Feature Stories:

• MPE Teachers of the Year
• STAR Teachers

Designing Evaluation Systems to Improve Teacher and Leader Effectiveness
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Cover Stories

MPE Teachers of the Year
Page 9
MPE recognizes 23 members awarded as Teachers of the Year

Designing Evaluation Systems to Improve Teacher and Leader Effectiveness
Page 12
Dr. Daphe Buckley

Star Teachers
Page 17
Congratulations to the 47 MPE members named STAR Teachers

In Every Issue

President’s Message
Page 4
Dr. Barry Morris

Executive Director’s Message
Page 5
Kelly Riley

Message from the Executive Director Emeritus
Page 6
Judy Rhodes

Member Spotlight
Page 11, 14 & 22

Mississippi Department of Education News
Page 16

Community College News
Page 18

Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning News
Page 19

Features

Mel Buckley Scholarship Awarded
Page 7

Earthwatch Expedition
Page 10
Ashley Barefoot finds science is dirty work during her Costa Rican Earthwatch Expedition

MPE Board Retreat
Page 15
The MPE Board of Directors meets at the Eagle Ridge Conference Center in Raymond

From our Board of Directors
Page 20
Teaching – More Than a Dental Plan
Barry Morris, Ph.D.

MPE Area Directors
Page 23
Locate the Area Director for your district
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
DR. BARRY MORRIS

Mississippians have never been defined by the summation of their circumstances, whether it be the one day of Katrina, one hundred days of oil surges into our waters, or the endless months of recession pounding away at our financial security.

In one day a disaster named Katrina rewrote the history of the Gulf Coast – but failed to rewrite the history of her schools. Teachers, parents, administrators, school boards, legislators, state leaders, universities and college leaders returned for the sake of the children. Schools came back to life. The deadening effect of hurricane winds and violent storm surges wiped away buildings but could not diminish our people.

The one hundred days of oil and the rising tide of recession attempt to define us as Mississippians. These too will fail to change who we are. For the sake of our children, we will not transfer responsibility for their learning to anyone else.

A teacher wrote about her grief over the recession and its restrictions on building an effective learning environment. She refuses to define her school year as diminished for the sake of each teenager who arrived in her room in early August. Definitely the recession has the potential of eroding our capacities, but with creative courage and a willingness in our towns and cities to join with their schools to build a greater learning community, this capacity will be more than enough to engage our children in a powerful learning experience.

Mississippi is a large learning community – when one of our districts suffer, all suffer. We are diminished by the needs of our fellow educators, administrators, children, and families. No region of our state can be ignored or set aside, for within that region grows our future. We treat our children with a sense of their giftedness and potential, rather than settling for just identifying their deficits and their limitations.

Mississippians are defined by their children and the great faith they hold in us. Our children come to school every day expecting the very best. We can do no less than to help them dream. There is no greater tragedy than to see children losing their dream of the future.

Our state leaders, legislators, department of education, institutions of higher learning, superintendents, school boards, teachers, and community leaders are parents and grandparents. They know their legacy is tied to their children.

Mississippians have always built on the potential to see the state as a vast learning community populated by treasures, our children, who are given to us for only a short period of time. Visionaries for our twenty-first century schoolhouse come in all forms from the early education teacher working with three-year-olds moving onto elementary, middle, and high school educators and administrators, superintendents, school board members, community leaders, community colleges and university faculty and administrators, state legislators and leaders, and deeply caring parents who join together across districts and regions to see our children as one child.

We are Mississippians.
It is an honor to serve as the Executive Director of the Mississippi Professional Educators. MPE encourages the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. I attended several events this summer where others expressed to me their respect and high regard for MPE’s principles and professionalism. I am sure you join me in thanking Judy Rhodes for her service to our organization. MPE is what it is today in large part to her leadership and efforts.

