ole Miss Office of Admissions weighed in on Twitter after tweets surfaced showing that Chancellor Glenn Boyce visited several private schools in the Jackson area, but did not visit any of the predominantly black public schools there.

Social media posts from Jackson Academy, Jackson Preparatory School and Madison-Ridgeland Academy show Boyce speaking with students on the respective campuses. The Office of Admissions confirmed on Twitter that Boyce also visited Germantown, Clinton, Madison Central, Northwest Rankin and Ridgeland high schools in the Jackson metro area and St. Joseph Catholic School and St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Madison.

Three of the seven high schools in the Jackson Public School District — Forest Hill, Jim Hill and Wingfield — said that the university has not made contact with them to set up a visit from Boyce. Murrah, Callaway and Provine could not be reached for comment, and Lanier High School did not confirm if the university had contacted them.

A communications spokesperson for JPS said he could not confirm whether or not the school district had been contacted by the university to plan future visits from Boyce.

A university spokesperson said that the Office of Admissions scheduled all of the chancellor's high school visits months before he was selected for the position and that he is continuing to add more high school visits to his schedule. They did not answer whether or not Boyce would plan to visit JPS schools in the future.

Jackson Mayor Chokwe Antar Lumumba said that

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GREEK ORGANIZATIONS REBRAND
College Panhellenic, Interfraternity Council and National Pan-Hellenic Council have all removed the term "Ole Miss" from their official names in an effort to create a more inclusive environment.
SEE PAGE 2



CHASE PURDY: OLE MISS' NASCAR PROTIGY
Purdy, now a first-year student at Ole Miss, took a year-long hiatus from stock car racing, but is ready to get back behind the wheel.
SEE PAGE 9

Greek organizations move away from ‘Ole Miss’ brand

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The University of Mississippi’s National Pan-Hellenic Council, College Panhellenic and Interfraternity Council have all removed “Ole Miss” from their official names and instead are opting for “University of Mississippi.”

This decision was made independently from the Office

of Fraternal Leadership and Learning (FLL) by student leadership, and comes before the results of the External Review Team are released spring 2020 to present an external review of the Greek community, according to the FLL website.

“I believe the external review will allow the Fraternal Leadership and Learning team to develop our strategic vision for the next few years in conjunction with all of our stake-

holders,” said Arthur Doctor, director of the FLL.

Doctor added that the decision to remove “Ole Miss” from the Greek organizational names was a decision made independently from the FLL. The Interfraternity Council (IFC) made the decision.

“This was a student-led decision, and the Office of Fraternal Leadership and Learning respects the leadership of our governing councils to make decisions they feel will make a positive impact on their community,” he said.

IFC President Cole Barnhill said that this change focused on keeping their branding

consistent with the FLL and the university at-large, which uses “University of Mississippi” name.

“The Interfraternity Council made a decision to change our social media handles to be consistent with the branding that is currently used by the Office of Fraternal Leadership and Learning, the logos we have on our website and other documents,” Barnhill said. “Our logos utilize the Lyceum branding for the university, and we felt that this created a more consistent image.”

However, the change is not a mandate to all fraternities and sororities within the three

systems. IFC fraternities can still use the “Ole Miss” name and brand themselves as they choose.

Doctor said that with his work as the FLL director, he hopes to create a more inclusive Greek system that prioritizes inclusivity and engagement.

“I work very closely with my staff and student leaders to identify additional opportunities to engage more students within fraternities and sororities and to ensure that this is a place where every student feels welcomed, affirmed and respected, whether they choose to affiliate with a chapter or not,” he said.

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The Lyceum's revolving door

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When Melinda Sutton Noss, former university dean of students, was transitioning out of her role last spring, she remarked that if a new chancellor were to be hired before she left, she would have worked for five different chancellors within five years.

Noss took over as dean of students under Chancellor Dan Jones, who was replaced in interim by Morris Stocks, who was replaced by Jeffrey Vitter, who was replaced in interim by Larry Sparks. Six months after Noss's departure, the university hired its 18th chancellor, Glenn Boyce.

For reference, in the 20th century, the University of Mississippi had nine different chancellors over a 100-year period. Since 2015, five different men have occupied that seat in the Lyceum.

At the time, Noss said the turnover in the Lyceum didn't affect her ability to effectively carry out her job, but noted that "it does take time to build relationships and get to know people and understand their style and what may be a priority for them."

However, the revolving door



of university leadership is not reserved only to the highest-paying leadership position in higher education in Mississippi.

Since 2015, when Jones was ousted as chancellor following a dispute with the Institutions of Higher Learning Board of Trustees over control of the university's medical center, the landscape of university leadership has changed drastically.

Of the 14 individuals that constitute senior leadership at the university, 10 were either hired or promoted during the past four years. Among the changes are: Interim Director of Athletics Keith Carter, Chief Legal Officer Erica McKinley, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Charlotte Fant Pegues and Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Noel Wilkin.

This revolving door of faculty transitions begs the question: Is this a problem for the university?

Sutton Noss and Leslie Banahan, former assistant vice chancellor for student affairs, say no; Provost Noel Wilkin said the same. However, all three either



work or previously worked in the Lyceum, where much of the turnover occurs.

In an email response to The Daily Mississippian, Provost Noel Wilkin said that the university is a "sum of all of its people."

"As a result, how a student experiences the university is more dependent upon the interactions with the faculty and staff than it is a function of the chancellor," Wilkin said.

He continued: "The university relies upon the chancellor to cast a clear and concise vision that motivates everyone to pursue the next level of success as we pursue our mission."

George McClellan, associate professor of higher education in



PHOTOS COURTESY: UM COMMUNICATIONS
the School of Education, is an expert in the field.

He said high turnover can cause a litany of issues within a university but also opportunities for growth.

"In an ideal situation, you

SEE REVOLVING DOOR PAGE 12

Mayfield speaks to IHL Board

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ASB President Barron Mayfield said that Chancellor Glenn Boyce was capable even though the search process was destructive to the university at a campus update to the Institutions of Higher Learning Board of Trustees at its meeting on Thursday.

"It is an exciting, interesting time to be a student at the University of Mississippi," Mayfield said. "You know, this semester we held our fourth annual Everybody's Formal, a formal open to every student regardless of academic major or organizational affiliation. We were able to put on this event by spending no student fees or fundraising and raised nearly \$25,000 for that."

He then transitioned into what he called a period of "tremendous pain and incredible loss" for the campus in reference to the murder of student Ally Kostial, the surfacing of a photo of university students in front of a bullet-riddled Emmett Till memorial and the shortened chancellor search process.

"Fortunately, Dr. Boyce has proven to be a strong and capable leader," Mayfield said. "He's a student-centered individual who has been willing to take on issues that we have not been able to get traction on in years, and I am incredibly thankful for the leadership that he has provided over the last few months. However, putting the product aside, the process broke trust with the university community, and I do believe it has done incredible harm to the university that we will be dealing with for years and years to come."

