



# MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

SPRING 2025

*Commencement*

“MOSES THE LAW GIVER”



# MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

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SPRING 2025



# MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

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SPRING 2025

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FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2025

10:00 a.m.

First Baptist Church, Jackson, Mississippi

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## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE GRADUATION ETIQUETTE

OUT OF RESPECT FOR OTHER FAMILIES PRESENT:



SILENCE ALL DEVICES



HOLD YOUR APPLAUSE  
UNTIL  
PROMPTED



NO AIR HORNS  
OR NOISEMAKERS



PLEASE TAKE ALL  
PICTURES WITH YOUR  
GRADUATE BEFORE  
THE CEREMONY

*This Commencement is a solemn and formal occasion marking the completion of the legal studies of our graduates.  
We ask for your cooperation and assistance in ensuring that the dignity of the ceremony is maintained and the sanctuary of the church is respected*

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW  
COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

**PRELUDE**

*Prelude and Fugue in C Minor - JS Bach*

*Sontana 5 - Felix Mendelssohn*

*Adagio - Ralph Vaughan Williams*

Dr. Robert Knupp, Professor of Music, Mississippi College, organ

**PROCESSIONAL OF GRADUATES\***

*Pomp and Circumstance (Sir Edward Elgar)*

Dr. Robert Knupp, organ

**A HYMN OF COUNTRY\***

*My Country, 'Tis of Thee* by Samuel F. Smith

Phillip McIntosh, Professor, Mississippi College School of Law

**INVOCATION**

Dr. Chip Stevens, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Jackson

**STATEMENT OF MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**

Dr. Blake Thompson, President, Mississippi College

**STATEMENT OF THE DEAN**

John P. Anderson, Dean, Mississippi College School of Law

**STATEMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAR**

Meade Mitchell, President, Mississippi Bar Association

**INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER**

John P. Anderson, Dean, Mississippi College School of Law

**COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS**

Justice Jenifer B. Branning

Mississippi Supreme Court

**AWARDING OF DEGREES**

**FOR THE DOCTOR OF JURISPRUDENCE CANDIDATES**

Dr. Blake Thompson

Dean John P. Anderson

Dr. Michael Highfield

**AWARDING OF HONORARY MEMORIAL DEGREE FOR PATRICK GREGORY HURTADO, CLASS OF 2025**

John P. Anderson, Dean, Mississippi College School of Law

**BENEDICTION**

Cole Lothrop

President, MC Law Student Bar Association 2024-2025

**RECESSIONAL\***

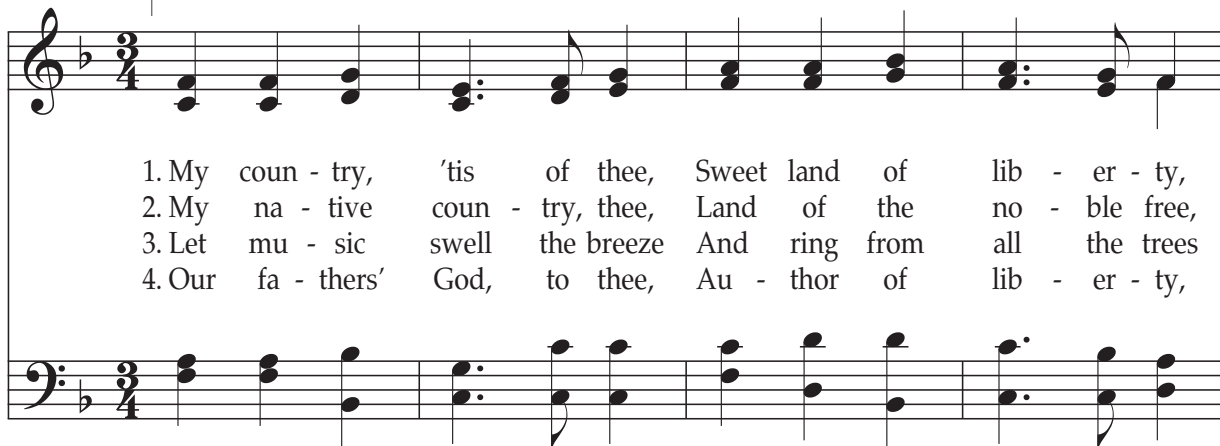
*Fanfare and March - Keith Chapman*

Dr. Robert Knupp, organ

\*Audience will please stand if able.