MPE continues to provide the premium package of benefits and services to our members. Many members who never expected to face legal problems required legal assistance this past spring regarding non-renewals due to budget cuts or reductions in force. Our attorneys provided assistance to 36 of our members who were non-renewed for either performance or budgetary reasons and who requested hearings. As of August 16th, 21 (58%) of these members were rehired, 4 (11%) were not re-hired, 8 (22%) were still awaiting a final decision by their school board and 3 (8%) had decided to retire.

Just as the start of a new school year is full of events and activities, there are several important education events and initiatives at the state level that I want to make you aware of. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee will host FY 2012 (i.e., school year 2011-2012) budget hearings this month. I will attend education-related hearings and provide an overview in my weekly emails of requested budgets. MDE’s Disciplinary Policies and Procedures Review Committee will make its recommendations this fall to the Mississippi Board of Education and the legislature for strengthening current educator misconduct and licensure revocation policies and laws. Finally, I hope you will read Dr. Daphne Buckley’s article on page 12 of this issue regarding MDE’s development and design of a new educator evaluation system. I served on the statewide Teacher Evaluation Council discussed by Dr. Buckley and I believe its recommendations will enhance and strengthen the education profession in Mississippi.

If you have not already done so, please encourage your co-workers to join MPE. Not only does MPE offer its members twice the amount of professional liability protection ($2 million compared to only $1 million offered by other associations) for a third of the cost, but it provides invaluable information to members on education policy and events throughout our state. As a reminder, MPE serves administrators and support personnel in pre-K through graduate education in both public and private institutions. 88 of our members work in the community college system and 73 work in the university system.

Thank you for being a part of the MPE family. Please remember that the MPE staff is here to serve you. Do not hesitate to contact our office at 1-800-523-0269 if we may ever be of assistance to you or if you have suggestions for how we may better serve our membership. Have a great year!

To start receiving our weekly emails from the Executive Director, email kelly@mpe.org
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMERITUS, JUDY RHODES

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director the past five years. The Mississippi Professional Educators is truly the premier association for educators in Mississippi. I was honored to serve you and to represent our organization. My recent retirement allows me to focus on my rehabilitation. I am working towards being able to enjoy a round of golf as soon as possible!

Serving as Executive Director allowed me the privilege to work with outstanding educators who served on MPE’s Board of Directors. Your board gives countless hours to this organization. I would like to personally thank the MPE Presidents that I worked with: Dr. Steve Bishop, Dr. Stacy Reeves, Dennis Silas, Dianne Sellers and Rhonda Travis. Dr. Barry Morris continues a strong line of leadership and service to MPE.

I am proud of MPE’s accomplishments during my tenure. Our membership grew from 6,300 to more than 9,000. I want to thank our Area Directors and Building Representatives for their hard work on behalf of MPE. We now have Area Directors in every area of the state and I believe this has made a significant impact in our recruitment efforts. We also added more benefits for our members. I am especially proud of the establishment of our MPE Graduate Scholarships. This benefit exemplifies MPE’s belief in personal growth as a professional. Among other new benefits, we also added accidental death & dismemberment coverage, as well as optional auto and home insurance at a discounted rate.

Thank you again for the opportunity and privilege to have served as your Executive Director. I wish you the best of luck this school year and in all of your future endeavors. I look forward to seeing many of you at our annual conventions in the future. Please maintain your focus on “students first,” as I know you will. You have taught me so much about serving on the “front line,” sharing with me the day-to-day challenges you face in all areas, including students, administration, parents and others. I thought I knew so much when I started with MPE, but you have taught me so much more.

Keep the faith! And please continue to support and help MPE strive to be the leading professional organization in the state.

Sincerely,

Judy

If you did not receive your building rep packet, or if you need additional supplies, please contact Stephanie Miller (contact information below). If you have had a change of address or have changed schools, please notify our office, or update your profile online at www.mpe.org. If you are NOT A BUILDING REP, but would like to inquire about being the building rep for your school, please contact Stephanie at stephanie@mpe.org or call 1-800-523-0269.
4th ANNUAL MEL BUCKLEY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Joey Hutto with Ross & Yerger Insurance presented the 4th Annual Mel Buckely/MPE Scholarship Award in April to Sarah Kay Millican, a Tupelo High School Graduate who will attend Mississippi State University this fall.