Mayfield also said that he thought the IHL Board had the best interest of the state's public universities, but he would like to see students, faculty, alumni and staff included in decision-making processes that will affect them in the future.

"This is really the first time that we've been able to address the Board directly (about the chancellor search process), and so I thought it was the appropriate time to say something," Mayfield said. "Because it has dominated so much of our year, and it's been very high profile, and I couldn't not say anything about it."

Sophomore retention rate at all-time high

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Retention of students from freshman to sophomore year is at 86.8%, an all-time high on the university's Oxford campus, with some students crediting academic programs and quality of life outside of class as reasons they continued attending the university.

Ellie Gorham is a sophomore

social work major pursuing a five-year master's program.

"I love the school, and I have a really good support group," Graham said. "The social scene on campus is awesome, and the classes are super interesting."

Louis Perotti, a sophomore biology major, agreed that the quality of Ole Miss' academic programs solidified his place here.

"I just thought the classes were structured well, and the professors

are really nice," he said. "It challenged me enough to where, like, I didn't think I needed more of a challenge, but it also wasn't too easy."

Kyle Ellis, director of the Center for Student Success and First-Year Experience (CSSFYE), credited the increase in retention rate to many different areas on campus.

"It's not just one area," Ellis said. "It's many people all on

campus pulling that retention rope in the same direction."

The previous record of freshman-to-sophomore retention was 86.5% in 2014, and the CSSFYE has continued to uphold its "high-touch" philosophy, in which valuable, interpersonal connections are forged between staff and students, since its establishment in 2013.

"We don't just say, 'Oh, go call a

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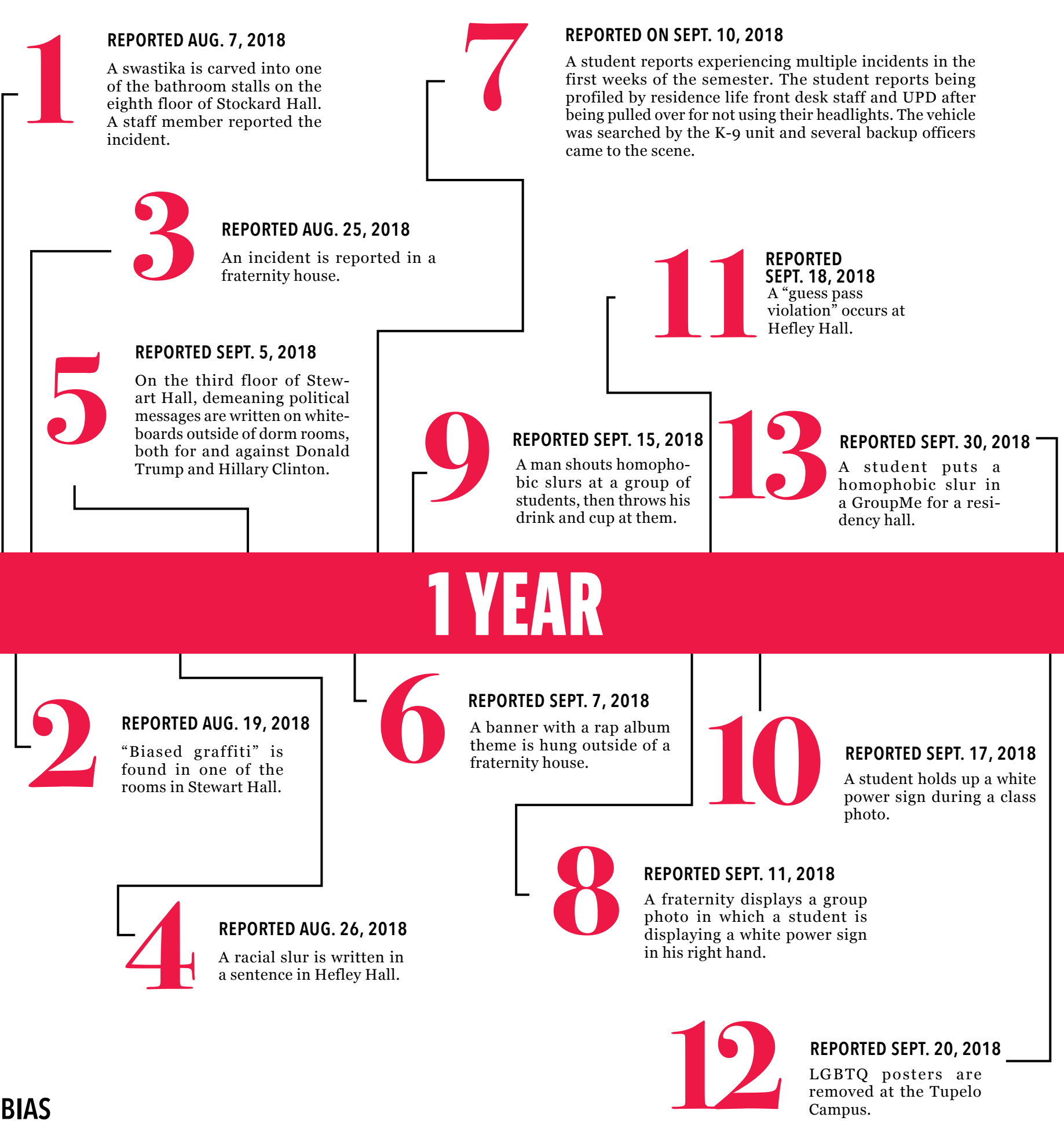
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BIAS
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Caldwell also said that BIRT handles reports individually, working to tailor educational opportunities to the situation and group addressed. If there is a report in a fraternity house, residence hall or academic department, those groups might be offered education tailored to the incident and group affected. Education may or may not be voluntary, depending on the situation.

Other entities on campus may choose other responses, depending on their institutional roles.

BIRT also focuses on supporting people who are affected by bias, whether by listening or by offering services, like counseling.

The group is made up of 17 people, with 13 faculty and staff members and four students.

Caldwell said that whenever groups are together — in person or online — bias is more likely to occur and have more of an effect on the community.

Of the 26 reports, many occurred in residence halls, fraternity houses and sorority houses.

Traditions play a role in continuing bias on campus, Caldwell said, adding that some who partake in those traditions do not understand the magnitude of what they’re doing.

“When I asked (about an incident), for a number of groups when they are brought in or we have a conversation about a particular action, I’m invariably told (they) didn’t know that that was offensive, and so I think that some folks are passing down traditions that they don’t know are racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic,” she said.

Still, others do know what they are doing, she said.

“I don’t think their membership in any organization is necessarily an indication that they have more of a proclivity to do it,” she said. “But there are people in our community who know what they’re doing, and they’re intending to make

people feel uncomfortable. So I think you have a wide range of folks who don’t know that they’re doing on the one hand, and then on the other hand, some folks who know that certain language is offensive and hurtful and harmful.”

