

amicus

MC SCHOOL OF LAW
SUMMER 2025

*RISING
HIGH,
LIFTING
OTHERS*

UP LA'VERNE
EDNEY '96
ABOTA Past President



amicus

Amicus
Summer 2025

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On the cover: La'Verne Edney is a formidable attorney, a respected leader, and a mentor to those following in her footsteps. Learn more on page 26.

OPENING STATEMENT

Each Monday morning, I lead a book club at the law school for staff and faculty. The goal is to build momentum, inspiration, and energy for the week to come. Recently we've been reading *Love Does* by Bob Goff. The author is a fun-loving lawyer who will tell you that his law office is on Tom Sawyer's Island in Disneyland! The main theme of the book is that the best way to love and lead people is to get to know them, get off the beaten path, and then **DO** things with and for them.

I chose this book because I think it perfectly encapsulates what we are trying to do at MC Law.

“OUR MOTTO IS THAT WE OFFER A LEGAL EDUCATION ONE RELATIONSHIP AT A TIME.”

1 Peter 4:10 says, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” We know the road to leadership, success, and service is different for every MC Law student. We therefore take the time to get to know each of our students – find out what makes them tick, where their passions and special gifts intersect – and then we help to set them on the unique path to leadership and service that will satisfy their calling.

In this issue of *Amicus*, you will read about how a number of our students, alums, and faculty are rising to serve our state and nation in their diverse leadership roles. After reading these remarkable stories, I think you will agree with me that love truly **DOES** at MC Law – and after 50 years of service, we are just getting started.

Dean John P. Anderson

COMMENCEMENT

2025

MAY 16, 2025, WAS A DAY OF CELEBRATION AS 98
LAW SCHOOL STUDENTS BECAME MC LAW ALUMNI.



“I’M ALWAYS READING SELF-IMPROVEMENT BOOKS. WITH EACH STEP IN MY CAREER, I’VE LOOKED FOR THE ‘BOOK FOR DUMMIES’ ON THE SUBJECT.”

“I have not found the book for dummies on the subject of beginning in private law practice, politics, or my current position on the Mississippi Supreme Court.... So how does one step into [a new role] without prior experience? What are the steps? Words of advice? Where do I start?”

“Maybe [we’re] looking for a complex answer, but the solution is very simple. That book I mentioned looking for is at our fingertips – the holy Bible. In that book, you will find all the guidance you need to carry out this very important calling.”

EXCERPTED FROM REMARKS BY JUSTICE JENIFER B. BRANNING '04, MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT



Commencement services were held at First Baptist Church of Jackson.



MC Law presented a posthumous degree to Patrick Hurtado, an MC Law student who passed away unexpectedly in 2024. Patrick’s widow, Hannah Hurtado, and their daughter, Lilly, accepted the degree in his memory.

LIFE LESSONS FROM MC LAW

The keynote speaker at MC Law’s 2025 commencement ceremony was Justice Jenifer B. Branning '04 of the Mississippi Supreme Court. Prior to taking the Supreme Court oath of office on January 6, 2025, Justice Branning served for nine years as a Mississippi state senator. She had a private law practice in her hometown of Philadelphia, Mississippi, for 20 years.

“Lessons learned at MC Law have served me well, not only in the practice of law and in public service to Mississippians, but in living this life with which God has blessed me.”

THE VERDICT IS IN

MC LAW IS RANKED AMONG THE
NATION'S TOP LAW SCHOOLS
in multiple categories, from federal
clerkships to programming to
its Christian mission.



#26 FOR FEDERAL CLERKSHIPS

U.S. News & World Report ranks MC Law #26 nationwide in its placement of graduates in federal clerkships.



Of the 195 ABA-accredited law schools in the country, the publication ranks only the top 40. Other respected law schools on the list include the University of Chicago, Yale, Stanford, and Harvard.

MC Law tied at #26 with noted law schools at Baylor, Emory, Vanderbilt, Tulane, UCLA, and NYU.

Federal clerkships are prestigious positions viewed as key credentials for other highly sought jobs, including large-firm associate positions and law professorships. Law clerks typically research legal issues, attend arguments, and draft legal opinions, gaining valuable legal experience from the court's perspective.

Relatively few law school graduates land these coveted positions. According to the American Bar Association, just 3% of the 35,215 law school graduates in 2023 secured federal judicial clerkships.

MC Law's location in the heart of the Mississippi legal community gives students an advantage when it comes to clerkship opportunities. With several courts within walking distance of the school, students have numerous opportunities to network with sitting judges at professional events and through externships.



“OFTEN, ONLY THE TOP STUDENTS, ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING, ARE CONSIDERED FOR FEDERAL CLERKSHIPS.

“Students from Harvard, Yale, and other prestigious law schools are applying for these same clerkships right here in Mississippi because they are so few and they are so coveted. When there are hundreds of the best students applying, the fact that we’ve had so many placements shows how qualified and well-prepared our MC Law students truly are.”

Ellen Robb, MC Law Dean of Career Services, Former Clerk at the Mississippi Court of Appeals (2003-2004)



A TOP SCHOOL FOR FAMILY LAW AND HEALTH LAW

PreLaw magazine's Back to School 2024 issue recognized MC Law as a top school for family law and health law. The magazine graded law schools on the breadth of their curricular offerings, including clinics, centers, externships, journals, student groups, and certifications.

FAMILY LAW

“PreLaw looks not only for substantive classes, but for the experiential courses, the clinics, the CLE programs, and our outreach in the community,” says Shirley Kennedy, clinical professor and director of the MC Law Family and Children's Law Center. “That recognition is wonderful, but what we're most proud of is the difference our Family Law Center has made in the lives of families and children statewide.”

For more on the difference the MC Law Family Law Center is making for families and children in Mississippi, see page 10.

HEALTH LAW

The MC Law health law program includes a certificate in health law, numerous experiential placements, a thriving student organization, and a vibrant speaker series.

“In addition to our well-rounded programming, MC Law has a successful alumni base of health law practitioners that offers our students remarkable opportunities to explore their interests regionally and nationally. It's amazing to see graduates of the program now returning to support the next generation,” says Professor Jonathan Will, founding director of the MC Law Bioethics and Health Law Center. “We look forward to continued development and growth in our health law program in the years to come. This is just the beginning.”

#8 MOST DEVOUT LAW SCHOOL IN AMERICA

The winter 2025 issue of preLaw named MC Law the #8 Most Devout Law School in America.



PreLaw ranked the top 20 Most Devout Law Schools based on the emphasis they place on religion and faith in their curriculums, faculty, and daily campus life.

“Our goal is to make MC Law a place where students can practice their Christian faith freely and openly,” says Kristian Gautier, director of Christian ministries and assistant director of admissions. “Our Christian mission enhances our students' experience. Not only will their education be a big priority here, but their spiritual life and Christian foundation will be strengthened as well.”

MC Law helps students connect to local churches and pastors, participate in on-campus Bible studies, and network with local judges and attorneys through the Christian Legal Society. The law school's Christian mission is embodied on campus; in April, MC Law dedicated a new prayer room where students can find inspiration, solace, and a respite from the rigors of law school.

“Our hope is that the Lord will make this place a beacon of light within the MC community and within the Jackson community,” Gautier says. “Our students are the future lawyers, judges, and attorneys in our state and nation. We want to produce spiritually strong lawyers committed to the cause of Christ. Investing in them in this way has an eternal pay off.”

46
of the nation's
197
law schools
have ties to religious
organizations.
MC Law is affiliated
with the Mississippi
Baptist Convention.



“A DEVOUT LAW SCHOOL INTEGRATES RELIGIOUS BELIEFS INTO ITS LEGAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVELY SUPPORTS ITS STUDENTS' FAITH. STUDENTS OFTEN CHOOSE SUCH INSTITUTIONS TO HELP ENSURE THEIR WORK ALIGNS WITH THEIR RELIGIOUS VALUES.”

preLaw Magazine, Winter 2025 Issue

A STRONG CASE FOR CAREER PLACEMENT

The preLaw Back to School issue also recognized MC Law as a top law school for career placement. PreLaw looked at law schools' employment numbers from the Class of 2017 through the Class of 2023 and ranked law schools with the greatest improvement in their graduates' employment rates.*

MC Law topped the list. The school's employment rate for graduates jumped from 59.4% to 81%.

Ellen Robb cites several reasons for MC Law's career placement success, including legal clinics that offer students hands-on experience and the law school's location in downtown Jackson.

“Our ideal location in the state capital sets MC Law apart from other law schools,” says Robb. “Students have frequent opportunities to interact with well-known attorneys and judges. In a week's time, students may have a supreme court justice, a state agency director, and a partner from a top law firm on campus. That's the norm here.

“That exposure gives students a broad range of knowledge as to what types of career opportunities are out there,” Robb continues. “This often leads our students to apply for positions they may not have otherwise considered.”

SPOTLIGHT ON THE MC LAW CAMPUS
PreLaw's Back to School issue also featured an article on the \$7.5 million renovation underway at the law school's downtown campus.

*PreLaw career placement rankings weighted employment from full-time, bar passage-required employment to full-time nonprofessional employment, with full-time, long-term, bar passage-required employment weighted highest.



A *VOICE* *for the* CHILDREN

MC LAW'S CHILD ADVOCACY CLINIC

IT'S A BUSY MORNING IN THE COURTROOM OF CHANCERY COURT JUDGE JOSEPH DURR IN COPIAH COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

"Many people leave this courtroom unhappy or disappointed, but this morning, everyone will leave happy," Judge Durr says. "There will be tears, but today, they'll all be happy tears."

Those happy tears will come from the parents, children, and extended families involved in four adoption cases on Judge Durr's morning docket. The cases include the adoption of a three-year-old girl by her great-grandmother, two biological siblings being adopted by their foster families, and a 15-month-old boy who will officially become the youngest child in a loving family of nine.

The children and their adoptive parents have different backgrounds and life stories, but all have one thing in common. Today, they will become families with the help of the MC Law Family and Children's Law Center.

CHILDREN TOUCHED BY THE CHILD ADVOCACY CLINICS

540

Guardian ad Litem Cases*

789

Adoptions*

250-300

Youth Court Cases per Year

**Since 2014, when the clinic began using tracking software*

Maddox Bynum



“Law students in the clinic see litigation, learn to interview clients, and get practical, hands-on courtroom experience. It’s a fantastic vehicle for the students not only to learn, but also to give back by serving families and children in Mississippi.”

Shirley Kennedy '91

THE CHILD ADVOCACY CLINIC

THE MC LAW FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S LAW CENTER INCLUDES A CHILD ADVOCACY CLINIC THAT ALLOWS STUDENTS TO GAIN PRACTICAL, HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE WHILE MAKING DRAMATIC DIFFERENCES IN THE LIVES OF MISSISSIPPI’S CHILDREN.

Shirley Kennedy '91, director of the Family and Children’s Law Center, joined MC Law in 2000 to develop the school’s child advocacy program. Kennedy, who had previously practiced with Brunini and taught at MC Law as an adjunct professor, made developing a robust clinical program a top priority. Under her direction, MC Law established a youth court clinic, a guardian ad litem clinic, and an adoption clinic. In 2025, the three were combined into the comprehensive MC Law Child Advocacy Clinic.