Hutto, Senior Vice President with Ross & Yerger Insurance, and the Tupelo based CREATE Foundation established the $1,000 annual scholarship in 2007 as a tribute to Mel Buckley, MPE’s former Executive Director. The scholarship is awarded to a Tupelo High School graduate who will be majoring in education. A committee selects the scholarship recipient after reviewing applicants’ written answers to six questions regarding their decision to teach, as well as applicants’ high school activities, honors and transcripts.

Asked why she decided on teaching as a career, Sarah Kay wrote, “I decided to become a teacher so that I could inspire, support and motivate young children to be successful. Being a teacher will give me the ongoing opportunities to not only provide a positive learning environment so that children can be successful in school subjects, but also to instill the values that will be needed for them to deal with everyday issues in the real world. I truly want to make a difference!” While at Tupelo High School, Sarah Kay was a member of the National Honor Society, Anchor club and Future Educators of America, as well as a member of the varsity soccer team. Her volunteerism includes work with the Salvation Army, American Cancer Society and Tupelo’s Junior Auxiliary.

HAVE YOU VISITED YOUR MPE WEBSITE (www.mpe.org) LATELY?

IT PROVIDES VALUABLE RESOURCES FOR YOU:

• Links to our benefit partners’ services (homepage)
• MPE dues and benefits compared to those of other organizations (Member Benefits)
• Printable (PDF) MPE application for your use in recruiting your co-workers and friends (Join Now!)
• Past issues of the MPE Journal (Resources for Educators)
• Frequently used phone numbers for MDE, SBCJC, IHL, and other state agencies (Resources for Educators)
• K-12 curriculum resources (Resources for Educators)
• Classroom grants and resources (Resources for Educators)
• Teacher awards and recognitions (Resources for Educators)
• Professional development opportunities throughout the state (Professional Development)
• Contact information for legislators (homepage)

Visit www.mpe.org today!
Adding MPE as one of your Facebook pages will enable you to receive valuable updates and education news.

Encourage your co-workers to visit both our webpage (www.mpe.org) and our Facebook page.

Members of the Mississippi Professional Educators are eligible for the Working Advantage discount program.

Save up to 60% on tickets, restaurants, travel and shopping

Exclusive discounts include:

**Entertainment**
Save up to 60% on movie tickets, theme parks, hotels, museums, zoos, attractions, aquariums and more!

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Discounts on apparel, books and music, electronics, flowers and restaurants!

**Theater & Events**
Find great seats and super deals on Broadway shows, family events, concerts and sporting events nationwide.

**REGISTER FOR YOUR FREE ACCOUNT TODAY,** Locate the member ID from the Working Advantage flyer you received in the mail from MPE, or email stephanie@mpe.org to have the member ID sent to you.

www.workingadvantage.com/mpe or call (800)565-3712
MPE DISTRICT TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