BIRT is one of several programs on campus that addresses racism on campus, some of which have evolved since the photo of students standing with guns in front of the Emmett Till memorial was reported by the MCIR. Listening sessions and forums have been hosted when an incident is publicly reported, many events on diversity in the “All in all Year” program have occurred and anti-discrimination training has become mandatory for students in the Greek system.

After the photo at the Till memorial emerged, many in the community demanded change for BIRT in the future, along with the way that the university sees bias on campus.

Kirk Johnson, an associate professor of sociology & African

American studies, sent an email — obtained through a public records request — to many members of the Critical Race Studies Group on campus about BIRT’s role at the university. The email was later forwarded to Caldwell.

“Abhorrent student behavior is commonplace, as we found with the microaggressions study,” he said in the July email. “The other problem is that the entire structure of the university — from the Confederate statue to antebellum place names to an underutilized BIRT system to the lack of meaningful punishments for rulebreakers — encourages rule breaking.”

He said many administrators saw the incidents as “anomalous,” calling their perspective the “one bad apple’ theory.”

“That’s an ignorant perspective, but it may be common,” he wrote.

He also said that he didn’t believe that administrators knew how to best handle biased incidents on campus.

“I’ve had conversations with university officials who seem perfectly well-intentioned but unable or unwilling to translate these aspirations into actions that will make a difference,” he wrote.

“For example, I’ve long felt that we need to be proactive to prevent student microaggressions instead of continuing to react to them after the fact. Instead of responding to one embarrassing incident after another, we could serve as a model for other campuses if we took measures to transform our campus culture in ways others want to emulate.”

When asked about these comments, Rod Guajardo, a university spokesperson, declined to comment.

“I think this is all of our responsibility — every person’s responsibility to make sure that we dismantle this horrid system, and I just happen to be in the seat,” Caldwell said. “And I can’t do it without help.”

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REPORTED OCT. 3, 2018

A couple is recorded on video “in an intimate act” in a sorority house.

25

REPORTED APRIL 17, 2019

A follow-up report on for the incident reported April 17, 2018.

17

REPORTED OCT. 8, 2018

Someone in Crosby Hall makes a sexist, body-shaming comment to another person.

23

REPORTED MARCH 7, 2019

A photo of three students posing with guns in front of a bullet-riddled Emmett Till memorial is posted to Instagram. This photo went on to be widely publicized when it surfaced, months after being reported to the university.

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REPORTED JAN. 15, 2019

A racist comment is made in an Ole Miss 2023 social media group.

21

REPORTED FEB. 4, 2019

A professor tells a student in Guyton Hall that he/she should drop out and come back later in life to finish the degree because of the student’s health problems.

26 REPORTS

18

REPORTED OCT. 13, 2018

The letters T and Q on an LGBTQ history month bulletin board are removed, ripped to shreds and left on the floor on the eighth floor in Stockard Hall.

24

REPORTED APRIL 17, 2019

A student in Residence Hall 3 were screamed at multiple times, though no specific bias was detailed in the document.

16

REPORTED OCT. 7, 2018

A racial slur is found on a door deck in Residence Hall 3.

14

REPORTED OCT. 1, 2018

Anti-LGBTQ report made in Stewart Hall.

22

REPORTED FEB. 20, 2019

Signs from a student organization denouncing white supremacy and promoting equality are torn and ripped on the second floor of Lamar Hall.

20

REPORTED JAN. 23, 2019

A student working at the front desk in Deaton Hall asks a resident if he is alright because he is walking up and down the stairs. The student working the front desk has a homophobic slur directed at him/her and does not feel safe at work for the rest of the night.

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The public records request documents only contained information on 25 of the 26 reports. Many details from the reports were redacted or not included, some to protect students that reported or were affected by bias. Fraternity and sorority names were not included, though they have been included in public records requests from the university in recent years. Rod Guajardo, a university spokesperson, said that the university provided the information that federal privacy laws allow it to share.

What’s changing in BIRT?

After the photo of members of the university community standing with guns in front of the Emmett Till memorial was reported by the MCIR, the university made several statements, as well as made changes to the way that BIRT works.

There are six changes, and four of them came after the report about the students posing for a photo with the Till memorial. Groups in the community or others in the university suggested changes.

counsel has been added to the BIRT Triage Team, which includes groups on campus that analyze the reports according to their own specialties. The triage team usually receives a report within 24-48 hours of it being filed. Caldwell said that it is important for the triage team to consider “free speech thresholds” in reports of bias and that the general counsel has expertise in that area.

Senior leadership at the university, including the chancellor and provost, will receive copies of the reports

from BIRT. Then-Interim Chancellor Larry Sparks and Provost Noel Wilkin asked for this change to be made after the report of the members of the university community posing with the Emmett Till memorial was publicly reported.

An electronic system will be used to manage the BIRT process. The previous general counsel suggested that the process be managed through email. After having conversations with the new general counsel, who joined the university in June of 2018, it

was decided that the electronic system would be used. This decision was made before the photo of the students at the Till memorial was publicly reported.

The threshold for public notification is being developed after the MCIR reported the incident at the Till memorial. Caldwell said that she is reaching out to other universities to see what thresholds they have before disclosing a report to the public. Caldwell said she was also considering the best practices

from the Clery reports, which include information from crime on campus as mandated by law, to see how BIRT could adopt similar policies. Caldwell said she expects the new system to be ready next semester.

All reports are shared with the BIRT team. The entire team considers reports that do not require additional inquiry or investigation and discusses educational opportunities that could come from the report.

MEN’S BASKETBALL

Rebels head to Memphis for top test vs. No. 16 Tigers

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Undefeated on the young season, Ole Miss men’s basketball is set to face its toughest opponent yet.

Breein Tyree, Devontae Shuler and company travel to Memphis on Saturday to take on No. 16 Memphis. It is the first time these teams will match up since December 2016 when the Rebels came away with an 85-77 victory.

The Rebels will have their hands full on Saturday as they look for a key win on the road against a ranked opponent early in the season. Ole Miss has a relatively weak schedule this season, and an early season win over the short-handed Tigers could be a point of separation come March.

The Tigers are without their star center and projected No. 1 overall pick in next year’s NBA Draft James Wiseman, who dropped his lawsuit against the NCAA last week.

He was ruled “likely ineligible” by the NCAA because head coach Penny Hardaway allegedly gave Wiseman’s mother \$11,500 in moving expenses back in 2017. Hardaway was not yet the coach of Memphis but donated to the school in 2008 as an alumnus and is therefore considered a booster by the NCAA.

Wiseman applied for reinstatement, but the NCAA ruled Wednesday that he must sit out 11 more games and donate \$11,500 to a charity of his choice. This was a massive blow to a team with championship aspirations and to fans who now must wait to see the 18-year-old who has been



FILE PHOTO: BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Devontae Shuler (2) had 12 points in the win over Norfolk State. Ole Miss travels to Memphis on Saturday to face the No. 16 Tigers.

compared to NBA superstar Joel Embiid.