Admitted to the limited practice of law under the close supervision of faculty members, second- and third-year law students enrolled in the clinic work directly on cases affecting children.

The Child Advocacy Clinic allows MC Law students to:

- Serve as the guardian ad litem for children in chancery court cases involving adoptions, terminations of parental rights, guardianships, custody and child support, and related matters
- Represent adoptive parents in proceedings involving children in the custody of Child Protective Services
- Counsel juveniles involved in youth court proceedings, including children accused of committing offenses
- Work on child abuse and neglect cases

“Law students in the clinic see litigation, learn to interview clients, and get practical, hands-on courtroom experience,” Kennedy says. “It’s a fantastic vehicle for the students not only to learn, but also to give back by serving families and children in Mississippi.”

THE MC LAW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION recognized Shirley Kennedy, director of the Family and Children’s Law Center, with the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award.

MC LAW LED THE WAY in developing uniform, comprehensive guardian ad litem training for attorneys throughout Mississippi. Guardian ad litem training for Mississippi attorneys is still an integral part of the Family and Children’s Law Center today.

THE LAW AND REAL LIFE

The clinical work can be emotionally draining, with students handling everything from bitter custody disputes to joyous adoptions. Youth court can be particularly challenging, but as youth court proceedings are sealed, the clinic offers students the unique opportunity to participate in cases they would not normally be allowed to observe.

“I had the opportunity to basically serve as a public defender for children in youth court,” says MC Law student Emily Sanchez. “The privilege of interviewing the children, encouraging them to make better choices, and representing them in a scary moment in their lives was so rewarding. Having the chance to impact someone’s life at their darkest moment, to be the person they look to for answers and guidance, has been invaluable.”

“At the end of every semester, I have students tell me one of two things,” Kennedy says. “It’s either, ‘Professor Kennedy, I’m so glad I did your clinic because I’ve been so touched by it, and I know now that family law is what I was meant to do,’ or ‘Professor Kennedy, I’m so glad I took your clinic. I thought I wanted to practice family law, but I can’t handle hearing so many people’s personal stories and dealing with their pain.’ The clinic really demonstrates that family and children’s law has to be a *calling*.”

Ava Burton Waller ’20, ’23, an attorney with Waller & Waller and a public defender with Rankin County Youth Court, heard the calling to family and child advocacy law when she participated in the clinic as an MC Law student.

“Advocating for children and families made the law feel real and meaningful to me,” Burton says. “Seeing them thrive when given the right support made it clear this was the kind of work I wanted to dedicate my career to. The clinic showed me that the law isn’t just about rules. It’s about advocacy that creates real, lasting change in real people’s lives. My clinical experience gave me practical legal skills, but it also taught me how to lead with heart, persistence, and empathy.”

WHEN THE HAPPY TEARS FLOW

The impact of the Child Advocacy Clinic was on display in Judge Durr’s courtroom on April 16, 2025, when four new families were formed.

Recognizing the important role the MC Law students played in the cases before him, Judge Durr invited the students involved to stand. Students in court that day were natives of Mississippi, Arizona, Georgia, Montana, and Indiana; many were drawn to MC Law by the opportunity to participate in the school’s outstanding family law program.



Judge Joseph Durr ends each adoption ceremony by presenting each family with a pen, explaining, “It’s a special pen because it has never been used to sign anything except to make you the parent of this child.” Above: Z’Riah receives her pen from Judge Durr.

Students Victoria Griffin and Pamela Orr served as guardian ad litem for three-year-old Z’Riah, whose great-grandmother, Vickie Jones, had raised her since birth and longed to formally adopt her.

Guardian ad litem spend a good deal of time with the families they serve, often navigating complex family dynamics. The level of responsibility is high; learning to be objective and not let their emotions cloud their judgment is an important part of the clinical experience.

“It’s hard at times,” Griffin says. “I focus on the fact that my part in the process is to investigate, and I pray that the Lord reveals to me what I need to know to determine what’s best for the child.”

Griffin presented a detailed report before Judge Durr, including the students’ observations from interviews and home visits with Jones and Z’Riah and a frank description of the obstacles Jones might face as an adoptive mother. The report concluded with Griffin and Orr’s recommendation of Jones as the best possible parent for Z’Riah. An elated Jones left court with a new daughter, and Z’Riah left hugging a new teddy bear, an adoption day gift from her guardian ad litem.

“The most joyous moment for me was seeing Z’Riah snuggling that teddy bear and resting in Vickie’s arms,” Griffin says.



Fifteen-month-old Maddox was adopted by “Little Joe” and Mandy Bynum, who had served as Maddox’s foster parents since he was 13 days old. Maddox arrived in court wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with the message, “Officially a Bynum.”

MC Law students also assisted Shenesea Jones in adopting Landin, a 12-year-old boy who had come to her as a foster child seven years earlier. Landin’s 10-year-old biological sister, Lexie, was adopted by her own foster family; the families planned to help the siblings stay in close contact.

“The adoption process took some time, but I told Landin to trust God and [that] in the right time, we would be a family,” Jones said. “We’re so excited this day has finally come, and we’re so grateful to MC Law for helping us get there.”

Like all adopted children, Jones’ adopted son was issued a new birth certificate with his new name. In a touching decision, Landin opted to change his first name as well as his last. The 12-year-old left the courtroom as Keonte Walker. “Keonte” was in honor of his adoptive mother’s beloved late nephew. “Walker” was Shenesea Jones’ maiden name, a family name Keonte wants to carry forward as a tribute to the woman who chose him to be her son.

Helaina Theos assisted with the final case of the morning, the adoption of 15-month-old Maddox by “Little Joe” and Mandy Bynum, who had served as Maddox’s foster parents since Maddox was 13 days old. Maddox arrived in court wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with the message, “Officially a Bynum.” The Bynums were accompanied by their large extended family, which included four biological children and two foster children with disabilities.

A LEADER IN FAMILY LAW — In 2024, *preLaw* magazine recognized MC Law as a top school for family law, largely due to the strength of its Child Advocacy Clinic. The clinic is led by Shirley Kennedy, director of the Family and Children’s Law Center; Jamie McBride, adjunct professor and chief assistant district attorney for the Seventh District of Mississippi; and Chad King, adjunct professor and partner with Thompson Law Firm.



Ron, Shirley, Kyle, and Kelly Kennedy

SHIRLEY KENNEDY’S PERSONAL CALLING

Founding the Child Advocacy Clinic was especially meaningful for Shirley Kennedy because her own family was created through adoption. Kennedy and her husband, Ron, adopted their children, Kyle and Kelly, when both were infants.

When Kennedy was practicing corporate law decades ago, the idea that she would someday be responsible for developing a program that would minister to thousands of children and families in Mississippi would have seemed unimaginable.

“Honestly, I had never thought about practicing family law,” Kennedy says. “That changed when my husband and I decided to adopt. I think this was God’s plan for me all along. The best part is that I still have the same passion for it as I had when I started 25 years ago. This work is rewarding beyond anything I ever could have dreamed.”

When Judge Durr told the Bynums, “If I could give every adoptive family a million dollars, I would,” Little Joe hugged Maddox tightly and replied, “We don’t need it. We just need him.”

“Well, you’re going to get him today,” Judge Durr replied with a smile.

“The moment the judge finalized Maddox’s adoption was incredibly moving for me,” Theos says. “The clinic introduced me to the human and emotional side of the law and taught me life lessons that will make me a better attorney, including the importance of empathy. Learning to listen with compassion while maintaining professional boundaries is a skill I’ll carry with me throughout my career.

“In family law, you’re not just dealing with statutes and procedures. You’re walking alongside people during some of the most emotional moments of their lives,” Theos continues. “It’s one thing to study family law in class. It’s another to stand beside a child in court and advocate for their future.”

“THE CHILD ADVOCACY CLINIC IS A HUGE REASON THAT I CHOSE TO ATTEND MC LAW.”

“We work with real people who are navigating a legal system that feels overwhelming and confusing. The work has opened my eyes to different family dynamics and taught me to be more open-minded and adaptable. These lessons have shaped the kind of attorney I hope to be in the future.”

Cassandra Harmon, MC Law Student



FROM STUDENT TO CLIENT TO FAMILY — Emily Stanfield ’24 served in the Child Advocacy Clinic as a law school student, but her deeper connection to the clinic is as a client. While she was still in law school, Stanfield and her husband, Matthias Kreen, began fostering a baby girl named Lainey. In 2023, the Child Advocacy Clinic handled the adoption that made Stanfield and Kreen Lainey’s parents. For Stanfield, who was adopted as an infant herself, adopting her daughter with the help of her classmates in the same clinic where she also served felt like coming full circle. “I feel bonded to the law school in a whole different way now,” Stanfield says. “MC Law made my family possible.”



BENCHMARKS

30 YEARS OF REPRESENTATION ON THE COURT OF APPEALS



IN 1995, THE MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT faced a backlog of civil and criminal cases that had been adjudicated in the lower courts but had been appealed.

At that time, it could take as long as four years for the Supreme Court to hear an appeal – four long years for justice to be served for Mississippians whose lives were in limbo, from children caught up in custody cases to defendants accused of crimes that left them languishing in Parchman. By 1990, the backlog included more than 1,300 cases and counting.

Understanding that justice delayed is justice denied, the Mississippi Legislature established the Mississippi Court of Appeals to work through the backlog and prevent it from happening again.

Ever since the court originally convened on January 3, 1995, MC Law has been represented on its bench. When the Court of Appeals celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2025, MC Law's long connection to this key judicial branch was also in the spotlight.

Above: Judge David McCarty '04 presents Judge Mary Libby Payne with the Mississippi Court of Appeals 30th anniversary pin.

ONE OF "THE ORIGINALS"

"I'M STRUCK BY THE BRAVERY OF THOSE FIRST JUDGES," THE HONORABLE MICHAEL RANDOLPH, CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT, SAYS.

"They were pioneers, forging a path of their own, as they created an entirely new court through their hard work and dedication. There were no procedures, no organization, no furniture, yet in 1995, they issued 529 opinions."

Current judges on the Court of Appeals refer to the first 10 judges to serve on the court as "The Originals." Those trailblazing 10 included Mary Libby Payne, the founding dean of MC Law. Judge Payne was the only female judge elected to the original court.

Payne followed a winding path to the bench. All of her adult life, she felt God calling her "to the ministry of jurisprudence." A career in the law, however, was not a common calling for a young woman in the early 1950s.

"When I told people I was majoring in political science because I thought it would be a good background to becoming a lawyer, they acted as if my ticket to heaven had been invalidated," Payne recalls. "Having a career wasn't nearly as important back then as having a husband. But the boys found that I was entirely resistible."

Payne was one of just three women out of 300 students in her 1955 class at the University of Mississippi School of Law. She graduated first in her class yet still found it hard to find a job, recalling, "There were so few women lawyers in Mississippi that there was not a 'usual route' for us." Payne worked as a secretary (a career for which she says she had "few skills and no aptitude") before briefly joining a law firm. She had to quit the firm when she and her husband started a family, as there was no such thing then as maternity leave.