MPE is proud to congratulate and honor the following members who were named their respective district’s 2010 Teacher of the Year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPE MEMBER</th>
<th>SCHOOL DISTRICT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Cook</td>
<td>Calhoun County</td>
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<tr>
<td>John M. Woodard, Jr.</td>
<td>Canton Public</td>
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<td>Melinda Turner Kopp</td>
<td>Chickasaw County</td>
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<td>Christina McDaniel</td>
<td>Choctaw County</td>
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<td>Sarah B. Cauthen</td>
<td>Coahoma County</td>
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<td>Daniel J. Fuller</td>
<td>Jackson Public</td>
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<td>Jennifer H. Lowery</td>
<td>Jones County</td>
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<td>Jackie McElwain</td>
<td>Kosciusko</td>
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<td>Judy Bishop</td>
<td>Lafayette County</td>
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<td>Mary Jean Taylor</td>
<td>Lamar County</td>
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<td>Tasha Scott</td>
<td>Lincoln County</td>
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<td>Mary Ann Ballew</td>
<td>Louisville Municipal</td>
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<td>Susan Huckaby</td>
<td>McComb</td>
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<td>Holis McArthur</td>
<td>Moss Point</td>
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<td>Dennis Reed</td>
<td>MS School for Math &amp; Science</td>
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<td>Vanda Brister</td>
<td>Pearl Public</td>
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<td>Debbie Lee Bolin</td>
<td>Pearl River County</td>
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<td>Shelley M. Douglas</td>
<td>Picayune</td>
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<td>Regina Weeks</td>
<td>Starkville</td>
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<td>Suzette Matthews</td>
<td>Sunflower County</td>
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<td>Alice Jones</td>
<td>Vicksburg-Warren</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamonn Brashier</td>
<td>Wayne County</td>
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<tr>
<td>William E. Bell, Jr.</td>
<td>Yazoo City</td>
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Ashley Barefoot, a second grade gifted education teacher at Oak Grove Gifted Education Center in the Lamar County School District and a member of MPE since 2005, joined an Earthwatch research team for an 8-day expedition in Costa Rica to help scientists determine sustainable coffee farming practices in the region. Barefoot’s expedition was funded by a grant from The Phil Hardin Foundation.

From July 4th to 11th, Barefoot joined 5 other Earthwatch volunteers from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom for the “Costa Rican Coffee from Community to Cup” project. The research team was led by Dr. John Banks of the University of Washington, Tacoma and Sebastián Castro Tanzi, a native Costa Rican scientist studying at the University of Vermont.

“This trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore another part of the world and to work alongside real scientists in the field. Their willingness to share their work with others helped me to realize that all people share this one world and it’s up to us to take care of it for future generations,” said Barefoot. She added, “The work that goes into producing one cup of coffee is intense. I used to think a $3 cup of coffee was too expensive and now I can’t believe it’s that cheap considering all of the effort that went into growing, harvesting, and producing it!”

This project was designed to help increase sustainable coffee farming practices in the Tarrazú region of Costa Rica, with the ability to be replicated in other farms and coffee regions. The word “Tarrazú” is derived from the indigenous Huetar word at-arrazú, meaning “rocky ground at the mouth of the mountain.” Coffee is the world’s fifth most widely traded commodity. Costa Rica exemplifies one of the most dramatic shifts toward intensive coffee production. Currently there is increasing recognition that such intensive farming practices are unsustainable for the farming community, for maintaining coffee yield and for the environment. (Source: Earthwatch Institute Expedition Briefing 2010: Project Overview)

The Earthwatch volunteers used Geographic Information Systems tools, baited traps, and soil coring to help researchers measure the biodiversity of pollinators and the relative biomass of coffee plantations.

“I learned so much about science data collection that I can’t wait to share with my students. I think they’re going to love the fact that sometimes science is dirty work, literally. I’ve got the dirty laundry to prove it!” laughed Barefoot. “I see a lot of hands-on, ‘down and dirty’ science projects in our future!”
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MPE MEMBERS RECOGNIZED AS EDUCATORS OF DISTINCTION BY THE COCA-COLA SCHOLARS FOUNDATION

Two MPE members were among five Mississippi teachers named Educators of Distinction in June by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation. Ruby Wallace, a MPE member since 2002, teaches at Yazoo City High School. Kathy Wells, a MPE member since 2007, teaches AP English at Wingfield High School in Jackson.

The Educators of Distinction award recognizes outstanding teachers dedicated to providing education with an enhanced purpose. Wallace and Wells were nominated by students who were named 2009-2010 Coca-Cola Scholars.

(MP Wallce) (Kathy Wells)

We want to hear from you! Please send your MPE member news to:

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P.O. Box 22550
Jackson, MS 39225-2550

MPE BOARD MEMBER RECOGNIZED AS DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL

MPE District 2 Board Member Sunnie Barkley was recently selected as National Distinguished Principal from Mississippi for the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). This honor will be announced in the October edition of Principal magazine.