# My Country, 'Tis of Thee

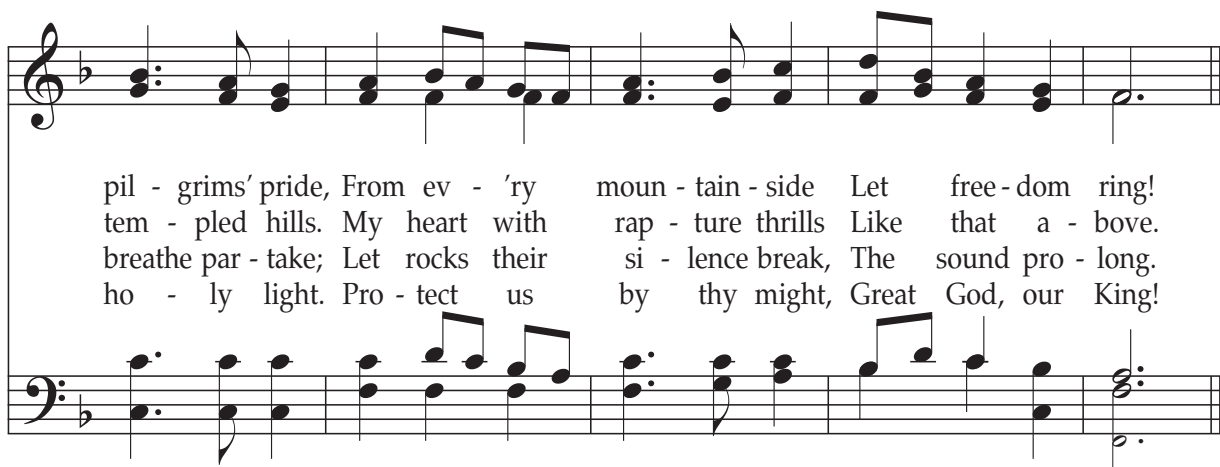
With dignity ♩ = 76-92



1. My coun - try, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of lib - er - ty,  
 2. My na - tive coun - try, thee, Land of the no - ble free,  
 3. Let mu - sic swell the breeze And ring from all the trees  
 4. Our fa - thers' God, to thee, Au - thor of lib - er - ty,



Of thee I sing; Land where my fa - thers died, Land of the  
 Thy name I love; I love thy rocks and rills, Thy woods and  
 Sweet free-dom's song; Let mor - tal tongues a - wake; Let all that  
 To thee we sing; Long may our land be bright With free-dom's



pil - grims' pride, From ev - 'ry moun - tain - side Let free-dom ring!  
 tem - pled hills. My heart with rap - ture thrills Like that a - bove.  
 breathe par - take; Let rocks their si - lence break, The sound pro - long.  
 ho - ly light. Pro - tect us by thy might, Great God, our King!

Text: Samuel F. Smith, 1808-1895

Music: From *Thesaurus Musicus*, London, 1744

2 Nephi 1:7

Ether 2:12

CANDIDATES FOR  
DOCTOR OF JURISPRUDENCE (J.D.) DEGREE  
SPRING COMMENCEMENT

**Kole Andrew Akers**, *Tuscaloosa, AL*  
B.A., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**Alex James Alexander**, *Covington, LA*  
B.A., Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA

**Lauren McKenzie Allen**, *Jackson, MS*  
B.A., Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

**Abigail Marie Avery**, *Nashville, TN Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**John Collins Bailey**, *Sardis, MS*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Anna Kathryn Beckett**, *Columbus, MS Cum Laude*  
B.B.A., M.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Charles Kenton Bounds**, *Puckett, MS*  
B.B.A., Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

**Brittany Elizabeth Gates Breard**, *Monroe, LA*  
B.S., University of Louisiana at Monroe, Monroe, LA

**Rachel Erin Britt**, *Shreveport, LA Magna Cum Laude*  
B.A., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Virginia Bailey Brumfield**, *Columbia, MS*  
B.S., Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

**Julianna Catherine Burke**, *Wesson, MS*  
B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Joshua Quinté Carter**, *Port Arthur, TX*  
B.S., American Intercontinental University, Schaumburg, IL

**Zachary Michael Chapman**, *Mobile, AL*  
B.A., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**Olivia Claire Churchill**, *Lake, MS*  
B.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Richard Lane Colson**, *Biloxi, MS Cum Laude*  
B.A., Spring Hill College, Mobile, AL

**Hannah Alexis Cooper**, *Ruth, MS*  
B.S., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Michaela Katherine Cooper**, *Brookhaven, MS*  
B.S., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**John Palmer Cottingham IV**, *Jackson, MS Magna Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Alexis Lee Crawford**, *Meridian, MS*  
B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**James Allen Curlee**, *Magee, MS*  
B.B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Alexandra Mae Daigle**, *Prairieville, LA*  
B.S.Ed., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Robert Thomas DeWitt**, *Mesa, AZ*  
B.A., Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