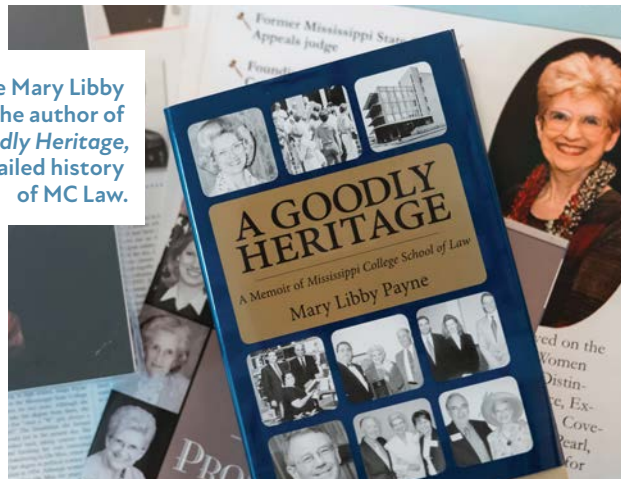
"WHEN I TOLD PEOPLE I WAS MAJORING IN POLITICAL SCIENCE BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD BACKGROUND TO BECOMING A LAWYER, THEY ACTED AS IF MY TICKET TO HEAVEN HAD BEEN INVALIDATED."

Mary Libby Payne

Payne eventually opened a solo office she describes as a "threshold practice"; her clients were whoever came across her threshold. Many were Black Mississippians of limited means. She recalls one gentleman who traveled to her office from three counties away. When Payne asked him why he'd made the long trip, he said, "I heard there was a lady lawyer in Brandon that won't let nobody take advantage of you."

Payne went on to serve as a legislative drafter and an assistant attorney general. Her impressive legal acumen was recognized when she became the founding dean of MC Law in 1975, a position she held until 1978, when she stepped down to become a full-time professor at MC Law.

Judge Mary Libby Payne is the author of *A Goodly Heritage*, a detailed history of MC Law.



Above: The original 10 judges on the Court of Appeals included Mary Libby Payne, founding dean of MC Law. Judge Payne was the only female elected to the original court.



SHEAR JUSTICE — Growing up, Brandi Denton spent most of her after-school and summer hours at her grandmother's beauty shop, Rose Ella's Beauty Salon, in Pearl, Mississippi. Mary Libby Payne was a weekly customer at the beauty shop from 1968 to 2017. As Rosie coiffed her hair, Payne regaled young Brandi with stories about the practice of law and encouraged the little girl to consider law school. When Payne ran for election to the Court of Appeals, a teenage Brandi helped her grandmother host a tea in Payne's honor. Today, Brandi Denton Gatewood '04, '10 is a graduate of MC Law and an attorney with the Mississippi Office of Post-Conviction Counsel. "Mary Libby Payne was a force and a constant presence in my life," Gatewood says. "Without her influence, I would never have found myself on this career trajectory." Left: Mary Libby Payne and Rosie

"IF YOU'D TOLD ME AS A LITTLE GIRL I'D HAVE THIS KIND OF CAREER, I WOULD'VE SAID, 'THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.' I COULDN'T EVEN DREAM THAT MUCH. BUT WHAT I WENT INTO THE PROFESSION TO DO WAS HELP PEOPLE. AND I THINK I DID A PRETTY GOOD JOB OF THAT."

Mary Libby Payne





“MARY LIBBY WAS IDEALLY SUITED TO SERVE BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE SO ELOQUENTLY EXPLAINED THE NEED FOR THE COURT OF APPEALS AND WHY SHE WAS UNIQUELY SUITED TO SERVE ON THIS BENCH.”

Shannon Warnock '93

Shannon Warnock
Mary Libby Payne



The Dragon Slayers,
Shannon Warnock
and Mary Libby Payne

IN 1994, PAYNE EMBARKED ON WHAT SHE CALLED “THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS THING SHE’D EVER DONE IN HER LIFE,” RUNNING FOR JUDGE ON THE NEWLY CREATED MISSISSIPPI COURT OF APPEALS.

Her election campaign was bolstered by the support of dozens of MC Law alumni, students, and faculty colleagues.

“I was honored to work on Mary Libby’s campaign. It was a turning of tables as the professor was looking to her former student for expertise,” says Shannon Warnock ’93, owner of the fundraising firm Strongbox Strategies. “We spent a lot of the campaign educating voters about the new court and why an appellate court was needed. Mary Libby was ideally suited to serve because no one else could have so eloquently explained the need for the Court of Appeals and why she was uniquely suited to serve on this bench.”

“MC Law students, alumni, faculty members, and my kinfolks all worked hard to get me elected,” Payne says. “I

realized that this judgeship was God’s call on my life. I was honored to serve with nine wonderful judges, who happened to be men. It was one of the few times in my career that I was treated as an equal.”

Judge Payne served on the court until her retirement in 2021. Payne recently celebrated her 93rd birthday. When she reflects on her prestigious, trailblazing career, her greatest takeaway is, “The Lord was in charge.”

“MC LAW STUDENTS, ALUMNI, FACULTY MEMBERS, AND MY KINFOLKS ALL WORKED HARD TO GET ME ELECTED.”

Mary Libby Payne

“I thought that I would probably spend my legal career in the law library, doing research for the people who actually try the cases,” Judge Payne says. “If you’d told me as a little girl I’d have this kind of career, I would’ve said, ‘That’s impossible.’ I couldn’t even dream that much. But what I went into the profession to do was help people. And I think I did a pretty good job of that.”



FROM MC LAW TO THE BENCH

Since the Court of Appeals originally convened in 1995, MC Law has been represented on its bench. Judges with an MC Law connection and their years on the Court of Appeals include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Mary Libby Payne,
First Dean of MC Law
1995-2001 | Ceola James '76
2013-2016 |
| Greg Hinkebein '79
1997-1998 | Sean Tindell '01
2017-2020 |
| Joe Lee '73
1999-2018
Chief Judge
2011-2018 | David McCarty '04
2019-present |
| Ermea Russell '85
2011-2012 | John Emfinger '81
2021-present |
| | Amy Lassitter
St. Pe' '02
2025-present |

When Judge Mary Libby Payne took the bench in 1995, she was the only female judge on the court. Today, five of the 10 judges are women.

THE DRAGON SLAYERS

During her time on the Court of Appeals, Judge Mary Libby Payne organized a monthly lunch group for Christian career women she thought might benefit from encouraging one another. She christened the group “The Dragon Slayers,” inspired by her uncle, who once said, “When I think of Mary Libby’s career, I think of her as a dragon slayer.” Following the death of her aunt, Payne found a piece of pottery in her aunt’s kiln depicting a tiny but mighty figure battling a dragon.

Shannon Warnock ’93, owner of the fundraising firm Strongbox Strategies, was one of Payne’s Dragon Slayers.

“My relationship with Mary Libby is more like a mother and daughter than anything else now, but we have evolved through many stages over the past 36 years,” Warnock says. “We’ve been professor and student, candidate and campaign manager, mentor and mentee. Mary Libby has invested in me by guiding, counseling, praying for, and loving me. Mary Libby is fiercely loyal and counts many people as friends. I’m honored she considers me one of them.”

SWIFT JUSTICE — In its first year of operation, the Court of Appeals issued 529 opinions. By the time of its 30th anniversary celebration in January 2025, the Court of Appeals had issued 15,397 opinions.

NOW ON THE BENCH

THREE MC LAW ALUMNI ARE CURRENT JUDGES ON THE COURT OF APPEALS: JUDGE AMY LASSITTER ST. PE '02, JUDGE JOHN EMFINGER '81, AND JUDGE DAVID McCARTY '04.

Prior to running for judge, McCarty was a solo practitioner. He had argued cases before the Court of Appeals but describes deciding to run for judge as “jumping off of a skyscraper.”

“I had worked on campaigns for other people, so I thought I knew what it would be like going door-to-door handing out push cards and putting out yard signs, but it’s a whole lot different when your *face* is on it,” McCarty says. “It was a kind of vulnerability that I was very unused to. The thing I heard most often was, ‘Son, you look a little young.’ Once a lady asked me, ‘Why have you got that beard?’ I said, ‘I don’t look very good with or without it, but I think this is slightly better.’ She slammed the door in my face.”

Beard or no beard, McCarty was elected. He’s currently seven years into his first eight-year term on the bench.



The 2025 Court of Appeals includes three MC Law graduates: Seated: Presiding Judge Virginia C. Carlton, Chief Judge Donna M. Barnes, and Presiding Judge Jack L. Wilson; Standing: Judge John D. Weddle, **Judge David Neil McCarty '04**, Judge Deborah McDonald, Judge Latrice A. Westbrooks, Judge Anthony N. Lawrence III, **Judge John H. Emfinger '81**, and **Judge Amy Lassitter St. Pe' '02**



Professor Jeffrey Jackson

“SIT. DOWN.” — Shortly after Judge David McCarty graduated from MC Law, the late Professor Jeffrey Jackson offered him and fellow alumnus Kevin White '04 temporary positions as researchers assisting Jackson and Dean Mary Miller in their writing of the *Encyclopedia of Mississippi Law*. McCarty and Snow dutifully reported to Jackson’s cluttered office and were told tersely, “Sit down.” The only chairs in the room were piled high with books and papers; when McCarty and Snow attempted to clear the piles, Professor Jackson said sharply, “Do not touch my stuff. Now. Sit! Down!” McCarty and Snow immediately dropped to seats – on the office floor. At which point Professor Jackson burst into laughter, and Dean Miller said dryly, “Jeff, stop hazing the children.”

“Campaigning reshaped me. Going to all those different communities and listening to so many different people changed me,” McCarty says. “Those are the people I think about when we’re deciding a workers’ comp case, or a property dispute, or a divorce, murder, burglary, medical malpractice, or tax case.”

“I MET PEOPLE AT MC LAW WHO SHOWED ME THIS WAS A PLACE WHERE WE WERE SUPPOSED TO LIFT EACH OTHER UP.”

Judge David McCarty

As an MC Law student, McCarty recalls Judge Carlton Reeves telling a group of students that their time at MC Law would give them “a key to every courthouse in Mississippi.” McCarty thinks often about that symbolic key he was gifted from MC Law.

“That key has infinite value,” McCarty says. “It unlocked my opportunity to serve the people of Mississippi, and it gave me a place in the MC Law community and the Mississippi legal community. Honestly, when I was admitted to MC Law, I was scared to come here, into this environment. I thought the law was like a secret club. Instead, I met people at MC Law who showed me this was a place where we were supposed to lift each other up.”

Today, McCarty lifts up others, both as an adjunct professor and as a donor to the law school.

“Teaching as an adjunct is a lot of fun because I’m closing the loop,” McCarty continues. “I’m always aware that I’m competing with the ‘ghosts’ of the great professors who’ve taught there before me and with the great professors who are still there. I want to have Jeff Jackson’s knowledge. I want to have Judy Johnson’s approachability. I want to have Matt Steffey’s wit. I want to have Dean Jim Rosenblatt’s warmth and presence and Dean John Anderson’s supportiveness and caring.”