Barkley has served as the principal of Olive Branch Elementary School since 1997. She earned both her Bachelor of Science in Education and her Master of Education from Memphis State University. She received her Specialist in Education from the University of Mississippi. A past president of the Mississippi Association of Elementary School Administrators, Barkley joined MPE in 1992 and also serves as a MPE Building Representative.

MPE MEMBER RECEIVES PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Linda Parrott was one of two Mississippi educators named by President Obama on June 7 as recipients of the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Linda will receive her award in Washington, D.C. later this year. The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to the best pre-college-level science and mathematics teachers from across the country. Parrott teaches chemistry at Ocean Spring High School and originally joined MPE in 1999.

We want to hear from you! Please send your MPE member news to:

mpe@mpe.org or
P.O. Box 22550
Jackson, MS 39225-2550
DESIGNING EVALUATION SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE TEACHER AND LEADER EFFECTIVENESS
Dr. Daphne Buckley, Deputy State Superintendent
Quality Professionals and Special Schools

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is currently working on developing and designing a new educator evaluation system. The system will focus on improving teacher and leader effectiveness which will lead to increased student achievement. Not only do we want to ensure that every teacher is highly qualified and fully certified, but we want to also ensure that we have effective teachers in each classroom. In order to achieve this goal we must create an evaluation system to measure the performance of teachers against the academic growth of students.

The movement toward increasing the number of effective teachers is due in part to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which focuses on three areas of teaching in particular: treating teachers as professionals, rewarding excellence in teaching and giving teachers adequate time and support to develop themselves and their lessons. Additionally, the teacher effectiveness aligns with the State Board of Education’s goal to increase teacher quality and quantity.

Teacher effectiveness matters; the research suggests teacher effectiveness contributes more to improving student academic growth than any other school characteristic and that an effective principal is important in recruiting and supporting teachers and leading school improvement (Murphy, 2006; Rivkin, 2005; Waters, 2003). Studies suggest that a student who has great teachers for several years in a row will be on a path of continued growth and success, while a student who is taught by a succession of less effective teachers may experience lasting academic challenges (Hanushek, 2009; Sanders and Rivers, 1996).

The teacher makes the difference in the classroom; therefore it is important that any system used to evaluate teachers should include input from teachers during its design. The initial teacher evaluation discussion started with the state’s district teachers of the year. They met and shared their recommendations regarding the performance components of the system. MDE used their recommendations as the foundation for the system’s development. Next, a statewide Teacher Evaluation Council (STEC) made up of education stakeholders was established to recommend to MDE a framework for the process and development of a statewide evaluation system for teachers and principals in Mississippi schools. The following recommendations were proposed by the Council:

1. The evaluation system should be comprehensive and required by all school districts with a focus on improving teaching techniques.

2. The MDE should revise current state teacher and administrator performance standards to include an appropriate educator ethics standard. The code of ethics should define the
professional behavior of educators and serve as a guide to ethical conduct.

3. The educator evaluation system should use multiple rating tools to assess the productivity and effectiveness of the educator’s performance. The rating tools should include the following components and meet the following objectives:

- Student growth
- Classroom and/or school observations
- Positive student work habits (e.g., attendance, preparation of homework, obtaining passing grades)
- Achievement gap reduction
- Participation in collaborative activities with peers
- Individualized and personalized support for students (e.g., mentoring of students, personalized assistance to students, establishing partnerships with the community)
- Peer evaluations
- Portfolios (artifacts) as objective evidence to meet agreed upon goals

4. The educator evaluation system should utilize an appropriate scoring rubric that contains identified and properly defined standards for meeting or performing at each scoring level.

5. The educator evaluation system should identify levels of performance for educators.

6. The educator evaluation system should include appropriate training for teachers and leaders.

7. The educator evaluation system should provide appropriate information to identify professional development needs for teachers and leaders.

8. The educator evaluation system must NOT create undue work for administrators and teachers.

9. The educator evaluation system should consider student growth as a significant factor in the overall evaluation results.

10. The educator evaluation system should evaluate teachers using a variety of multiple measures and not just student growth.

11. The educator evaluation system should allow for appropriate and timely feedback at the teacher, school, and district levels.