**Cody McKay Dinkelacker**, *Madison, MS*  
B.S., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Allison Kathryn Dooling**, *Huntsville, AL Summa Cum Laude*  
B.S., Anderson University, Anderson, SC  
M.S.F., Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

**Tatum Elayne Morton DuBos**, *Pineville, LA*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Kash Dakota Eason**, *Laurel, MS*  
B.S.B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Richard Grant Ellsworth**, *Palmdale, CA*  
B.S., Utah Valley University, Orem, UT

**Shamauria Maneisha LaShai Fair**, *Hazlehurst, MS*  
B.A., M.B.A., Alcorn State University, Alcorn State, MS

**Christopher Anthony Favilla**, *Howell, NJ Cum Laude*  
B.A., Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ

**Emily Hope Foster**, *Ferriday, LA Cum Laude*  
B.A., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Rikia Sidney Shaylynn Fulmore**, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
B.A., Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD

**Marcos Antonio Garcia**, *Weslaco, TX*  
B.A., University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX

**Gregory Thomas Garrett**, *San Angelo, TX Cum Laude*  
B.S., Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

**Michael Lamar Gillespie Jr.**, *Jackson, MS Summa Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Mary Kifer Glass**, *Newellton, LA*  
B.A., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Justin Taylor Hancock**, *Meridian, MS*  
B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Cassandra Gabrielle Harmon**, *Madison, MS*  
B.S., Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

**Samantha Andrea Hernández**, *Slidell, LA Cum Laude*  
B.S., B.S., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Jonathan Mical Hill II**, *West Monroe, LA Magna Cum Laude*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Jillian Elizabeth Hilt**, *Jackson, AL*  
B.A., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**Abby Gwendolyn Hollingsworth**, *Lake, MS*  
B.S., M.S., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**William Thomas Hollingsworth**, *Oxford, MS*  
B.A., Millsaps College, Jackson, MS

**Andrew Spence Howell**, *Madison, MS*  
B.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Matthew James Howell**, *Covington, LA Cum Laude*  
B.S., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Marley Roberson Hoxie**, *Starkville, MS*  
B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Hannah Kathleen Hutchins**, *Houston, TX*  
B.S.B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS  
M.B.A., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Juarez McLeod Johnson III**, *Morton, MS Cum Laude*  
B.A., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Thomas Chancellor Jones**, *Cleveland, MS Summa Cum Laude*  
B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

~ **Sean Brian Kelley**, *Macon, GA*  
B.S., M.S., Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

**Perry Elizabeth Kelly**, *Shreveport, LA*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**William Greg Kennedy**, *Madison, MS Magna Cum Laude*  
B.A., B.B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS



**Chloe Rebecca King**, *Roxie, MS*  
B.S., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Jacob O'Neal Lewis**, *Hattiesburg, MS*  
B.S., University of West Alabama, Livingston, AL

**Sean Louis Link**, *Louisville, KY*  
B.A., Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH

^ **William Ernest Lively IV**, *Medford, OR*  
B.S., Excelsior College, Albany, NY

**Cole Michael Lothrop**, *Tupelo, MS*  
B.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Maggie Lynn Maddox**, *Colfax, LA Cum Laude*  
B.S., Louisiana State University at Alexandria, Alexandria, LA

**Kyle Anthony Martin**, *Florence, MS*  
B.S., M.B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Matthew Dean Matherne**, *Monroe, LA Magna Cum Laude*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Morgan Ally Maugans**, *Egg Harbor Township, NJ*  
B.A., DePaul University, Chicago, IL

**Gabriel Davis May**, *Columbia, MS Cum Laude*  
B.A., William Carey University, Hattiesburg, MS  
M.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

~ **Joel Robert Meek**, *Columbus, MS Cum Laude*  
B.S.B.A., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Brenna Amani Michael**, *Lafayette, LA*  
B.A., Millsaps College, Jackson, MS

**John Scott Milam**, *Jackson, MS*  
B.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**William Westmoreland Mitchell**, *Jackson, MS Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Marilyn Mshai Mwasi**, *Little Rock, AR*  
B.A., University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, AR

~ **Patrick Shannon Nieves**, *Yorktown, VA Magna Cum Laude*  
B.A., George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

**Sydney Ann Osborne**, *Lancaster, CA*  
B.A., M.S., Salem University, Salem, WV

**Richard Andrew Palmer IV**, *Macon, GA*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Jenna Rose Patano**, *Palatine, IL Cum Laude*  
B.S., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Ted Anthony Paulmeno**, *Allen, TX*  
B.S., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Tami Prescott Peets**, *Hays, KS*  
B.A., Belhaven University, Jackson, MS