“I feel bad for him honestly. I wish I was playing against him,” Tyree said. “A guy like that is someone you probably only get to play once in a lifetime.”

Memphis still has plenty of talent without Wiseman on the floor. The Tigers had the No. 1 recruiting class in the country this year with Wiseman and fellow five-star prospect Precious Achiuwa.

Achiuwa averages over 12 points and six rebounds per game this year on efficient shooting. The Tigers have an impressive trio of freshmen in the backcourt as well

with Lester Quinones, Boogie Ellis and Damion Baugh.

“Obviously you’re going to miss a guy like (Wiseman). Don’t get me wrong,” Davis said. “But they’re still really talented, and they’re still undefeated when he hasn’t played. They’ve still got great length.”

The Rebels struggled to defend against versatile big men last season, causing head coach Kermit Davis to recruit junior transfer Khadim Sy to fill the void in the middle.

They may have trouble defending down low against Achiuwa and D.J. Jeffries, but the absence of Wiseman means the

Tigers will have to rely more heavily on their guards and backup big man Lance Thomas, who has played less than 10 minutes per game this season. Thomas started and played 11 minutes in Memphis’s first game without Wiseman against Alcorn State last Saturday.

Without Wiseman available, Quinones leads the team in scoring, and Baugh leads in assists. Ellis is also one of the premier threats from beyond the arc for the Tigers after being released from his letter of intent at Duke.

Ole Miss will be boosted by the return of Blake Hinson, who is expected to make his season debut on Saturday after missing the first four games of the season due to a blood abnormality.

Hinson has not participated in full-contact practice since August, but Davis said he has been working out on his own and should be in game shape.

The Rebels may be able to roll out their small-ball lineup that features Hinson and K.J. Buffen at the four and the five against a depleted Tigers squad. It is also safe to expect a healthy dose of Davis’ signature 1-3-1 zone to try and rattle Memphis’ young guards.

With Hinson returning, Davis will likely use a lot less of Antavion Collum and Carlos Curry but could take a “strength in numbers” approach to try and slow down Memphis’s talented young frontcourt.

“I do think that him coming back when him and K.J. (Buffen) are playing, K.J. can slide even more to the three and play more there and even play K.J. at the five and Blake at the four. It gives us different options,” Davis said.

The Rebels will also rely heavily on their veteran guard tandem of Tyree and Shuler, who will need to carry the load on offense if Ole Miss expects to come out with a victory.

The Tigers may not be at full strength, but a win for the Rebels Saturday could benefit a team trying to make the NCAA Tournament in back-to-back years for the first time in nearly two decades.

CROSS COUNTRY

Ole Miss cross country prepares for NCAA Championships

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The Ole Miss cross country program has dominated its meets all season, and both the men’s and women’s teams are set to compete in the NCAA Cross Country Championship in Terre Haute, Indiana, on Saturday.

The Rebels are one of only seven programs to have both teams qualify for the national meet in each of the last four seasons. Their consistently strong performance this year also resulted in several SEC season honors.

Associate head coach Ryan Vanhoy was named SEC Men’s Coach of the Year while Skylar Boogerd and Cole Bullock were tabbed as the Women’s and Men’s Freshman of the Year, respectively. Vanhoy was also named U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) South Region Men’s Coach of the Year. Bollock finished ninth in the

SEC Championships to help the men win their second consecutive conference title by a margin of 55 points.

Boogerd is the first Rebel to win SEC Women’s Freshman of the Year. The Tennessee native finished 19th in the SEC Championships with the team finishing runner-up.

Among other awards are first team All-SEC runners Waleed Suliman, Farah Abdulkarim and Cade Bethmann. Bullock and Micheal Coccia were named to the second team All-SEC and Jack Filan to SEC All-Freshman. Victoria Simmons ran her way into the Women’s second team All-SEC.

The men and women also finished first and second respectively in the NCAA South Regional on Nov. 15 to qualify for nationals. The squads will look for the same magic in the Cross Country Championships at the Lavern Gibson Championship Course this weekend. The men’s team will enter the meet ranked

No. 9, and the women’s team will be No. 23.

“There are 255 individuals in the race,” Vanhoy said. “It’s one of the best cross country races in the world — probably outside of maybe the world championships. It’s very difficult to win that race.”

Though the Rebels will face their toughest test of the semester, Vanhoy said he is confident his squad will deliver this weekend.

“This year, we have a few guys that probably have the opportunity to be an All-American,” he said. “That’s probably a better way to gauge an individual goal for some members on our team, but to win the whole thing would be very difficult.”

The men’s and women’s teams finished 17th and 22nd respectively in last year’s national meet.

The NCAA championships starts this Saturday at 10:15 a.m, and the women’s and men’s teams will be making a run at finishing in a top spot in the nation.

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Wednesday, December 4th **Union Plaza 5 PM - 9 PM**

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PHOTO COURTESY: CHASE PURDY VIA FACEBOOK

Chase Purdy at the PapaNicholas Coffee 150 where he placed second in 2018 .

Right on track

Chase Purdy is the fastest freshman in NASCAR

JOSHUA CLAYTON
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There are eight laps to go in the Sioux Chief PowerPEX 250 at the Elko Speedway, and Chase Purdy is leading the pack. As other racers gained on him down the stretch, Purdy started to smell something like an electrical fire in his Bama Buggies No. 8 car. However, it was not an electrical fire. After contact with another car, the drive shaft popped through the fuel line under the car, came through the floorboard and knocked the fuel line, causing the inside of the car to burst into flames. “It wasn’t fun. I was lead-

ing the race with eight laps to go, and I thought I was going to catch my break in a kind of a dry spell, you know, like we’ve been so close,” Purdy said. “I think the announcers said they’d never seen that.” The then-19-year-old was able to climb out of the window and run away as the car burned in the middle of the track. Purdy’s chance at his first major win — literally — went up in flames. “I just remember thinking, ‘Thank God I had on my fire suit,’” he said. “It gives me up to, like, a minute and a half to get out of the car before I start to really feel like I’m burning, but I had burns all on my neck

and my wrist and hands. That was not fun. I definitely took off my seatbelt as fast as I could and hopped out of there. The fire thing got to me a little bit because I’m literally burning, and I’m trying to get out.” Most college freshmen can share their own list of accidents and fender benders, but those don’t happen at 120 miles per hour with other cars at either bumper.