12. The educator evaluation system must focus on the diversity of student needs and backgrounds.

MDE will continue to receive input from teachers and leaders during the development and implementation of the statewide educator evaluation system. The system will be phased in and piloted in selected school districts over the next two years. If you would like to know more about the statewide evaluation for educators, please e-mail Daphne Buckley at dbuckley@mde.k12.ms.us.

NOTE: Dr. Buckley refers to the movement toward increasing the number of effective teachers as a result of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). You may review the USDE’s blueprint for the reauthorization of the ESEA in its entirety in the News and Resources section of the MPE website (www.mpe.org/DisplayNewsArticle.asp). The blueprint identifies five key priorities: 1) college- and career-ready students; 2) great teachers and leaders in every school; 3) equity and opportunity for all students; 4) raise the bar and reward excellence; and, 5) promote innovation and continuous improvement.
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MPE MEMBER HONORED AS MISSISSIPPI ALTERNATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

MPE member Melinda Kopp was named 2010 Mississippi Alternate Teacher of the Year by the Mississippi Department of Education on April 23rd. A member of MPE since 2005, Melinda represented Congressional District 1 as its Teacher of the Year Congressional Finalist.

Kopp has been teaching in Chickasaw County for 20 years, beginning in the Houston School District in 1989 and moving to Houlka Attendance Center in 2000. She received her BS in English Education and MA in English from Mississippi State University and is Nationally Board Certified. She teaches English I, English II, English IV and AP English at Houlka Attendance Center and also teaches speech in Houlka and Coffeeville via distance learning through the Internet.

MPE MEMBERS EXCEL

Carol Rigby received the 2010 Joe F. Shepard Memorial Service Award from the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) at its 2010 Administrator’s Conference in June. The award honors Mr. Joe Shepard who served as administrator of Leake Academy for seventeen years. The award is presented to a MAIS administrator who has given their expertise, dedication, service, loyalty and leadership to the MAIS over an extended period of time. Rigby serves on the MAIS Teacher Certification Commission, is a former member of the Teacher Association Board, the MAIS Executive Committee, and in 1997 was elected as the first female to serve on the Academy Activities Commission. A member of MPE since 1992, she is beginning her nineteenth year as Headmaster of Copiah Educational Foundation, Inc.

Lillie Bryant, a secondary mathematics teacher and a MPE member since 2008, was named Teacher of the Year at Natchez High School. Michael Cates, a MPE member since 2004, has been named Principal of Tremont Attendance Center in Itawamba County. Shelia Hudnall of West Hills Elementary in Meridian recently earned her Masters in Dyslexia Therapy and passed the exam to be a Certified Academic Language Therapist.
Among other items considered during its strategic planning session on Thursday, the Board discussed MPE's role in state and federal initiatives, including P-16 councils and the USDE's Blueprint for Reform. The board conducted its quarterly board meeting on Friday.

Your Board of Directors continues to give much of their time and efforts in advancing MPE. We certainly appreciate their leadership and service.

MPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HOSTS ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT

Your MPE Board of Directors held its annual planning retreat June 16-18 at Eagle Ridge Conference Center in Raymond. The Board hosted a reception and dinner for local educators and legislators Wednesday evening. Senator Hillman Frazier; Dr. Clyde Muse, President of Hinds Community College; and, Dr. Sandra Rasberry, Chair of Belhaven University's Division of Education, enjoyed visiting with MPE board members and their guests.

Dr. Sandra Rasberry, Chair of Belhaven University's Division of Education, and Senator Hillman Frazier visit with Dr. Benny Hornsby, MPE Board Secretary-Treasurer, at the reception Wednesday evening.

Senator Hillman Frazier and Dr. Clyde Muse, President of Hinds Community College, greet each other.

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RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES

With your help, we can obtain our goal of “10,000 in 2010”

• Five new members = one year’s free membership
• 6-9 new members = one year’s free membership + $10 per member*
• 10-14 members = one year’s free membership + $15 per member*
• 15 or more new members = one year’s free membership + $20 per member*

You will receive $5 per student member recruited.