“There’s a clear dividing line between my life before MC Law and the experiences I’ve had since,” McCarty continues. “I was lucky enough to be part of an exceptional group of people who all started out together studying civil pro in room 301. It’s incumbent on me to support MC Law so that other people can have that experience. I want MC Law to be the place where others can come and find that same key.” @

“MY PARENTS WERE SO PROUD WHEN I WAS ELECTED JUDGE. TO THIS DAY, IF I GO OUT TO LUNCH WITH MY MOTHER, SHE’LL TELL THE SERVER, ‘THIS IS MY SON. HE’S A JUDGE.’ I’M LIKE, ‘MOM, THE 18-YEAR-OLD SERVER DOES NOT CARE ABOUT MY JUDICIAL CAREER. SHE JUST HOPES I TIP!’”

Judge David McCarty



AN LAW REVIEW TAKES AN IN-DEPTH LOOK BACK – AND FORWARD – IN HONOR OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COURT OF APPEALS. APPEALING HISTORY

VOLUME 43 OF THE MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE LAW REVIEW WILL HONOR THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

“**P**ast *Law Review* members had advised me that the best way to generate involvement and authorship in a volume is to choose a topic that people are passionate about,” says Thomas Jones, editor-in-chief of the *Law Review*. “This volume honoring the Court of Appeals features insightful articles on that 30-year history from the people who lived it, as well as articles that look ahead to the court’s future.”

Contributors include Court of Appeals Chief Judge Donna Barnes, who wrote on the founding of the court, and Presiding Judge Virginia Carlton, who provided an in-depth look at how the court functions today. Judge Leslie Southwick of the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, who was one of the original 10 judges on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, authored a historical piece about the division and interplay between race and partisanship in Mississippi elections.

Additional contributors include Dean Emeritus Jim Rosenblatt, Professor Emily Lindsay, Professor Caroline Smith, Professor MJ Hernandez, and MC Law students Emily Hurst Smith and Thomas Jones.

Jones has seen the importance of the court’s work and the knowledge and commitment of its judges firsthand. In 2024, he served as an extern for Court of Appeals Judge David McCarty ’04.

“The experience and wisdom I gained from that externship were immense,” Jones says. “Our *Law Review* staff hopes this volume reflects our deep respect not only for the court and those responsible for its establishment, but also for all the current and past judges who have used their position to serve the people of Mississippi.”



MC Law students Thomas Jones, Emily Durr Sanchez, and John “Jack” Cottingham IV

“**THE COURT OF APPEALS** has become an essential component of the state judiciary. Its jurisprudence encompasses nearly all areas of Mississippi law, and its decisions have significantly influenced legal doctrine, provided guidance to trial courts, and affected the lives of thousands of citizens....We take this opportunity to honor the Mississippi Court of Appeals for three decades of dedicated service to the legal community and the citizens of Mississippi.” — *Excerpted from the Dedication of the Mississippi College Law Review, Volume XLIII*

VOLUME 43 OF THE MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE LAW REVIEW IS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION IN LATE AUGUST 2025. VISIT DC.LAW.MC.EDU.



Rising High **LIFTING OTHERS UP**

LA'VERNE EDNEY '96 | ABOTA PAST PRESIDENT

LA'VERNE EDNEY HAS EARNED A REPUTATION AS A FORMIDABLE TRIAL ATTORNEY. AS SENIOR COUNSEL WITH BUTLER SNOW, EDNEY PRACTICES IN CORPORATE DEFENSE, LITIGATING HIGH-STAKES PHARMACEUTICAL, MEDICAL, AND PERSONAL INJURY CASES.

Her skills as an attorney and a leader were recognized on the national stage when Edney was elected the 2024 president of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA). An invitation-only organization that works to protect the Seventh Amendment right to a civil jury trial and an independent judiciary, ABOTA has more than 7,300 members, including the nation's most respected plaintiff's attorneys, civil defense lawyers, and judges.

Edney was the fourth woman and the first Black woman to serve as ABOTA's president. She was sworn in on January 27, 2024, at the ABOTA national board meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi, by the Hon. James E. Graves Jr. of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, who also served as a justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court.

"I have known La'Verne since her law school days," Graves said. "She is relentless in her efforts to give back to her community. She is a mentor and friend to young attorneys, and she always achieves and accomplishes wherever she goes. Some people hold jobs. La'Verne excels at everything she does. Some people simply fly. La'Verne soars."

SMALL-TOWN ROOTS, BIG-TIME DREAMS

The modest house near rural Arcola, Mississippi, in which Edney was born and raised is no longer standing. But for Edney, the lessons she learned within its walls have never faded.



La'Verne Edney and her parents, the late Essie Mae and Theodore Ford

The youngest of the late Essie Mae and Theodore Ford's 14 children, Edney recalls that she "never felt poor but always knew there was no extra money." What Essie Mae and Theodore Ford *did* have in abundance were compassion and a desire to serve. When Edney was 10 years old, her parents took in their first foster child. The Fords would eventually foster 11 children.

"My parents were farmers, and my father was also a Baptist minister," Edney says. "He and my mother didn't just preach about serving others; they put their words into action."

If Edney's first two role models were her parents, her third was Ben Matlock, the folksy, fictional TV lawyer played by Andy Griffith.

“I dreamed of being a lawyer like Matlock, but I didn’t think of that as something I could actually do. I didn’t know any real attorneys, and I thought that kind of career was out of my reach,” Edney recalls. “When I was in college at Alcorn, I would sometimes drive into downtown Jackson, watch all the businesspeople walking around, and just...dream. It sounds silly, but I remember thinking, ‘I could be someone carrying a briefcase.’”

Following her graduation from Alcorn State University, Edney accepted a position at Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), but her dream of becoming a lawyer refused to die. After four years at IHL, Edney, by then the mother of a young son, applied to MC Law – and was rejected.

“The first time I applied, I was turned down. When I was eventually accepted, I was elated. And I made a promise that I was going to do my best to make good on that opportunity.”

Edney quit her job, took out student loans, and dived into three years of juggling marriage, motherhood, and law school. She treated law school like an 8:00 to 5:00 job. When her classes ended, Edney picked up her four-year-old son, E. J., at daycare, then returned with him to the MC Law library, where both Edneys often stayed into the night.

“I was a quiet little boy, so I didn’t mind sitting in the law library and reading a book, trying to be just like my mom,” E. J., now an associate dean at Vanderbilt University, recalls. “Sometimes I fell asleep – law school could be pretty boring for a four-year-old.”

Following her graduation in 1996, Edney clerked for Judge Leslie Southwick of the Mississippi Court of Appeals, then practiced privately for nine months before joining the Brunini law firm in 1998. By then, Edney had welcomed a second son, Jaylon. In 2002, she and her husband divorced.

“I was honest upfront with the law firm,” Edney recalls. “I told them, ‘I’ve got two children, and I’m a single parent. There are going to be some things I have to do to care for my sons. But I’m willing to stay up late and do whatever I need to do to make it work.’ And that’s what I did. I was willing to make the sacrifices and put in the hard work.”

That hard work was recognized when Edney made partner in 2004. In 2008, she proposed and launched a family law practice within Brunini. The work was gratifying, but Edney sensed a different calling.

“I saw a lot of people who needed legal help but couldn’t afford it. To be honest, if I had needed a lawyer, I couldn’t have afforded to hire me,” Edney says. “I didn’t want to turn those people away. I prayed that God would show me a way to do more.”

“MY FAITH IS EVERYTHING. NOTHING IS BY CHANCE. GOD HAS HIS HANDS IN EVERYTHING I DO.”

La’Verne Edney

Those prayers were answered when the executive director of the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project, an organization that matches low-income Mississippians with lawyers who are willing to handle their cases pro bono, met with Edney to discuss the urgent need for volunteer lawyers. Edney did more than just volunteer. She took a leave from Brunini to serve as the organization’s general counsel, a position she held for two years.

“When you pray for something and it falls in your lap, you cannot ignore it,” Edney says. “This was a calling. I couldn’t say no.”



“I REALLY BELIEVE IN THE MISSION OF ABOTA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING THE SEVENTH AMENDMENT RIGHT TO TRIAL BY JURY....WE HAVE TO PRESERVE THAT RIGHT.”
La’Verne Edney

LEADING ABOTA

Edney returned to corporate practice in 2011, practicing with Baker Donelson until joining the Butler Snow team in 2018. In 2024, she accepted another calling, rising to the high-profile position of president of ABOTA.

“I really believe in the mission of ABOTA and the importance of preserving the Seventh Amendment right to trial by jury,” Edney says. “We don’t need to succumb to a dictatorship or have someone other than the judicial branch of government decide cases for us. That’s what makes us unique in the United States. We have to preserve that right.”

During her one-year tenure, Edney addressed tough issues, speaking out against divisive rhetoric against judges, jurors, and the justice system. She made nearly 60 visits to ABOTA chapters, addressing attorneys and judges nationwide. Edney guided ABOTA programming, ranging from continuing education to juror appreciation events to mock trials and civics education for K-12 students and teachers – all while practicing full-time and trying a case to a jury verdict.

“I felt a sense of heightened responsibility, as I do with everything I undertake in my profession, because I am African American and I’m a woman,” Edney says. “It’s a heightened standard I feel I have to meet constantly. But as the first Black, female ABOTA president, I also felt very honored. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I wanted to make the membership proud they’d chosen me.”

“LA’VERNE IS AN EXCELLENT LISTENER. SHE HAS A GREAT MEMORY ABOUT THE DETAILS PEOPLE SHARE WITH HER ABOUT THEIR PERSONAL LIVES AND THE BATTLES THEY’RE FACING. SHE LISTENS TO AND LOVES PEOPLE, AND THEY LISTEN TO AND LOVE HER. LA’VERNE IS THE REAL THING, GENUINE TO THE CORE.” — Grace Weatherly, Wood Weatherly Trial Law, Texas, 2021 President of ABOTA

Edney more than met that goal.

“ABOTA includes plaintiff and defense attorneys, conservatives and liberals, and those with opposing political opinions. I don’t have to tell you how heated some political situations were in 2024, but La’Verne never spoke out or made a decision without considering all of those points of view,” says Grace Weatherly of Wood Weatherly Trial Law in Texas, 2021 president of ABOTA. “Many leaders shy away from making statements about which there may be disagreement. La’Verne never hesitated to speak out when necessary. She made decisions based on the mission and best interests of ABOTA, and never shied away from doing the right thing.”