**Taylor Brooke Porche**, *Houma, LA*  
B.S.B.A., University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA

**Nicholas Parker Douglas Raad**, *Grand Rapids, MI Cum Laude*  
B.A., Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI

**Peyton Nye Ratcliff**, *Brandon, MS*  
B.S., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Kristen Ward Ray**, *Northport, AL*  
B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Michael D. Reichard III**, *Elm Grove, LA Summa Cum Laude*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

~ **Enoch Josiah Rhodes**, *Parker, Colorado Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Denver, Denver, CO

**Samuel Maxwell Rhodes**, *Collierville, TN*  
B.S.B.A., Mississippi College, Clinton, MS

**Steven Curtis Richard**, *Sulphur, LA*  
B.S., McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA

**Anna Claire Ryan**, *Woodville, MS*  
B.S., University of the Ozarks, Clarksville, AR

**Emily Virginia Sanchez**, *Starkville, MS Summa Cum Laude*  
B.S., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Eva Victoria Schmitt**, *Geneseo, IL Cum Laude*  
B.A., Augustana College, Rock Island, IL

**Caitlyn Charlise Scott**, *Valdosta, GA*  
B.S., University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**Jonah M. Sharbono**, *Rayville, LA*  
B.A., University of Louisiana at Monroe, Monroe, LA

**Emily Hurst Smith**, *Shreveport, LA Summa Cum Laude*  
B.A., B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**John W. Spence III**, *Monroe, LA*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Joseph Marx Spires**, *Mer Rouge, LA*  
B.A., Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

**Lauren Grace Steiger**, *Huntsville, AL*  
B.S.B.A., University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL

**Cameron Trenese Bené Stringer**, *Jackson, MS*  
B.A., Jackson State University, Jackson, MS

**Leslye Blake Sullivan**, *Tallulah, LA*  
B.A., Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

**Meagan McKenzie Sullivan**, *Brandon, MS*  
B.S.N., Delta State University, Cleveland, MS

**Madison T. Thornton**, *Puckett, MS*  
B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

~ **Amelia Trevizo**, *Dallas, TX* *Magna Cum Laude*  
B.A., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

**JeCinda S. Turner**, *Shreveport, LA*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Stephen Alexander Vasquez**, *Brooklyn, NY*  
B.A., University of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY  
M.B.A., Canisius University, Buffalo, NY

**Chynna Louise Wall**, *Rochester, IL*  
B.S., Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL

**Benjamin Patrick Watts III**, *Rochester, IL*  
B.S.B.A., Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

**Emily Ann Webb**, *Alexandria, LA* *Magna Cum Laude*  
B.S., Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

**Britain Allison Weeks**, *Gilbertown, AL*  
B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Brice Lindun Wilkinson**, *Brandon, MS* *Cum Laude*  
B.S.B.A., M.B.A., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

**Jameese Sheire Williams**, *Greenville, MS*  
B.A., University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS

**Kayla Renee Williams**, *Atlanta, GA* *Cum Laude*  
B.I.S., Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

**Ethan Garrett Zadrozny**, *Laurel, MS* *Cum Laude*  
B.A., M.P.H., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

~ December, 2024 graduate

^ August, 2025 graduate

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS RECEIVED  
CERTIFICATES OF ADVANCED STUDY  
IN THE DESIGNATED AREAS OF LAW:

CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL LAW

Hannah Kathleen Hutchins

Juarez McLeod Johnson III

CERTIFICATE IN CIVIL LAW STUDIES

Alex James Alexander

Brittany Elizabeth Gates Breard

Rachel Erin Britt

Alexandra Mae Daigle

Tatum Elayne Morton DuBos

Emily Hope Foster

Mary Kifer Glass

Cassandra Gabrielle Harmon

Jonathan Mical Hill II

Jillian Elizabeth Hilt

Maggie Lynn Maddox

Matthew Dean Matherne

Michael D. Reichard III

Steven Curtis Richard

Jonah M. Sharbono

John W. Spence III

Joseph Marx Spires

Leslye Blake Sullivan

JeCinda S. Turner

Emily Ann Webb

CERTIFICATE IN FAMILY & JUVENILE LAW

Cassandra Gabrielle Harmon



THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS RECEIVED  
CERTIFICATES OF ADVANCED STUDY  
IN THE DESIGNATED AREAS OF LAW:

CERTIFICATE IN HEALTH LAW

Meagan McKenzie Sullivan

CERTIFICATE IN INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE LAW

Eva Victoria Schmitt

CERTIFICATE IN PRO BONO SERVICE

Lauren McKenzie Allen

Cassandra Gabrielle Harmon

Sean Brian Kelley

Steven Curtis Richard

CERTIFICATE IN SOLO AND SMALL LAW PRACTICE

Joshua Quinté Carter

## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

PRESIDENT  
DR. BLAKE THOMPSON

Dr. Blake Thompson has brought a new sense of excitement to historic Mississippi College with his limitless energy and deep commitment to putting students first. It is common to find him engaging with students across the institution's two campuses or recruiting prospective students in their schools.