Purdy, now a first-year student at Ole Miss, sits and recalls his high-speed crashes with a grin as if they were minor paint scratches in a parking lot. For him, it’s all part of what he signed up for. That signature was inked at an early age as Purdy says he’s wanted to race for as long as he can remember. As soon as he started walking, Purdy would find anything at the center of a room, like a coffee table or armoire, and run around it as fast as he could all day. He’s been making left turns all of his life. Charlie Purdy, his father, said, “We would joke about it when he got into racing like, ‘That’s all he’s doing now,’ but he would do it until he got dizzy and just (fall) out.” Purdy’s been behind the wheel ever since, starting with go-carts and moving to stock cars at 14 and appearing for his first NASCAR-sanctioned team at 16. He has made his way up the ladder quickly with several accolades in his short career. After being named NASCAR Whelen All-American Series National Rookie of the Year, Purdy was selected as one of nine drivers in the NASCAR Next program, an initiative promoting the top




PHOTO COURTESY: CHASE PURDY


Chase Purdy started racing with NASCAR at 16 years old.

young drivers in the nation, in 2017 and 2018. The freshman, born in Tuscaloosa and raised in Meridian, made a name for himself with his aggressive racing style, adopted from some of his favorite racers. Purdy said he aspires to race like Kyle Larson and Jimmie Johnson. His driving style comes with risks. Purdy has been in his fair share of crashes in his young career, including a major one at the Talladega General Tire 200 on the final lap. With a cluster of cars racing three-wide, a tap to the rear bumper sent Purdy into the wall hard. He was transported to the hospital immediately with spinal shock. “That was kind of like my wake-up call for me and I’ve never really been hurt in the race car,” he said. “That was kind of like, ‘This sport’s dangerous. Like, I did not see that happening,’ and it speeds up to 109 miles an hour. It really, really takes the breath out of you.” The freshman spent

most of his adolescent life traveling for races every weekend. “It takes away a lot of your social life. I lost connection with few of my friends and stuff. I’m still friends with them but not as close as I probably would have been had I stayed in school a lot more,” Purdy said. Purdy took a year off from racing after enrolling at Ole Miss last winter, hoping to get acclimated to life as a college student, but he said he’s looking forward to getting back on track soon. “I’ve thought about it, but (racing) never scared me. (It) truly never made me hesitant at all or race car or any kind of decision making,” Purdy said. “The goal for the next season would be to have a deal and be doing something completely out of the ordinary that no other driver’s done. hat would be to be full-time on campus, living at college and racing at the same time. I think that’s what speaks volumes in many ways.”



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How students are making money on Instagram

ERIN KILLION
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Followers and likes on Instagram might be a fun part of the social media experience, but for some Ole Miss students, it also pays the bills.

There are many ways to make money using social media, and popular users, called influencers, make money by advertising products to their audiences.

Lindy Goodson, an influencer and Youtube personality with over 9,000 followers on Instagram, makes around \$400 per campaign, which includes individual posts and stories. Goodson has partnered with brands like Neutrogena and Plato's Closet, which have paid her to promote their company on her Instagram account.

Goodson's feed features illustrative posts about fashion and makeup, and she decorates her photos with drawings and bright filters. In her sponsored Neutrogena post, she removes

Halloween makeup, surrounded by floating makeup wipes.

Goodson said she sometimes uses marketing platforms that provide ways for brands to contact influencers and for influencers to market themselves.

"Usually, I will get emails from brands, and they'll let me know what the campaign entails, and I'll let them know if I can do it, and then we'll discuss budget," Goodson said. "There are influencer marketing platforms you can join that make it easy for brands to reach out to you and for you to pitch to brands."

These marketing platforms are third-party websites where influencers can create a profile, marketing themselves to potential partners. They can include their ideal post topics, engagement rates and follower demographics.

Laine Mansour, an integrated marketing communications student with almost 48,000 followers, uses her

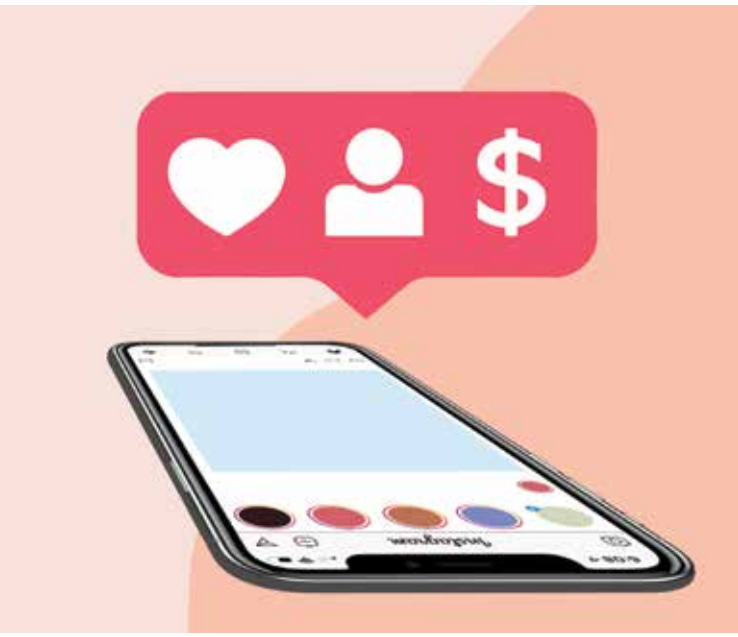


ILLUSTRATION: KATHERINE BUTLER / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

popular Instagram account to advertise clothing companies and photographers.

"I really love it because it gives me more creative freedom to post what I want," Mansour said. "I do ad posts every once in a while, but I make sure not to do too many collaborations because I feel it comes across ingenuine to my audience to constantly be pushing products."

Mansour said that compa-

nies usually reach out to her to collaborate, then they offer a flat rate for a photo post or story. That rate depends on her previous engagement rates that she provides to the company.

Instagram engagement includes interactions on a specific post in relation to your number of followers. This can include post likes, comments, profile clicks and follows. The more interaction a post gets per

account follower, the better the engagement rate for a post is.

Influencers often utilize the "business account" setting on Instagram, which provides them with analytics on how their posts perform — tracking profile clicks and follower increases from each post.

Sara Caroline Bridgers, an integrated marketing communications student and an online business owner with 17,000 followers, is frequently contacted by brands who want to collaborate with her.

"Typically I get emails about collaborations, and there has always been a set fee that doesn't depend on likes or engagements, but for a majority of them, I've been asked to submit my engagements from the posts or stories back for them after the campaign has ended," Bridgers said.

Bridgers' feed includes photos of her and her sorority sisters with matching filters. Bridgers has advertised brands like Steve Madden and Diff Eyewear on her Instagram.

Kayla White, a member of the Ole Miss Rebelettes dance team and a campus ambassador for popular online dating app TinderU who has 5,500 followers, receives a consistent paycheck of \$500 in exchange for posting five photos and five Instagram stories dedicated to Tinder.

"With Tinder, I have a set paycheck as long as I meet the appropriate post deadlines," White said. "Tinder asks for screenshots of the insights to see how their campaign is going."

Goodson said she only works with brands she supports in order to be honest with her followers.