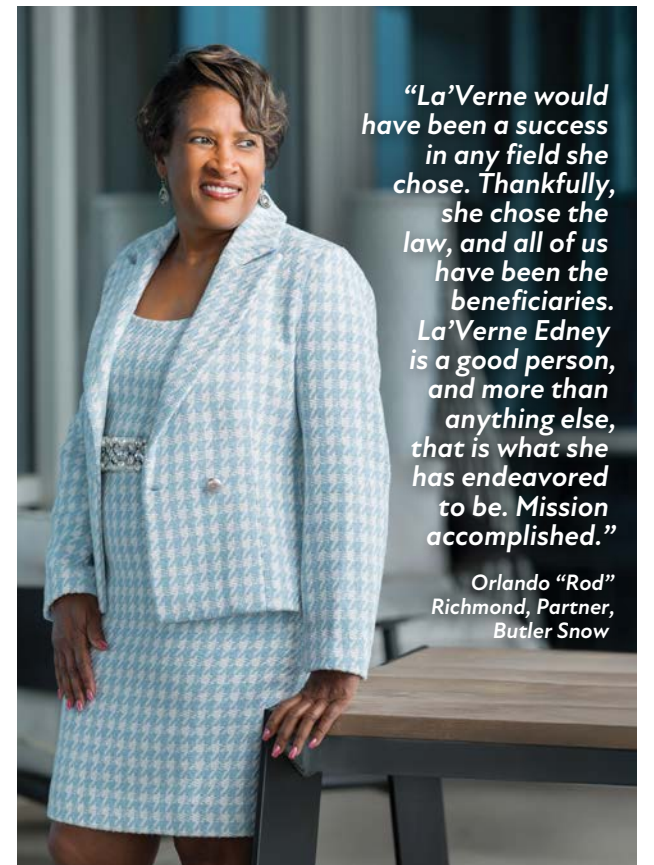
“LA’VERNE EDNEY IS ONE OF THE BEST PRESIDENTS ABOTA HAS EVER HAD. SHE KEPT THE CORE VALUES OF HER LIFE AT THE CENTER OF HER LEADERSHIP AND REGULARLY LIFTED UP EVERYONE AROUND HER.” — Donna Melby, 2005 President and First Woman President of ABOTA

“La’Verne’s ability to recognize and address the core issues where feelings are strong, as well as her timing on when and how to respond, was exactly what our organization needed in these challenging times to the rule of law,” agrees Cynthia McGuinn, 2018 ABOTA president and past president of the ABOTA Foundation.

While Edney’s legal and leadership skills are impressive, ABOTA members agree that her exemplary character was equally key to her successful tenure as president.

“La’Verne is a powerful lawyer, not only because of her position in the legal community, but also because of the force of her presence,” says Steve Quattlebaum, 2023 ABOTA president and managing partner with Quattlebaum, Grooms and Tull of Arkansas. “La’Verne holds her spirituality high in her life and allows her example to be her testimony. Especially impactful is her influence on young women of color. They see in her a role model and a person they could aspire to be. La’Verne inspires the best in others.”

“La’Verne handled her role as president with grace, commitment, honesty, integrity, and the kind of caring and compassionate leadership that seems all too infrequent these days,” says Donna Melby, who became the first woman



“La’Verne would have been a success in any field she chose. Thankfully, she chose the law, and all of us have been the beneficiaries. La’Verne Edney is a good person, and more than anything else, that is what she has endeavored to be. Mission accomplished.”

Orlando “Rod” Richmond, Partner, Butler Snow

president of ABOTA in 2005. “This is her approach to leadership and to life, a gift she embraced from her parents. She centered her focus on those she served, shunning the lime-light herself, and gained the trust, respect, and admiration of the most accomplished trial professionals in the country.”

“La’Verne was a charismatic, transformational, and collaborative leader,” says Luther Battiste, founding shareholder of Johnson, Toal, and Battiste in South Carolina, who served as the first Black president of ABOTA in 2020. “She led with style and grace, conveying both authority and humility, and set a high standard for being president.”

“La’Verne made the job look so easy that future presidents may underestimate the challenges,” Grace Weatherly observed. “She set the bar quite a bit higher for future leaders, and frankly, I’m glad I served as president before and not after her.”

“Now that La’Verne’s term as president has ended, she’s earned a rest,” McGuinn says. “But knowing La’Verne, I suspect she’s already doing good deeds elsewhere.”



“LA’VERNE BELIEVES IN LIFTING OTHERS AS SHE CLIMBS. SHE HAS MOTIVATED ME TO REACH FOR THE STARS AND ENSURE THAT I BRING OTHERS ALONG TO SEE THE VIEW.”

Sharon Spencer ’18, Assistant District Attorney for the Seventh Judicial District

LIFTING OTHERS UP

While she’s recognized as a leader’s leader at the pinnacle of her profession, Edney is also known for her warmth, humility, and willingness to help others succeed. While she’s still pushing to reach new heights herself, Edney is also helping others climb.

“Every young attorney needs a good mentor, someone who will advocate on their behalf,” Edney says. “Some people call them champions. I would call them cheerleaders – someone who knows you, knows your ability, and shares what they know about you with others. I’ve always done that because I know how many people did that for me.”

“La’Verne is far less interested in her credentialing as an attorney than she is in how her platform has allowed her to impact the lives of so many others,” says Orlando “Rod” Richmond, partner at Butler Snow. “She has spent numerous hours mentoring others, especially women. Women all over Mississippi have her on speed dial.”

“LA’VERNE EDNEY IS ONE OF THE RAREST INDIVIDUALS THAT THIS STATE HAS EVER KNOWN.”

“The impact she has made, the path she has forged, and the results she has achieved read like a fairytale. Like many others, I’m in awe of her. Yet she remains one of the most humble, down-to-earth people you will ever encounter. She is a true Mississippi icon.”

Jesse Mitchell, Founding Partner, The Mitchell Firm

Mitchell and Edney are often opponents in the courtroom, yet he is one of her biggest fans.

“It’s one thing for people to use words to encourage or advise, but it’s even more telling when you are encouraged and advised because of a person’s actions,” says Nakimuli Davis-Primer, shareholder at Baker Donelson. “La’Verne doesn’t allow the busyness of her amazing career to stop her from taking time to help someone else. I am so grateful for how she’s consistently believed in me and my abilities and advocated for me in spaces where I may not otherwise have had a voice.”

“La’Verne provides me and others with a sense of belonging,” says La’Toyia Slay-Cooley, partner at Butler Snow. “She helps me see every single day that I can thrive and that this space is also for me. I admire La’Verne’s unwavering dedication to excellence, but mostly, I admire her empathy and support for others.”

“Women are the minority in the legal profession, and Black women make up an even smaller percentage,” says Sharon Spencer ’18, assistant district attorney for the Seventh Judicial District. “It’s inspiring to see La’Verne continuously break barriers and excel in the profession, but

when La’Verne excels, it’s not just for her; it’s for others that will follow. She believes in lifting others as she climbs. La’Verne has motivated me to reach for the stars and ensure that I bring others along to see the view.”



A LEGACY OF FIRSTS

La’Verne Edney was the first:

- Black Female National President of ABOTA
- Black Mississippian inducted into the International Association of Barristers
- Black Female Mississippian inducted into the International Academy of Trial Lawyers
- Black Female President of the Mississippi Bar Foundation
- Black Female Chair of the Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership
- Black Female to serve on the Board of Trustees of Mississippi College
- Black Female to serve on the Board of Origin Bancorp, Inc.

La’Verne Edney also serves on the board of the Magnolia Speech School and the Baptist Hospital Board of Regents.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- 2024 National Bar Association Trial Master Award
- 2021 Capital Area Bar Association Professionalism Award
- 2019 Mississippi Women Lawyers Association Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2018 MC Law Distinguished Lawyer of the Year

DEEP TIES TO MC

La’Verne Edney has served on the MC Board of Trustees off and on since 1999. Her connections to MC include service on the law school committee, executive committee, and audit committee, as well as judging mock trial competitions and speaking to incoming law school students.



ESTABLISHING A FAMILY PRECEDENT

While she has countless admirers in the legal profession, the people most proud of Edney’s success are her family members. Until his death in 2011, Edney’s late father slept with her certificate to practice law framed above his bed.

“My parents didn’t graduate from high school. When they walked into First Baptist Church for my graduation from MC Law, they were like, ‘Wow. Look at our baby.’ It’s still hard for me to talk about it now without getting emotional,” Edney says. “My parents would not be able to fathom the opportunities I have today. They’d probably tell me, ‘Baby, be careful. You’re at a big table.’ My dad was a Baptist preacher, and so he knew that all things are possible. But to see this? He would just be so, so proud.”

“WHEN I GO INTO THE COURTROOM TO TRY A CASE, THE FIRST THING I DO IS PRAY. I’M NOT NECESSARILY PRAYING FOR VICTORY. I’M PRAYING TO DO THE VERY BEST THAT I CAN FOR MY CLIENT AND THAT JUSTICE WILL BE DONE. Even if I don’t win, I want to have peace in knowing that I did my very best. Fortunately, I’ve had a great career where I’ve had a lot of successes. So the jury was on my side. Or God, or both.”

La’Verne Edney

During her year as ABOTA president, Edney had many opportunities to take a “plus one” along on trips. She always chose one of her sisters, nieces, or close friends.

“La’Verne’s generosity in sharing her spotlight with family and friends is indicative of the kind and loving person she is,” says Beatrice Patterson, Edney’s sister. “My baby sister helps others whenever and wherever she can. With that kind of compassion for others, there’s no stopping her.”



The Edney family: Jaylon, La’Verne, E. J., and E. J.’s wife, Adrienne, grandchildren Nora and Rocky

Edney’s sons have been influenced by her example. As associate dean of belonging and communities at Vanderbilt University, E. J. Edney helps students, many of them from underserved communities, connect with resources that help them succeed in college. Jaylon

Edney is the owner of Edney Family Contracting and of Errand Kings, a business he co-founded with his mother when he was still in high school. Both men model the work ethic, support for others, and faith they learned from their mother for their own young families.



Left: La’Verne Edney is the youngest of the late Essie Mae and Theodore Ford’s 14 children. Edney is pictured in the first row, second from right.

GETTING THE SCOOP

La’Verne Edney spent the summer following her high school graduation living in Los Angeles with her older brother. She landed her first job there at an ice cream stand serving attendees at the 1984 Olympics.

“I remember my mother up working at one or two in the morning on a little fold-out table in her bedroom,” Jaylon says. “She was constantly working, yet she was also always a great mom. She never missed out on the things that were important to us. She makes it look easy, but there’s no ‘secret sauce.’ My mother not only outworks everyone else; she outworks expectations. She is the reason I get up early and work hard every day.”

“My mother taught me by example that things don’t just happen and that being smart is not enough,” E. J. says. “She put so much effort into making sure she showed gratefulness to God for the platform He gave her by being prepared for the places He put her into and the opportunities He put before her. She weaponized imposter syndrome and made it her superpower. During all [of] those hours in the library and those late nights at home, I watched my mom convince herself she belonged in those spaces.”

“It didn’t surprise me when she was elected president of ABOTA,” Jaylon says. “But it was special to see other people recognize what I’ve always seen in her.”

Edney’s sons are all the more proud of their mother’s success because they know it didn’t come easy.

“My mother does not take the regard with which other people hold her lightly,” E. J. says. “I get tears in my eyes thinking about how difficult it was – the daughter of a sharecropper, the baby of 14 children, a mother, so many things screaming that this wasn’t supposed to happen. And now not just my mom but also her proteges are more accomplished than a lot of people will ever be. I’m so proud of the investments she’s made in other people and the ways in which those investments have had an impact on the world. I’m prouder of that legacy my mother has built than all of her accolades.”