Thompson just completed his sixth year as president of Mississippi College during which time the private institution has experienced renewed enrollment growth, announced an academic scholarship program unmatched in the state, introduced innovative programs of study and enhanced the historic campus.

Mississippi College, in early 2024, unveiled a partnership with city and business leaders for a new, mixed-use development adjoining the main campus in Clinton that will serve as an economic driver for the entire region and transform the physical and economic landscape near the campus. In May of this year, the institution initiated a comprehensive renovation plan for the Mississippi College School of Law in downtown Jackson – the first major renovation to the facility in more than 20 years.

Thompson and Mississippi College started the Speed Scholarship in 2022 to honor longtime benefactor Leland Speed – which provides full tuition for admitted high school or transfer students who are residents of Mississippi. That led to a record class of over 1,000 new students in fall 2023. Applications are up 60 percent from two years ago, which goes against the national trend of decreasing enrollment.

Under Thompson's leadership, the Gore Arts Complex was opened in 2023, supporting one of the only arts education programs in Mississippi and housing the newly created Institute for Southern Storytelling. Renovations to the historic Alumni Hall - including adding a visitor's center, Chick-fil-A, and Einstein Bros. Bagels restaurants - were completed in 2020. In 2019, he established the University's Honors College and expanded international programs by launching the Edward McMillan Center for Education Abroad.

Planning is now underway for the University's 2026 Bicentennial Celebration, which will be the first 200th anniversary of an institution of higher learning in Mississippi.

On August 24, 2024, Gov. Tate Reeves appointed Dr. Thompson to the Board of the Mississippi Humanities Council, an organization that creates opportunities for Mississippians to learn about themselves and the larger world and enriches communities through civil conversations about the state's history and culture.

Nationally, Thompson was appointed to serve a seven-year term on the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II Presidents Council, the division's highest governing body. He has also served as President of the Mississippi Association of Independent Colleges and Universities for the past four years and is beginning a one-year term as President of the Mississippi Association of Colleges (MAC) - the annual meeting of all of the state's two- and four-year higher education institutions, which he convenes in July of 2024.

Thompson recently served as a member of the President's Advisory Council for the University of Health Sciences & Pharmacy in St. Louis. He has played a significant role in the American Heart Association's Metro Jackson chapter, serving on its Heart Ball Executive Leadership Team at the 43rd annual event to promote healthier lives. The Mississippi Business Journal recognized him as one of Mississippi's Top CEOs, and he is a member of the Mississippi chapter of YPO.

Before joining MC, Thompson served as vice president and secretary to The Ohio State University (OSU) Board of Trustees. He held several leadership positions encompassing government affairs, economic and workforce development, and university governance at the 66,000-student OSU, one of the largest universities in the country. During that time, he was instrumental in supporting the creation of The Ohio State University Medical Center Board, for which Ohio State was recognized by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). In addition, Thompson held a joint vice presidential appointment with Battelle, the world's leading nonprofit research and development organization, where he led the creation of the Battelle Center for Science and Technology Policy in partnership with the John Glenn School of Public Affairs. He has also served as a senior staffer to the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee and the late Sen. Thad Cochran in Washington, D.C.

Blake and his wife, Jana, were raised in the small community of Rienzi, Mississippi. Both are graduates of the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy, where he was recognized as 2021 Alumnus of the Year and serves on the Dean's Advisory Council. Thompson is a three-time graduate of Ole Miss, where he earned his doctorate in pharmaceutical sciences. He also holds an executive master's degree from the Georgetown University School of Business. The Thompsons have three children: Grey, Sarah Blake, and Cate.

## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

DEAN  
JOHN ANDERSON

John P. Anderson began serving as Dean and Henry Vaughan Watkins and Selby Watkins McRae Professor of Law in 2023 after a year as Interim Dean. He has been awarded numerous recognitions while teaching, and was most recently voted Law School Professor of the Year for 2021-2022, and Mississippi College Distinguished Professor of the Year for 2018-2019.

A native of Lompoc, California, he received his undergraduate degree in philosophy from the University of California at Berkeley, an M.A. and Ph.D. of philosophy from the University of Virginia, as well as a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. After several years practicing law in Washington, D.C., and teaching as an adjunct professor at the American University School of Law, he decided to shift to full time teaching. He and his family relocated to Mississippi in 2010 where he began his time as an MC Law Professor.