"It's really important to me to make sure it's worth it for me to take the time and creative energy to create good content," Goodson said. "(I'm) also trying to be sure I only work with brands that I truly believe in because without the trust of my audience, I'll have nothing."

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ACROSS

1- Tolled;

5- Hot stuff;

9- Spinner;

12- General Bradley;

13- Corporate concern;

15- Female horse;

16- Words of denial;

17- Sacred song;

18- Nautical heading;

19- Pleasant smells;

21- Place;

23- Cornerstone abbr.;

25- Proceeded;

26- Draft letters;

29- Even;

31- Flammable gas;

35- Brown-capped boletus mushroom;

36- Lots of land;

38- Stitched;

39- Not a dup.;

41- Retains;

43- Sported;

44- N Atlantic archipelago;

46- Hot-dog topping;

48- Heyerdahl's "___-Tiki";

49- Festival;

51- Mystery writer Buchanan;

52- Curvy letter;

53- "Damn Yankees" vamp;

55- Black, in poetry;

57- Advocate of women's rights;

61- Parenthetical comments;

65- Predictive sign;

66- Bikini blast;

68- Resting place;

69- Male deer;

70- Mother of Isaac;

71- Otherwise;

72- Common ID;

73- Take the bait;

74- Flow slowly

DOWN

1- Novelist Jaffe;

2- Love personified;

3- Western pact;

4- Dirt;

5- Makeup item;

6- Early hrs.;

7- South African river;

8- Radiant;

9- Anklebones;

10- Black-and-white cookie;

11- Hammer head;

14- Toastmaster;

15- The first Gospel;

20- Tinseltown terrier;

22- Fornicary

residents;

24- Shortstop Jeter;

26- Deride;

27- Turkish palace;

28- Steeple;

30- Caterpillar rival;

32- Came to;

33- Peter and a Wolfe;

34- Perfect places;

37- Digging tool;

40- Young goose;

42- Bask;

45- English public school;

47- New Mexico art colony;

50- Assumed name;

54- Take ___ at (try);

56- Dressed to the ___;

57- Moat;

58- CPR experts;

59- Signify;

60- Actress Garr;

62- Strike out;

63- Start of North Carolina's motto;

64- Pace;

67- Warmed the bench;

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HOW TO PLAY

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

EASY

4	3	5	1	2	8	6	7	9
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7	4	8	2	9	1	3	9	5
6	2	6	3	8	5	4	1	7
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BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Ole Miss Special Olympics players hoist the Unified Egg Bowl trophy after defeating MSU 25-18 on Wednesday. Players were met with the Ole Miss band and cheerleaders in full game day revel.

Unified Rebels win Egg Bowl

MADDY QUON
thedmnnews@gmail.com

The University of Mississippi’s and Mississippi State’s Special Olympics teams lined up on the football field to compete in the sixth annual Unified Egg Bowl on Wednesday night in the Manning Center.

The Unified Rebels beat the Unified Bulldogs 25-18. Jayaratha scored all four touchdowns in the game for the Rebels.

Teams entered the field through a tunnel with cheerleaders and Tony the Landshark. The Unified Rebels gathered in a huddle before cheering, “Go Rebels!”

In the stands were students, athletes and family members, all holding signs cheering on the team. The women’s volleyball team passed out signs to those who didn’t have any.

Members of the Pride of the South marching band, the cheerleading squad and the Ole Miss Hand Band also attended. The hand band performed a Christmas-themed halftime show.

Special Olympics President Ally Avant, a senior political science major, said that she was extremely happy that the Unified Rebels won and that seeing the athletes celebrate their victory made being the head coach of the team worth it.

“Special Olympics is the most rewarding thing that I do. Our main goal is to promote inclusion both in sports and off the field,” Avant said. “We just like making friends from all over the Oxford community

and on campus, too.”

Catherine Day, a junior communications sciences and disorders major and treasurer of Special Olympics, has been involved in Special Olympics since middle school. Day said that her MPower leader told her about Special Olympics at Ole Miss.

“It is so much fun coaching and just being a part of this team because it’s just hilarious, and it’s so fun seeing (the athletes) thrive in their athletic abilities,” Day said.

Sophomore accounting major Megan Jansen, who is also involved in Special Olympics, watched the Unified Egg Bowl. Jansen held a sign for Bhanu Jayaratha, a freshman at Northwest Mississippi Community College who played for Ole Miss.

Jansen said that she and her friends look forward to playing flag football with the Special Olympics teams every week on Wednesday nights, and enjoy being active and interacting with people that don’t go to Ole Miss.

“It’s such a rewarding experience to not only help the athletes participate in something they normally don’t do but also get to watch their parents and families cheer them on,” Jansen said.

“Bhanu is a star,” Jansen said. “I would put him on my fantasy football team if I could.”

Jayaratha said that he enjoyed playing flag football with the Special Olympics for the first time and enjoyed winning even more.

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BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Tray Shocy sprints downfield early in the game against Mississippi State.



BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Ole Miss Special Olympics players look on to the Mississippi State players as they receive second place medals.

OPINION

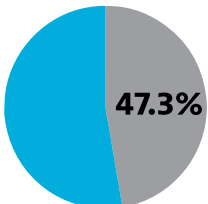
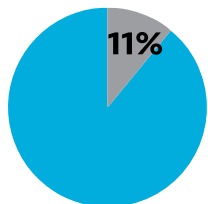
1974

Northpoint was founded by 10 Southern Baptist churches.

\$9,925

Yearly tuition

While 47.3% of the Memphis Metro area is African American, only 11% of Northpoint's students are.



49

Teachers

960

Students

I went to a segregation academy. Now, I want to ban them.

AMY CAIN

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In 2016, I graduated from a segregation academy.

For 12 years of my educational experience, I attended Northpoint Christian School (NCS), which was formerly known as Southern Baptist Educational Center (SBEC). Like many private schools in the South, NCS was founded during the period of desegregation in public schools. “Desegregation” is, of course, not the best term to describe these events, since this period really only encouraged segregationists to find alternate routes to shield their children from integration. SBEC/NCS was one of those segregationist tactics.

Trying to discuss my alma mater has always been a touchy subject for me. Obviously, not every memory of my time there is negative, and I still maintain friendships with several of my teachers from high school. However, despite the benefits I received from this system, I must also confront the realities of the damage that my education did to the community that I consider home. Loving a community means wanting what is best for the whole and being willing to point out the problems that keep us from achieving our fullest potential.

“White flight” from Memphis public schools commenced in earnest after the district implemented a busing policy in 1973, and at the same time, NCS (then SBEC) opened in Memphis. Desegregation in Memphis led to drastic population movements across the Tennessee border and into DeSoto County, and in 1988, SBEC moved to a new location in Southaven to chase these residents. The Memphis school system bought the original location and allowed SBEC to remain there rent-free for two years as the new facility was being developed. This new facility is about two miles outside of Memphis city limits and is the location I attended.