“If someone had told 10-year-old me I’d have this career and these opportunities, my response would have been, ‘no way.’ I didn’t dream this big,” Edney says. “If I could go back and give that little girl some advice, it would be, ‘Know that you can do anything.’ That doesn’t mean you won’t have obstacles and doubts that surface. But always, *always* keep pushing. I’m grateful for all that I have and proud of what I’ve worked to achieve, but I’m still pushing.”

SHOWCASING HER MISSISSIPPI ROOTS

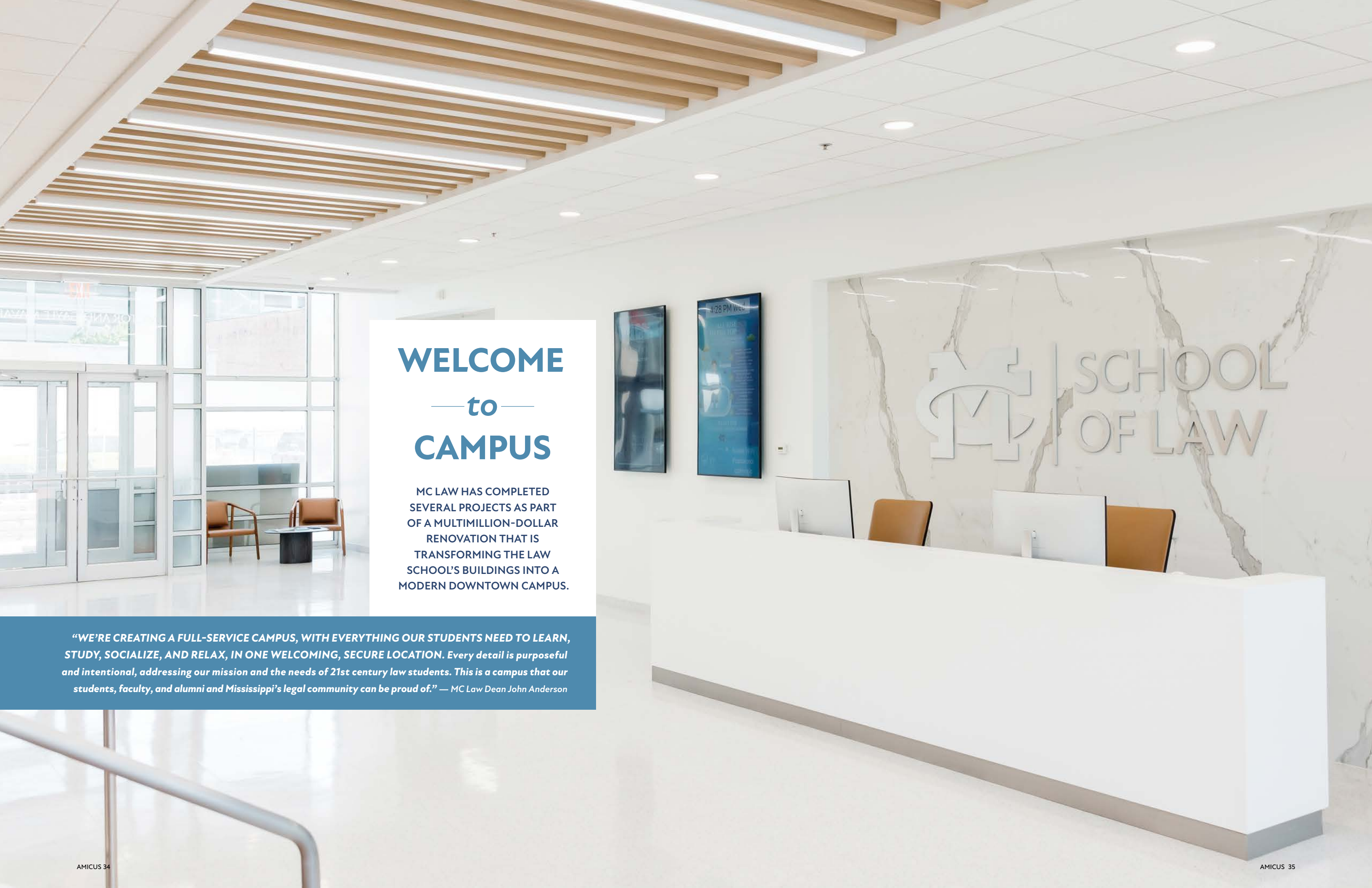
As president of ABOTA, La’Verne Edney had the opportunity to choose the location for national ABOTA board meetings. Eager to promote her home state to attorneys and judges nationwide, Edney chose Biloxi, Mississippi, as the first meeting location. Attendees were treated to tours of Mississippi landmarks and live blues performances featuring Mississippi artists.

A member and former director of her church choir, Edney had previously taken the ABOTA stage herself.

“La’Verne is an exceptional singing talent,” says Steve Quattlebaum, 2023 ABOTA president. “In 2023, she was the lead singer in a band made up of ABOTA members. La’Verne rocked the house.”



Biloxi, Mississippi



WELCOME — to — CAMPUS

MC LAW HAS COMPLETED SEVERAL PROJECTS AS PART OF A MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR RENOVATION THAT IS TRANSFORMING THE LAW SCHOOL'S BUILDINGS INTO A MODERN DOWNTOWN CAMPUS.

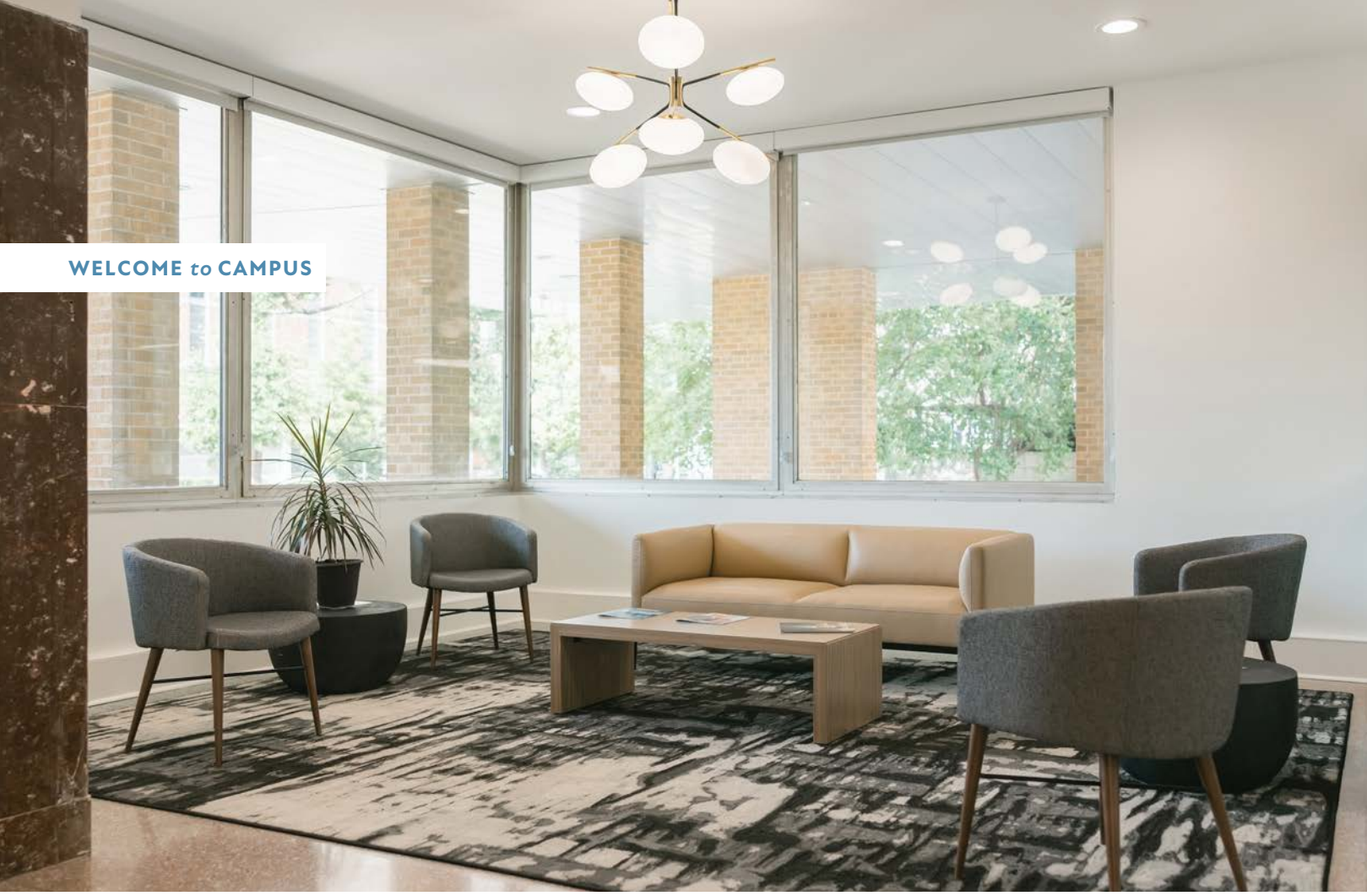
“WE’RE CREATING A FULL-SERVICE CAMPUS, WITH EVERYTHING OUR STUDENTS NEED TO LEARN, STUDY, SOCIALIZE, AND RELAX, IN ONE WELCOMING, SECURE LOCATION. Every detail is purposeful and intentional, addressing our mission and the needs of 21st century law students. This is a campus that our students, faculty, and alumni and Mississippi’s legal community can be proud of.” — MC Law Dean John Anderson