Dean Anderson's scholarship focuses on securities enforcement, white-collar crime, and intersections of law and philosophy (e.g., business ethics, constitutionalism, problems of pluralism, and human rights). He has been published in leading peer-reviewed journals and in top law reviews. Professor Anderson recently published a book with Cambridge University Press, *Insider Trading: Law Ethics and Reform*. He is a frequent contributor to the Columbia Law School Blue Sky Blog, and an editor of the Business Law Professor Blog. Along with his role as dean, he currently teaches Contracts I and II.

In his short time in the role, Dean Anderson has set a goal of building on the unique attributes of MC Law (its location in the state's capital, its Christian mission, and its student-first culture). He has put many new ideas into motion that will allow for growth and opportunity while enriching the community in which MC Law is situated. In addition to a multi-million-dollar renovation that began in the summer of 2024, under Dean Anderson's leadership the law school continues to innovate with new programs like the "Fast Track to Mississippi Practice." His vision for the law school is that it should offer a superior legal education "one relationship at a time."

Dean Anderson currently resides in Madison, Mississippi with his wife, Jaime, and their three children: Peyton, Brendan, and Cosette.

## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER  
JUSTICE JENIFER B. BRANNING

Justice Jenifer B. Branning of Philadelphia was elected to the Mississippi Supreme Court on November 26, 2024, and took the oath of office on January 6, 2025.

Justice Branning previously served for nine years as a Mississippi State Senator, representing Senate District 18 of Neshoba and parts of Leake and Winston counties. She was Chair of the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee and Vice-Chair of the Government Structure Committee. She also served on the following committees: Accountability, Efficiency and Transparency; Appropriations; Business and Financial Institutions; Economic and Workforce Development; Forestry; and Judiciary A. In previous years, she served as Chair of the Elections committee, Vice-Chair of the Forestry Committee, and as Chair of various Appropriations sub-committees. She also served on the Mississippi Prepaid College Tuition Board, the Mississippi Women's Task Force and the Southern Legislative Conference Committee on Economic Development, Transportation and Cultural Affairs.

She received the Friend of Transportation Award from the Mississippi Department of Transportation in 2024 and the Friend of Agriculture Award from Farm Bureau in 2021. She was named the 2019 Legislator of the Year by the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and named the 2018 Legislator of the Year by the Mississippi Forestry Association.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration from Mississippi State University and attended the MSU Master of Business Administration program before earning a law degree from Mississippi College School of Law. During law school, she served as a clerk for the Mississippi Secretary of State Division of Business Regulation and Enforcement in 2003-2004. She was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 2004. She had a private law practice in Philadelphia for 20 years, dealing with real estate transactions, business transactional work and estate planning.

She and her husband, Chancy Branning, have three sons.



## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Ronnie Falvey

Chairman

Mr. Bill Sones

Vice Chairman

Ms. Amanda Alexander-Taylor

Secretary

### TERMS THROUGH 2025

Mr. Ralph Barnes

Dr. Ronnie Falvey

Mr. Roy Fountain

Mr. Oscar Miskelly

Rev. Hugh Plunkett

Mr. Bill Sones

Mr. Art Stevens

Mr. Tony Stringer

Mr. Bob Waller

### TERMS THROUGH 2026

Ms. Amanda Alexander-Taylor

Mr. Brian Crawford

Dr. Eddie Donahoe

Ms. La'Verne Edney

Dr. David Eldridge

Dr. Susan Fortenberry

Mr. Wally Henry

Mr. Tony Huffman

Dr. Marjorie Lenoir

Dr. Dwayne Pickett

Dr. Chip Stevens

Mr. Gary Watts

### TERMS THROUGH 2027

Dr. Chad Altmeyer

Rev. Barry Corbett

Ms. Tina Fulcher

Rep. Gregg Harper

Dr. Jeff Holland

Ms. Debbie Rice

Mr. Percy Thornton

Dr. Robert Watson

Dr. Ken Weathersby

## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

## FULL TIME FACULTY

**ANDERSON, JOHN** (2010), Dean and Henry Vaughan Watkins & Selby Watkins McRae Professor of Law. B.A., University of California at Berkeley; M.A., J.D., Ph.D., University of Virginia

**CAMPBELL, DONALD** (2005), Owen Cooper Professor of Law. B.A., University of Southern Mississippi; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law; M.A., Ph.D., University of Florida

**CORMIER, ZACHARY** (2024), Assistant Professor of Law and Director of the Litigation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Center. B.B.A., University of New Mexico; J.D., Pepperdine University School of Law