Recruitment bonus checks will be awarded at the end of each quarter, with the first quarter beginning July 1 and ending September 30. Credit will be given for each new member who joins or re-joins** between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. Free memberships will be credited towards the next year’s membership.

* credit will be given for each additional member after 5
** member must have previously been made inactive for a period of three months or more

Senator Hillman Frazier and Dr. Clyde Muse, President of Hinds Community College, greet each other.
The world is forever changing and moving at a rapid pace. The world of education has certainly changed and will continue to change to meet the demands of the future. How will our students be ready to meet the challenges of an ever increasing and demanding fast-paced world? Their journey begins by how well our teachers and administrators prepare them academically.

Our students must meet the highest level of expectations to put them on a path to success. Teachers and administrators have worked extremely hard implementing appropriate lesson plans and teaching strategies to prepare students for a more rigorous curriculum and assessments. As Mississippi educators, you are to be commended for your hard work. National education publications have taken notice of the positive changes that have been implemented to challenge our students.

The majority of states, including Mississippi, are moving in unison toward one set of common educational standards, in English Language Arts and Mathematics that will be taught to students from Mississippi to Maine. This effort, called the Common Core State Standards, is not an effort led by the United States Department of Education, but a uniform effort led by the National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The English Language Arts and Mathematics standards for K-12 education were developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including teachers, content experts, school administrators and parents. These standards will establish clear and consistent goals for learning that will prepare our students for college and the workforce.

The Common Core State Standards are:
- Aligned with college and work expectations;
- Clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Evidence and research-based.

A significant benefit of the adoption of the Common Core State Standards will include resources to improve the assessment process in Mississippi schools. Until we reach a point that the results of assessments are immediately available for use in improving the educational process, we will continue to trail other states in advancing student achievement.

We have always said that Mississippi’s children are competing against children from across the country, but not until the development of the Common Core State Standards has the playing field been leveled. Mississippi has adopted these standards, which will build upon the work already underway to transform Mississippi’s education system for years to come. There will be much more information regarding the Common Core State Standards coming soon.

As teachers, you have a golden opportunity to really make a difference in the lives of our students. It is in your classroom where instruction and learning has to be at its best for optimum results. Thank you for all you do to help mold and shape the brightest minds in the country.
MPE is proud to congratulate and honor the following members who were recognized in April by the Mississippi Economic Council as STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition) Teachers. 47 of the 263 (18%) teachers recognized this year are MPE members.

**MPE Member**

Adrian Allen, Terry High School  
Millie Arender, Vancleave High School  
Susan Bass, Northeast Lauderdale High School  
Rosemary Blakeslee, Gulfport High School  
LeAnn Boswell, Noxapater High School  
Elizabeth Butler, East Central High School  
Dianna Byrd, Wayne Academy  
Stephanie Clanahan, Noxubee County High  
Monica Cowan, H.W. Byers High School  
Robin Dibble, Starkville High School  
Dr. Susan Dillard, Nanih Waiya High School  
Henry Easley, Calhoun City High School  
Rona Eckles, Hernando High School  
Greg Goley, Moss Point High School  
Elizabeth Graves, Tylertown High School  
Carol Gurley, Potts Camp High School  
Dr. Elizabeth Harrison, Houston High School  
Rita Henley, Copiah Academy  
Melandy Henry, Sebastopol High School  
Lisa Herndon, Amory High School  
Susan Hill, Ripley High School  
Susan Huckaby, McComb High School  
Lydia King, Loyd Star High School  
Rebecca Knight, Enterprise High School