WELCOME to CAMPUS

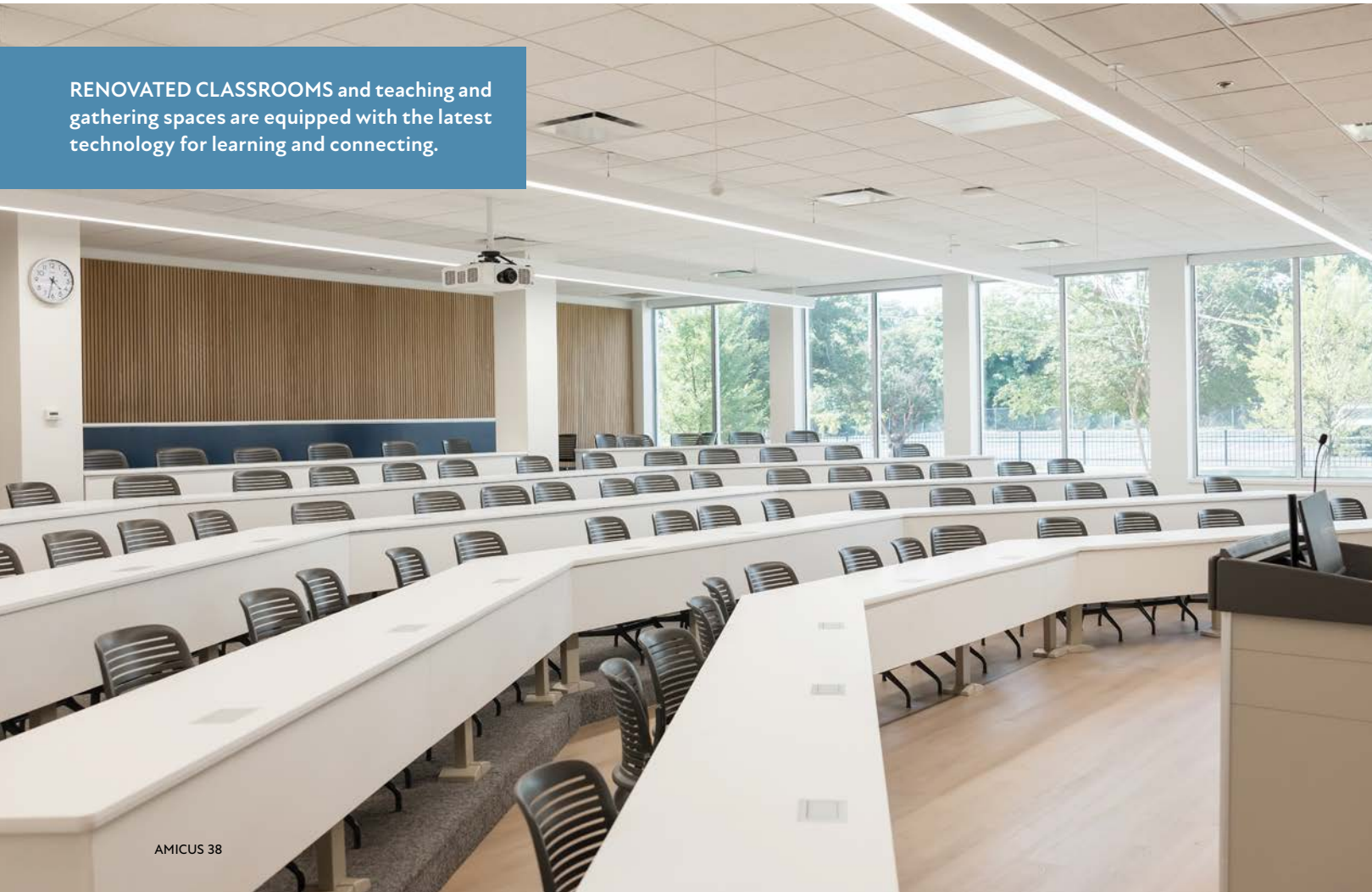


REIMAGINED INTERIOR SPACES include a spacious, first-floor library featuring comfortable conversation areas, a reading room with a view of the Quad, and quiet study rooms. The first floor of the library can double as a large event space.

WELCOME to CAMPUS



RENOVATED CLASSROOMS and teaching and gathering spaces are equipped with the latest technology for learning and connecting.



THE NEW MAIN ENTRANCE to the central classroom building opens into the spacious Watkins & Eager Lobby with a welcoming reception area and an “airport lounge” feel, where students can socialize with friends or plug in their laptops and be instantly connected to the information they need to study or work.

WELCOME to CAMPUS



SCAN TO SEE MC LAW'S CAMPUS VISION AND AN UPDATE ON THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS.

WELCOME to CAMPUS

PHASED PROJECTS

Phase 1

- Exterior signage
- First-floor library
- Administrative offices
- General campus facelift and extensive landscaping
- Updated classrooms
- Technology integration throughout campus
- Collaborative social spaces for students and faculty

Phase 2

- Student Center
- Family Law Center offices

Phase 2 cont.

- Back patio and wellness lawn
- Murals and historic displays

Phase 3

- Second floor of classroom center
- Second floor of administration building
- Second-floor library
- Student lounge

Phase 4

- Moot courtroom
- Offices
- Third-floor classrooms

The timeline for Phases 3 and 4 is dependent on the generosity of campaign donors.

The MC Law project is a collaboration between MC Law, CDFL Architects + Engineers, and Alliant Construction.

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

MC Law offers many opportunities to name an area of the campus in honor of yourself, your firm, a friend or family member, a professor, or other honoree.

GIFT LEVEL RANGE

AREA

\$5 million+ each	The Law School An Endowed Center of Law
\$1.5–\$2 million each	The Classroom Building The Administrative Building The Student Center The Law School Library The Advocacy Center
\$750,000–\$1 million each	The Conference Hall The Library Reading Room (each floor) The Quad (back patio) Clinic Center Offices/Building/Farish Street Parking Lot Courtroom/Classroom in Advocacy Center
\$250,000–\$500,000 each	Rear Parking Lot Teaching Center II, Classroom Building Trial Courtroom, Main Building Alumni Hall of Honor
\$100,000–\$150,000 each	Bronze Sculptures by Dr. Sam Gore Student Center Dining Hall Student Center Cafe Faculty Lounge, Main Building Private Reception Center, Main Building Faculty Support Suite, Main Building Advocacy Hall of Honor Family Law Clinic Seminar Room Quad Fountain
\$50,000–\$75,000 each	Seminar Room, Main Building Quad Wellness Lawn Quad Pavilion #1 Quad Pavilion #2 Quad Pavilion #3 Moot Court Judges Chambers, Main Building Moot Courtroom, Main Building Rare Book Collection, Second-Floor Library Student Services Office, Main Building Wellness Room Dean’s Suite Welcome Lounge Alumni Museum Station
\$10,000–\$25,000 each	Faculty Offices, Main Building (per office) First-Floor Library Study Rooms Second-Floor Library Study Rooms Quad Tree (four available)
\$1,000–\$5,000 each	Quad Pavilion Table (eight available) Law School Parking Lot Banner (per year) Quad Pavilion Bench Quad Pavilion Chair

TO DISCUSS A NAMING OPPORTUNITY, CONTACT:

Justice Randy Pierce
Assistant Dean for Advancement
rpierce@mc.edu

Lauren Wells
Director of Advancement
lwells3@mc.edu

John Anderson
Dean
jpanders@mc.edu

Giving levels and spaces available are subject to change as the renovations unfold. Names are subject to the approval of MC Law.

HELP CREATE THE NEW CAMPUS.

Our complete vision for the transformed campus will only become a reality with the support of our alumni, friends, and members of the legal community. Tax-deductible donations in any amount are deeply appreciated, and every gift will be recognized.



TO MAKE A GIFT TO THE MC LAW BUILDING FUND, VISIT LAW.MC.EDU OR SCAN





USM and MC mascots Seymour and Tushka celebrate the 3+3 program partnership between their universities.

LEGAL EAGLES



MC LAW AND THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI (USM) HAVE TEAMED UP TO OFFER STUDENTS AN ACCELERATED PATH INTO THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

THE NEW 3+3 PROGRAM ALLOWS QUALIFIED USM STUDENTS TO ENROLL IN MC LAW BEFORE FULLY COMPLETING THEIR BACHELOR'S DEGREES, REDUCING THE TRADITIONAL PATH TO A LAW DEGREE BY A FULL YEAR.

Participating students save a year's worth of tuition and other expenses and get a head start on entering their professional careers.

USM is the fourth public university to partner with MC Law for a 3+3 program; 3+3 partnerships are also in place with Mississippi State University (MSU), Mississippi University for Women ("The W"), and Troy University in Alabama.

"I see this as two institutions with long histories and stellar reputations in our state, both of which have an eye for entrepreneurial opportunities and thinking outside the box, coming together in a win-win relationship that benefits our students," says USM President Dr. Joe Paul. "Programs like this are great examples of how we're helping our students maximize their efforts and achieve their personal and

professional dreams. I am fully confident our students will receive a top-shelf legal education at MC Law."

"USM is already one of MC Law's top feeder schools, and some of our most successful alumni are Golden Eagles," says MC Law Dean John Anderson. "The cost and time savings of the 3+3 program will be beneficial to our shared students, and our partnership through this program will enhance the already strong relationship between our schools."

Students will note their intention to participate in the 3+3 program when they enroll for undergraduate studies. Students who have completed 75% of the coursework required for a bachelor's degree will be eligible for admission to MC Law. After the student successfully completes the first year of the J.D. program, USM, MSU, The W, or Troy will award the appropriate bachelor's degree. After the student completes the requirements for the J.D. degree, MC Law will award this professional diploma.

"THIS PROGRAM IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF OUR STUDENT-CENTERED MISSION. WE CAN'T WAIT TO WELCOME USM STUDENTS TO OUR DOWNTOWN JACKSON CAMPUS."

MC Law Dean John Anderson

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE 3+3 PROGRAM, CONNECT WITH MC LAW DEAN OF ADMISSIONS JAY ARMSTRONG AT ARMSTRON@MC.EDU

LAW & HONOR

LAW DAY 2025

MC Law held its annual Law Day awards ceremony on April 17, 2025, honoring outstanding achievements and commitment to the law school on the part of students, faculty, and staff.

“LAW DAY IS A MEANINGFUL EVENT FOR OUR ENTIRE MC LAW COMMUNITY AS WE celebrate the hard work and accomplishments of our students, the commitment and teaching excellence of our faculty, and the vision and generosity of our donors,” says Dean John Anderson. “Together, we are a community that believes not only in upholding justice, but in uplifting each other.”

MDLA
Faculty Award
Mary Largent Purvis
2025

FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS

Professor of the Year
Frank Rosenblatt

1L Professor of the Year Section A
Donald Campbell

1L Professor of the Year Section B
Jonathan Will

Adjunct Professor of the Year
Chris Dunnells and Trey Manhein

Staff Employee of the Year
Rickey Wells

Recipients were selected by MC Law students.



SCHOOL OF LAW

70

STUDENTS RECEIVED A TOTAL OF **\$62K** IN SCHOLARSHIPS



Randy Pierce
Lauren Wells



STRENGTHENING THE *CASE FOR SUPPORT*

LAUREN WELLS AND RANDY PIERCE LEAD MC LAW'S ADVANCEMENT EFFORTS,
INCLUDING ALUMNI RELATIONS, FUNDRAISING, AND COMMUNICATIONS.

JUSTICE RANDY PIERCE *Assistant Dean for Advancement*

Randy Pierce serves MC Law part time as assistant dean for advancement while also serving as an adjunct professor. He was previously the director of the Mississippi Judicial College in Oxford. A former justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court, Pierce has also served as a chancery court judge and as a member of the Mississippi House of Representatives. Pierce is a partner in the law firm of Bordis Danos Pierce. He holds an accounting degree and an MBA from the University of Southern Mississippi and a J.D. from the University of Mississippi. Pierce and his wife, Cheryl, have four children and live in Greene County, Mississippi.

"I'VE ESPECIALLY ENJOYED THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST DEAN ANDERSON IN HIS VISION TO MAKE MC LAW A PREMIER LAW SCHOOL."

"The relationships I've established with alumni are special to me, and I'm excited about the law school's future. MC Law is vital to Mississippi's legal profession."

BY THE BOOK

Justice Randy Pierce is the author of four novels, *Pain Unforgiven*, *Magnolia Mud*, *The Peter Bay*, and *Missy*.