**DEAN, BRITTANY** (2023), Assistant Professor of Legal Analysis and Communication. B.A., University of Mississippi; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law

**DIXON, ANGELA** (2021), Associate Professor of Law. B.A., Vanderbilt University; M.Div., Candler School of Theology; M.P.H., Rollins School of Public Health; J.D., Vanderbilt University School of Law

**ESCAJEDA, HILARY** (2021), Associate Professor of Law and Director, Business and Tax Law Center. B.S.S., Cornell College; J.D., LL.M., University of Denver, Sturm College of Law

**HALL, HEATHER** (2021), Associate Professor of Legal Analysis and Communication. B.S.B.A, Western Governors University; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law

**HERNANDEZ IV, MILTON J.** (2023), Assistant Professor of Law and Co-Director, Civil Law Center. B.A., Louisiana State University; J.D., D.C.L., Louisiana State University Law Center

**JOHNSON, JUDITH J.** (1984), Professor of Law. B.A., University of Texas; J.D., University of Mississippi

**KENNEDY, SHIRLEY T.** (1999), Clinical Professor of Law. Director, Child Advocacy Program; Director, Family Law Center. B.F.A., University of Texas; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law

**LEE, CHANDRA** (2004), Professor of Legal Analysis and Communication. B.A., University of Mississippi; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law.

**LINDSAY, EMILY** (2021), Research, Instructional Services & Circulation Librarian. B.A., Millsaps College; J.D., Mississippi College School of Law

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## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE PRESIDENT

**THOMPSON, BLAKE** (2018), President, Mississippi College. B.S., M.S., Ph.D., University of Mississippi; M.B.A., Georgetown University

## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE PROVOST, EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT, AND GRADUATE DEAN

**HIGHFIELD, MICHAEL J.** (2023), Provost and Executive President, Mississippi College. B.B.A., M.B.A., Mississippi State University; M.S., Ph.D., University of Kentucky

## ABOUT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

### PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The medallion concept originated in Biblical days as a symbol for authority. The medallion was worn for adornment, and its likeness served as the official seal. The Presidential Medallion, crafted for Dr. Blake Thompson, symbolizes the authority of the president's office as well as the president's responsibility to the Mississippi

College academic community. Fashioned in bronze and electroplated with gold, the Presidential Medallion depicts the Nelson Hall clock tower and is inscribed with the name and founding date of the university. The university's motto *Veritas et Virtus* (truth and virtue) and the title "president" are included in the inscriptions.



### MACE AND SEAL

The Mississippi College Mace, carried by the faculty council president who serves as grand marshal, is a symbol of the authority of the president of Mississippi College. Originating in the Middle Ages as a hand weapon used by the guards of kings, the mace has evolved into a ceremonial symbol in academic processions. The Mississippi College Mace is an original design by Dr. Ruth Glaze, former professor of art, and the late art instructor Dr. Kenneth Quinn, and was crafted by the late Dr. Archie Germany, professor emeritus of chemistry. Dr. Cliff Fortenberry, professor of communication and former department head,

suggested the creation and use of the mace, which was first used during the inaugural ceremony of Dr. Howell Todd on April 28, 1995. The mounts were designed and cast by the late Dr. Sam Gore, professor of art and former department head, and former professor of art Steve Cook. The four bronze Ormolu mounts represent Provine Chapel, Nelson Hall, a Choctaw Indian, and the Mississippi College motto within a circle placed over an open Bible and under the torch of truth. The mounts are attached to the four quadrants of the mace, and the Mississippi College Presidential Seal is located in the crest of the mace.

### THE PRESIDENTIAL SEAL

The seal, which originated in prehistoric periods, came to represent the authority of the king. When used with wax and attached to a document, the impression of the seal carried with it the full weight of the king's authority. The university seal symbolizes the academic

authority controlled by the university. Any document which bears the seal is vested with the full authority of the university and its president. The Mississippi College Presidential Seal mirrors the design of the Presidential Medallion.

## ACADEMIC REGALIA

A time-honored tradition of great dignity, the wearing of academic apparel dates to the ecclesiastical garb of the late Middle Ages. The academic gown and hood were apparently first adopted in the 13th century at the University of Cambridge (1284). The University of Oxford was soon to follow. The custom was transplanted to this country in colonial times by Kings College in New York, now Columbia University.

In 1885, American universities and colleges standardized their academic styles and developed the intercollegiate code of academic costume. The characteristic elements of academic regalia are the

gown, hood, and cap. The gown is usually of black material (serge or worsted for bachelors, the same or silk for masters, and silk for doctors). The hood, worn around the neck to hang down the back, is the principal emblem of the nature and source of the degree held. It is edged with velvet of the color of the degree; its silk lining bears the colors of the institution which granted the degree. Hoods may be worn only after the degree has been granted.