These academies are not only racist and detrimental to the regions surrounding them but also to some of the students who attend these institutions. NCS is a perfect example of this in its policies regarding women and LGBTQ students. While these rules may sound archaic and defunct, I am here to testify that they are very much still in practice. I can recall two specific cases of LGBTQ students being forced to leave during my time at NCS.

However, even for those of us who survived high school undetected, this policy created a hostile atmosphere characterized by

fear and seclusion.

Other students, unfortunately, felt emboldened by this official rule to ostracize and antagonize anyone they suspected of being part of this underground queer community.

NCS and other segregation academies were created and still operate largely because of racist and bigoted motivations. Perhaps one could argue that we should not take any policy actions against segregation academies based on their racist legacy alone. After all, many institutions were created as products of prejudiced ideologies. However, harm caused by segregation academies is not only historical. These private institutions have a negative impact on children who receive an education from the public school system.

When the upper and middle classes — since those are all who can afford to attend segregation academies — decide to take their children out of the public school system, their donations and involvement are also removed from the public school. At around \$9,925 per year for high school students, NCS tuition does not differ substantially from the average amount spent per student in the Mississippi public system. The difference in educational outcomes is perhaps better accounted for by the additional involvement and financial support of active parents.

Parents with more financial means are typically those who are also more willing and able to donate their time and energy to funding school activities and extracurricular organizations. Public schools, which are usually already understaffed, are then also deprived of this other source of support. Mississippi has a vast teacher shortage, yet NCS is able to maintain 49 teachers with an average student-teacher ratio of 12-to-1.

When we talk about the “legacy” of segregation academies in Mississippi, we must also address their continued presence and impact on our state’s educational system and the students who graduate from these institutions. NCS is an undeniably large part of my personal history, and segregation academies will always be a part of Mississippi’s history. However, this does not justify their continued existence. You cannot leave a wound open and expect it to heal. If we genuinely want to move past segregation in Mississippi, we have to close these academies and invest in the futures of all children.

Amy Cain is a senior philosophy and political science major from Southaven, Mississippi.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Adopt-A-Basket is good, but a living wage would be better

DEAR EDITOR,

thedmopinion@gmail.com

The Associated Student Body (ASB) is currently collecting donations to provide Thanksgiving baskets for families in need this holiday season. More specifically, through its Adopt-A-Basket initiative, ASB hopes to provide Thanksgiving meals to members of the “Ole Miss family” — employees of the University of Mississippi.

Similarly, Books and Bears will begin in earnest after the Thanksgiving break as the yearly “holiday project that benefits University of Mississippi campus service workers, custodians and landscape crews.”

These are commendable causes that have been organized for several years. I and many other members of the campus community — students, staff and faculty — will undoubtedly contribute. As we do so, however, I

encourage members of the campus community to think about the need for these charitable programs in the first place. These donations will be going to workers on this campus who are not paid enough to put together their own Thanksgiving meal and buy gifts during the holiday season. While charitable actions like these are commendable, they are not enough. The problem isn’t lack of charity, it’s that we don’t pay all workers on

campus a living wage.

At the University of Mississippi, an estimated 20-25% of all full-time and part-time workers earn less than \$15 per hour. In addition, in the past decade, many workers have had only minimal, if any, cost-of-living raises. At the same time, the cost of living in the Oxford area has risen faster than the wages and salaries of campus workers. While we are collecting donations for food and then presents, we should also begin to push

for more systemic change. ASB, Faculty Senate and Staff Council should author resolutions demanding a living wage for all campus workers and that campus and state leadership take action to make that happen.

Conor Dowling is an associate professor of political science and a member of United Campus Workers-Mississippi.

OPINION



CARTOON: MAGGIE HUBBARD

The flagship is not for Mississippians

AINSLEY ASH

thedmopinion@gmail.com

Recently, Chancellor Glenn Boyce made appearances at high schools in Jackson. He made sure to visit some of Mississippi's most expensive private schools that have tuition prices well above in-state prices at our university. Some of the schools he visited include Jackson Prep, Madison Ridgeland Academy and Jackson Academy. Mississippi's most affluent public schools also received a visit, including schools such as Madison Central and Germantown.

Yet, in the midst of these intentional visits, it appears Chancellor Boyce and admissions have yet to visit Jackson public schools. Perhaps, in these numerous trips to the Jackson metro area since October, they simply "forgot" to coordinate meetings with any of the schools in the entire Jackson Public School District, the second-largest school district in Mississippi.

Either way, the university

has made it clear that its primary time and energy will be expended courting its most affluent, well-resourced and whitest prospective students.

Everyone else: you are an afterthought.

The evidence is abundantly clear -- as a whole, the University of Mississippi is not for Mississippians.

The university does not look like Mississippi. The overwhelming affluence and whiteness of our university is a stark contrast to our state.

It is no secret that, historically, Mississippi is the poorest state in the union. Mississippi's median household income is \$42,000. Yet, the median family income of a student at the university is \$116,000, the most of any public university in Mississippi and just behind Millsaps, a small private liberal arts college, at \$123,200.

In a study on colleges and social mobility, the University of Mississippi ranked last in the state in terms of its producing upwardly mobile students. Only 14% of students were likely to move up two or more income

quintiles, the lowest percentage of any Mississippi university. Jackson State was first at 36%.

Mississippi has an African American population of nearly 40%, the most of any state. Yet the University of Mississippi's African American enrollment stays around 12%. Of course, the university's claim to civility does little in the face of bimonthly race scandals.

While there are certainly individual actors and programs such as Luckyday and the MOST program that work to make this campus more accessible and inclusive for our less affluent and black students, this should be a mission pushed from the highest office of our university.

As federal and state funding falls, tuition prices rise. (Let us not forget that Chancellor Boyce served as Commissioner of Higher Education and is quite familiar with our rising tuition costs.) This has resulted in the university becoming more and more reliant on nonresident fees.

Laura Hamilton, author of "Paying for the Party," argues that when universities become

reliant on nonresident fees, "public universities start to look more and more like private universities and they have to serve the highest bidders."

Your average Mississippian looking to attain a bachelor's degree is never going to be the highest bidder, especially when tuition scholarships are tied to ACT and SAT scores, and the governor-elect intends to continue slashing public education funds.

If Mississippi's flagship university is truly going to serve the state, then it is time for senior administration to reevaluate their priorities. Even with limited state and federal funding, it is not a question of whether or not the money is

going to be spent, but rather who and what it is going to be spent on.

Chancellor Boyce said that "our university is our commitment to serve a wide range of students, whether they arrive needing extra help to manage college-level academics, or if they are exceptional students who need an extra challenge."

I would love to see our chancellor and our university live up to his own charge. Boyce, here are just a few ideas from a first-generation student like yourself.

Ainsley Ash is a junior public policy leadership major from Meridian, Mississippi.