LAUREN WELLS *Director of Advancement*

Lauren Wells began her professional career as a buyer for Dillard's before moving into contract marketing and business management. She joined the MC Law staff in 2021 as the marketing and communication coordinator and also served as the law school's director of marketing before assuming her current role as director of advancement. Wells holds a marketing degree and an MBA from Mississippi State University and is a loyal Bulldog fan. She lives in Jackson with her husband, Sam, and their daughter, Cordelia. Sam attended Ole Miss, which makes for interesting Egg Bowl weekends.

"I ENJOY THE CREATIVE ASPECT OF MY JOB THE MOST, COMING UP WITH NEW AND EXCITING WAYS TO KEEP OUR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ENGAGED...."

"With excited alumni comes support, which opens doors for impressive prospective students and faculty."

DRIVERS, START YOUR ENGINES!

Lauren Wells once wrote for the NASCAR publication *Motor Racing Digest*, which required her to cover race weekends, interview drivers, and immerse herself in NASCAR culture. According to Wells, "It was unfamiliar territory, but I became a lifelong fan in the process."



Class Actions

PLEASE SEND FUTURE CLASS ACTIONS KATIE HENDERSON AT KHENDERSON@MC.EDU

1975

J. Dudley Butler celebrated 50 years of practicing law on April 7, 2025.

1982

Al Shiyou was named the National Legal Officer of the Year for Civil Air Patrol.

1985

Judge Anthony Gabbert received the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association's highest award, the Hon. Joseph Stevens, Jr. Aspire to Excellence Award. Judge Gabbert has been accepted to the Duke University School of Law LLM Program for Judicial Studies as part of a class of 22 state, federal, and international judges admitted to the program with a full scholarship, including judges from Singapore and Ukraine.

1991

Judge Robert Hildum was sworn in as a magistrate judge on the Superior Court for the District of Columbia on July 1, 2024.

1992

Judge Christopher Collins was sworn in as judge in the Capitol Complex Improvement District Court.

1996

Judge Stephen Dillard graduated from the Duke University School of Law with an LLM in judicial studies in May 2025.

1997

Jeffrey Styres was promoted to general counsel, corporate secretary, and senior vice president of Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company in Jackson, Mississippi.

Tangi Carter is running for circuit judge for Forrest and Perry Counties, Mississippi. The election is November 5, 2025.

Judge Michael Powell was recently elected as Charlotte County Court judge in Charlotte County, Florida, in the 20th Judicial Circuit of Florida.

Rob Hadden is a legal recruiter with David Carrie LLC, where he places lawyers in remote and in-person roles nationwide. He worked in private practice for 23 years.

1999

Manish Patel was reelected to a second term as the chairman of the Disciplinary Commission of the Alabama State Bar and serves as the Bar Commissioner for the 22nd Judicial Circuit.

Jennifer Riley-Collins was appointed executive vice president and chief of programs and innovation by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

2000

Arion Staggs signed a publishing deal with Koehler Books for his debut novel, *Leta Pearl's Love Biscuits*, which will be released on October 7, 2025. His essay *Every Move I Make, She'll Be Watching Me*, was featured in *The New York Times*.

Adam Kilgore retired after two decades as general counsel of The Mississippi Bar (2004-2024). He has since launched a law practice concentrating on ethics and professional responsibility. Kilgore also serves as the expert host of *In Legal Terms* on Mississippi Public Broadcasting, a weekly radio show and podcast that explores legal issues and public interest topics.

2002

D. Christopher Daniel was recognized as Mississippi's Prosecutor of the Year by Attorney General Lynn Fitch. He also received the Children's Advocacy Centers of Mississippi Judge Thomas H. Broome Champions for Children Award.

2007

Kristy Ball became partner at Helsell Fetterman LLP.

2008

Blake Altazan was hired as special counsel at Kean Miller, Ochsner, Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson.

2009

Wells Griffith III was nominated for a senior energy position in the Trump administration.

2010

Courtney Smith returned from a nine-month deployment in Germany, where she was a part of a mission with the Mississippi Army National Guard.

Judge Justin Mercer was elected state district court judge for the 23rd District in the state of Arkansas. He was sworn in on January 1, 2025.

Gary W. Thompson transitioned from private practice to a new role as an assistant attorney general in the Consumer Protection Division of the Kentucky Attorney General's Office.

2011

Romika Wells was named Sanderson Farms' director of organizational development and training.

Megan Stuard Thornton opened her own firm, Stuard Thornton Law Firm, in Magee, Mississippi.

2012

Lynsay Chapman made history as one of the two first female chief assistant district attorneys appointed in January to the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit in Georgia.

2014

Jason D. Asbill is the executive director and chief legal officer of Louisiana Guardianship Services Inc. and twice-elected councilman for the City of Harahan, Louisiana. Asbill received the 2025 Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Top Young Lawyer Award.

2015

Ira Rushing returned from a nine-month deployment in Germany, where he was part of a mission with the Mississippi Army National Guard.

2018

Ray A. Young Jr. opened The Young Law Firm LLC in Gulfport, Mississippi, in March 2024. He maintains a general law practice with his law partner, Breanna F. G. Young, Esq.

2019

Emily Lal moved back to Mississippi, where she works for the Attorney General's Office in the child justice division.

MaCall Chastain has been selected for the 2025 cohort of the State Executive Development Institute through Mississippi State University. Chastain is a recipient of the 2025 Reveille Alumni Award from Mississippi State University's Alumni Association and is a member of the Mississippi State Personnel Board's Spring 2025 Mississippi Continuous Improvement Program.

2021

Courtney Sanders is an associate attorney at Coxwell & Associates PLLC.

Samuel Richardson completed the Dayton Bar Association's Leadership Development Program and the Ohio State Bar Association's Leadership Academy. He serves as part of

the Ohio State Bar Association's Council of Delegates.

Chelsea Walker is a staff attorney and grant manager with Mission First Legal Aid.

2022

Anna Weldon is an associate with Mouldoux, Bland, Legrand & Brackett in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her practice focuses on the defense of employers and insurance carriers for claims arising under the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, Defense Base Act, and War Hazards Compensation Act.

2024

Rimaz A. Mustfa was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar and related courts and works for Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett P.C. in Erie, Pennsylvania, where she concentrates her practice in labor and employment law.

Births

2016

Taylor Miller and **Leanna Miller '14** welcomed their fourth child and third daughter, Margaret Taylor Miller, in January 2025.

2021

Courtney Sanders welcomed a son, Roman, on August 3, 2021.

2023

Emily Gray and her husband, Dr.

Hunter McLendon, welcomed a daughter, Vivienne Kate McLendon, on June 26, 2024.

In Memoriam

1970

Samuel E. Farris, September 30, 2024

1973

David Gillentine III, December 11, 2024

1974

John Smith, December 20, 2024

Patrick H. Johnson Jr., January 20, 2025

1977

Phillip Nelson, March 20, 2025

1978

Henry Craft Jr., December 19, 2024

1985

Dorothy Horecky, December 13, 2024

Robert Harrison, September 17, 2024

1992

Jean Smith Vaughan, January 23, 2025

Jeffrey Klingfuss, January 30, 2025

1995

Jason Schuyler, January 23, 2025

2009

David Duckworth, September 7, 2024



Let's do lunch.

All MC Law alumni are invited to First Wednesday lunches on the MC Law campus. Held next semester on the first Wednesdays of September, October, and November, First Wednesday is an opportunity to tour the completely renovated MC Law campus, network with fellow alumni and your favorite professors, and win MC Law swag during competitive rounds of **Bingo!** hosted by Dean John Anderson. **Check your email for the next opportunity to RSVP, or reach out to Katie Henderson at khenderson@mc.edu.**

Closing Statement

GRATEFUL TO SERVE



Jad Jamal Khalaf

MY HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK QUOTATION WAS, "MAY THE DREAMS OF MY HEART BECOME REALITY, KNOWING THAT WITH GOD, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE."

The desire of my heart is to serve the Lord, including through my profession as an attorney and through my current service as the president of the MC Law Alumni Board.

I am honored to serve alongside fellow board members Ammie Nguyen, Davis Pace, La'Bria Barnes, Bonnie Menapace, Kaylon McCou, Brianna Bailey, Ian Baker, Chad

Shook, Amanda Summerlin, Kyle Moore, Jacobi Grant, and Louwlynn Williams. Together, we work to build and strengthen relationships among current alumni and to pave the way for those who will become MC Law alumni.

The board could not do our work without many others who also contribute their skills and talents. I'm thankful to these individuals who have gone above and beyond to support and assist us: Dean John Anderson, Dean Emeritus Jim Rosenblatt, Dean Randy Pierce, Dean Mike Maloney, Ora Durham, Lauren Wells, Amanda Harris, and Ann Regan Barlow.

I'm also grateful for the MC Law alumni who donate their time, expertise, and financial support to further the law school's mission of training future attorneys through a Christian legal education, legal clinics, student organizations, externships, law centers, and moot court.

If you'd like to get more involved with your law school, please reach out to the members of the Alumni Board. Get to know them, and feel free to share your ideas for MC Law with them. They'll be happy to share the many ways you can volunteer with the alumni association or support MC Law financially.

I encourage each of our alumni working to make the dreams of your own heart a reality to "serve where you are planted," whether that be as an attorney, a judge, a scholar, a business professional, a professor, a leader in the community, a member of a church, or in your own family.

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8.

JAD JAMAL KHALAF '14 is the founding partner of Khalaf & Nguyen PLLC, practicing in the areas of personal injury and criminal defense. Contact Jad at 601.688.8888 or jad@601attorney.com.



BE A PART OF MC LAW'S

RISE

WHETHER YOU MAKE A GIFT TO THE Building Fund, Annual Fund, or General Scholarship Fund, your support secures the future of MC Law and furthers Christian legal education in Mississippi. Gifts in any amount are tax-deductible and deeply appreciated.

THE MC LAW BUILDING FUND

Help fund renovations to the MC Law campus currently underway.

- **TO GIVE, VISIT:** law.mc.edu
- **TO SEE THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS, VISIT:** law.mc.edu/about/virtual-tour

THE ANNUAL FUND

Help grow this unrestricted account, which allows MC Law to respond quickly to challenges or to capitalize on new opportunities that fulfill the law school's mission.

TO MAKE A ONE-TIME GIFT, VISIT: law.mc.edu
OR SCAN:



THE 151 SOCIETY

The 151 Society provides exclusive opportunities for involvement and honors donors who contribute \$151 or more annually to the Annual Fund. 151 is a nod to the street address of the Law School, 151 James H. Meredith Drive (formerly 151 E. Griffith Street).

TO JOIN, VISIT: law.mc.edu/alumni/giving-societies

THE ORDER OF THE ROSE

The Order of the Rose recognizes donors who give or pledge \$10,000 or more to the Annual Fund. Pledge payments may be made over a period of up to five years. Donors are inducted into the Order of the Rose upon completion of payment.

TO JOIN, VISIT: law.mc.edu/alumni/giving-societies

THE GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Support MC Law in recruiting and retaining promising future lawyers with a gift to the General Scholarship Fund.

TO SUPPORT FUTURE ATTORNEYS, VISIT: law.mc.edu



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