The cap bears a tassel which may be black for all ranks of degrees, or may be of gold thread for doctors and the color representing the degree for bachelors and masters.



## HISTORY OF MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

When Mississippi College opened its doors in 1826 as Hampstead Academy, much of the United States was still wilderness. A mere nine years earlier, Mississippi had been admitted into the Union as the twentieth state. Mississippi itself was still an untamed frontier – a challenge to be met by hard work, diligence, and faith. Applying these ideals to the academic setting, Mississippi College began educating men and women to become leaders in both professional and spiritual arenas.

Mississippi College is the oldest institution of higher learning in Mississippi and was the first co-educational

institution in the United States to grant a degree to a woman. In 1850, the Mississippi Baptist Convention obtained the university by lease and began operation through a board of trustees.

Now in its 199th year, Mississippi College is the oldest private university in the state. The university is governed by a board of trustees elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Support comes through tuition, private donations from alumni and friends, foundation and corporate support, and the Mississippi Baptist Convention.



## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE VISION STATEMENT

Mississippi College seeks to be known as a university  
recognized for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ.



## MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Mississippi College, governed by a board of trustees elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is a private, co-educational, comprehensive university of liberal arts and sciences and professional studies dedicated to the pursuit of academic excellence. Founded in 1826, Mississippi College is the oldest institution of higher learning and the largest private university in the state of Mississippi. As a Christian institution, Mississippi College values the integration of faith and learning throughout the educational process.

Consistent with its Baptist heritage and relationship to the Convention, Mississippi College provides a Christian education for its student population. Students select the university because of the quality of its academic programs, Christian environment, and location. The university recruits students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship, leadership, and church and community involvement. The majority of students come from Mississippi and other southern states.

Mississippi College stimulates the intellectual development of its students through the liberal arts and sciences and concentrated study in specialized fields, including preprofessional and professional programs.

The university environment promotes the spiritual, social, emotional, and physical development of its students and encourages them to utilize their skills, talents, and abilities as they pursue meaningful careers, lifelong learning, and service to God and others. The university emphasizes those undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that offer opportunities for service. The university reflects its responsibility of service to the community through a variety of learning opportunities and numerous cultural enrichment experiences.

Mississippi College is committed to excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. The university seeks to employ and retain faculty who are dedicated to teaching, learning, and advising students; who support and engage in scholarship and creative activities that advance knowledge; and who seek to continue their own professional development. The university also seeks to employ and retain staff and administrators who are equally dedicated to supporting these efforts. Furthermore, the university selects employees who reflect Christian values and a commitment to service. Mississippi College is an equal opportunity employer in accordance with Title VII and applicable exemptions.



# ABOUT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE SCHOOL OF LAW

## OUR HISTORY

MC Law began educating future attorneys in 1930 as the Jackson School of Law, a night school for working professionals who wished to become attorneys.

Our location in Jackson, Mississippi's legal and governmental center has been an advantage ever since the law school's earliest days; the original faculty members were practicing attorneys who pursued justice in the courtrooms of the capital city by day and encouraged the next generation of legal leaders in the evenings. Over the years, the law school grew from a night school into a full-time institution, earning a reputation for outstanding instruction and the professional success of its graduates.

In 1975, the law school became a part of Mississippi College, the oldest university in the state. In the late 1970s, plans were underway to construct a new law school

building on the main campus of Mississippi College in Clinton. Those plans changed when United Gas Pipeline generously donated a five-story building in downtown Jackson to the law school; the first classes were held on the new MC Law campus in 1980. At that time, the gift was the largest in Mississippi College history, but its true worth was not in the monetary value of the bricks and mortar, but in the building's location.

For more than three decades, MC Law's position in the heart of Mississippi's legal, judicial, and business center has offered students unlimited opportunities for work, clerkships, and externships. Combining a practical legal education with Christian principles, the law school has since become a premier legal center for the South.

## OUR MISSION AND VISION

Our aim is to create an institutional environment that promotes intellectual and practical learning. Our student body and faculty reflect a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. Out of this diversity, we seek to create a scholarly community in which students and faculty discuss issues freely in a variety of settings, both formal and informal.

Our curriculum is designed to train students to become skilled and ethical lawyers capable of adapting

their practice to a changing legal world. To accomplish this goal, we have looked to a liberal arts model in shaping the law school's curriculum. Our courses emphasize individual responsibility for learning, while providing every student instruction in the substantive and analytical skills necessary for successful practice.





SCHOOL  
OF LAW