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BOYCE

continued from page 1

he was unaware of what circumstances may have lead Boyce to visit or not visit JPS schools but that it was a missed opportunity for the university.

“I see this as a lost opportunity for Ole Miss more than anyone else because the JPS students have a variety of gifts and abilities that would be an asset to not only Ole Miss but any institution around the country,” Lumumba said. “(JPS) students have demonstrated over time an ability to succeed in any arena around this globe. As a proud Jackson Public Schools graduate and proud JPS parent, I think that the alumni base of Ole Miss needs to ask the question (of) why this opportunity was missed.”

Jody Lowe, interim director of admissions, said that the admissions office had been directed to send all questions regarding Boyce visiting high schools and the recruitment of in-state students to UM Communications.

Recruiting in-state students has been a constant topic of discussion among university community members. At an Institutions of Higher Learning listening session in June, Provost Noel Wilkin said that the university had a plan to increase the recruitment of in-state students.

A university spokesperson said that the admissions office is hiring additional recruiters, planning visits with high schools, adjusting scholarship offers to Mississippi students and engaging with alumni



PHOTO COURTESY: UM CHANCELLOR VIA FACEBOOK

Chancellor Glenn Boyce visited several high schools in the Jackson metro area but none that were predominantly African American.

to identify prospective students.

Tre Powell, after graduating from Forest Hill High School a year early with a 3.87 GPA, came to Ole Miss with the Ole Miss Opportunity (OMO) scholarship.

OMO provides tuition for fall and spring semesters, an unlimited meal plan and housing in a university residence hall. Powell found out about the OMO program after talking with former Jackson area admissions counselor Trey Carroll.

“He came to my school to talk to the graduating seniors to try and convince them to come, but only me and another close friend who graduated early talked to him personally about it,” Powell said.

“He felt the need to help us personally, and he did that.”

When Powell decided to attend the university in 2017, his decision was met with harsh criticism by his peers and those in his community.

“Everybody was really shocked,” he said. “They didn’t know why I picked Ole Miss. I didn’t know why I picked Ole Miss ... They were just looking at me like they were really just judging me.”

Powell, who is biracial, said that most of the criticism he received about attending the university was because of its history with racial segregation, but he has found that after being a student for the past three years, most of the criticism

was overemphasized.

“They would tell me, ‘Why are you going to that racist school?’ and people in my high school would joke about it and be like, ‘You’re going to get lynched,’ and nobody took it seriously,” Powell said. “I’ve pretty much never come across any racists vibes (here). I have (before), but not as often as I thought it would.”

Powell said that recruiting representatives from the university did not visit Forest Hill often and that most universities visited the school sparingly. The only other schools he remembered coming to recruit were the University of Southern Mississippi, Hinds Community College and Jackson State University.

“(Ole Miss) didn’t come as often,” Powell said. “It would be a bunch of other colleges. (Ole Miss) came once, but then (Trey) came a bunch after that to help me.”

Former Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter also made a recruiting trip to Jackson during Powell’s senior year of high school but did not visit Forest Hill. Powell said it would have meant a lot to him if the chancellor had visited his high school.

“I feel like it would have made a big difference because the chancellor is the big dog around campus,” Powell said. “If he personally made an appearance, I would feel like he wanted us to come personally because he took out his time and came to talk to us,” Powell said.

Will Fletcher and Steven Wyatt, who graduated from Jackson Preparatory School in 2017, decided to come to Ole Miss toward the end of their senior year of high

school. Fletcher and Wyatt originally planned on going to college out-of-state, but neither could justify paying higher tuition fees.

“I didn’t really want to come here, honestly,” Fletcher said. “I wanted to go to (the University of Alabama) because I wanted to go out of state and experience something new. Just for money reasons, I didn’t go because there was no reason to spend as much money as I was about to ... overall I’m paying way less here than I was for high school.”

Fletcher said that around one-third of his graduating class of 170 at Jackson Prep came to Ole Miss for college.

“I was kind of scared that it was going to be ‘High School 2.0,’ but it hasn’t been,” Fletcher said. “I like meeting people and nothing against the people at Prep, I loved high school, but I just knew I needed to branch out.”

Fletcher said that he was in touch with local university recruiters in Jackson who visited Jackson Prep around once a month.

“It got to the point where people would come to Prep just to help people out with applications,” Fletcher said.

Fletcher and Wyatt said that the chancellor coming to visit their high school would not have had any effect on where they decided to go to college.

“It would have been cool, I guess, but I’ve never felt connected to the chancellor now,” Wyatt said. “I felt like he was hiding for a little while ... I know he did (The Longest Table) but besides that, I’ve never seen him.”

REVOLVING DOOR

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don’t want to see that much turnover in a short amount of time because you can get institutional corruption, but it also presents a fairly significant opportunity,” McClellan said.

Changes in leadership offer university presidents and chancellors the opportunity to restructure departments and change the philosophy of a university.

“Sometimes the chancellor, he or she will come in, and they will say very quickly, ‘I want my team.’ Rarely do you see them come in and wipe out a whole

team at one time,” McClellan said.

He added that the process used to select Glenn Boyce “will affect our faculty hires because people will wonder about shared governance at the university. People who might otherwise be attracted to vice chancellor jobs will be, I don’t know. That (process) looks like a mess.”

However, the University of Mississippi is not unique in experiencing turnover atop the leadership ranks. According to McClellan, the average tenure of a college president is roughly five years.

Of the other seven Mississippi public universities governed by the IHL Board of Trustees, four (Jackson State, Mississippi

Valley State, Mississippi University for Women and Alcorn State) have appointed new presidents or chancellors since 2017. Delta State and the University of Southern Mississippi have had their current presidents since 2013, and Mississippi State’s President Mark Keenum assumed office in 2009.

McClellan said that in states with hyper-politicized higher education systems, turnover is rampant. He didn’t classify Mississippi as such, but said, “Mississippi — in particular, the University of Mississippi, because of its actual and symbolic importance in the state — is a particularly fraught environment.”

RETENTION

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1-800 number. Oh, go see financial aid,” Ellis said. “We make referrals to specific people.”

The CSSFYE works closely with students to not only advise them but also help with common issues that interrupt a student’s education, including homesickness, health issues and academic probation. They can refer students to retention grants, loans and even emergency funds to ensure that their collegiate careers stay on track.

The CSSFYE is always refining its methods for retaining students by analyzing data and peer institutions.

“I think now we’re starting to look at ways to be more efficient,” Jeffiner Fos, assistant director of retention in the CSSFYE said. “Rather than just continuing to do more, we’re trying to see what’s actually working and seeing what’s high-impact.”

Gorham and Perotti said that football games and the Grove have been some of the standout moments from their freshman year that improved their Ole Miss experience. They expect to continue to get more involved in the years to come.

“It’s a family,” Perotti said. “Even though you don’t know people, you meet people from around the country that I didn’t think I would ever meet being at a school in the South.”

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