**MPE Member**

Ann Lathrop, Bay St. Louis High School  
Sandra Lewis, Franklin High School  
Kathleen Lott, Cleveland High School  
Nancy Love, Puckett High School  
Jackie McElwain, Kosciusko High School  
Susan Neal, Newton High School  
Rosina Paillot, Pearl River Central High School  
Stephen Pater, George County High School  
Linda Powe, Pearl High School  
Thomas Powell, Saint Martin High School  
Sarah Pylant, Purvis High School  
Dennis Reed, MS School for Math & Science  
Wayne Richey, Clinton High School  
Mary Sanford, Seminary High School  
Elizabeth Scrivner, Riverside High School  
Vicki Shirley, Corinth High School  
Sherry Stratton, Caledonia High School  
Robert Sutton, Oak Grove High School  
Benjamin Wall, Newton County High School  
Megan Walters, Ethel High School  
Donna Wilson, Lawrence County High School  
Jennifer Wilson, Northwest Rankin High School  
Paula Windham, New Albany High School
During the 2010 legislative session, House Bill 1071 created an Education Achievement Council to work towards increasing the educational attainment and skills levels of the state's working-age population. The council is a result of a recommendation from the 2009 Graduation Rate Task Force. The group consists of leaders from community colleges, universities, the Department of Education, the Department of Mental Health, the Governor’s Office, Legislators, and the Mississippi Economic Council.

Recently, the group held its first meeting to elect chairpersons and discuss what we hope to accomplish. Representative Kelvin Buck and Senator Doug Davis, chairmen of the Universities and Colleges Committees for both the House and Senate, were selected to lead the group. One of the goals of the board is to bring different stakeholders together to try and improve all levels of education in the state. By stepping back and looking at the big educational picture, we hope to be able to improve the entire system, which will benefit all of Mississippi.

We have one of the least educated citizenries in the country. It is not good enough in today’s global economy to simply graduate our students and send them on their way. We must prepare them to enter the workplace and use the skills they have learned to live a better life. I think this council will allow us to provide a better educational system for everyone.

During June, our Adult Education office sponsored the annual Adult Education Staff Development Regional Conferences in Natchez and Oxford. Approximately 520 people attended these two conferences. All of the participants are on the front-line of improving our state and are dedicated folks who might not normally receive the recognition they deserve for the important work they do. It was a pleasure to spend some time with them.

At these conferences, awards were given to students and teachers of the year in the adult education field. In the northern region of the state, Patricia Perry from Northeast Mississippi Community College was awarded student of the year, and Teresa Smith from Mississippi Delta Community College was awarded instructor of the year. In the southern region, Preston Butts from the Harper Wallin Family Education Center in Hattiesburg was awarded student of the year, and Alvin Hogan from the McComb Public Schools was named instructor of the year. Congratulations to these winners!

On August 5, nearly 700 instructors and administrators from the community colleges met at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson for the first ever Career and Technical Postsecondary Summer Conference. This was a great time for our career and technical folks to learn ways to improve their training and to also network with one another. Participants were able to attend breakout session ranging from business and computer related technology to student services. We hope that this will be the first of many summer career and technical education conferences.

As the new school year begins, I hope everyone has the best year ever!
MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING NEWS

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS ANALYZE IMPACT OF OIL SPILL
Dr. Hank M. Bounds
Commissioner of Higher Education

The Deepwater Horizon incident that occurred this past April is a terrible tragedy; the magnitude of the oil spill’s impact on Mississippi and the rest of the Gulf Coast is unknown. These circumstances immediately put Mississippi universities in a unique position to use their expertise in analyzing potential damages that could affect our Coast for years to come.

Fortunately, our state is prepared to respond to this disaster because of the combined efforts of our institutions’ talented researchers and research technologies headquartered here. We are thankful to have four major research universities that have a long and successful history of collaborating and a strong track record of working together through the Mississippi Research Consortium (MRC).

These institutions- Jackson State University, the University of Mississippi, the University of Southern Mississippi, and Mississippi State University- were some of the first on the scene to begin studying the physical and socio-economic effects of the oil spill. We created the Mississippi Deepwater Horizon Response Team in early May to facilitate a rapid response with the most relevant expertise.

Two representatives from each member institution comprise this team and, along with studying the spill’s socio-economic impact and effects on human health, they are also reviewing the spill’s environmental and ecological impacts. Researchers are using computational modeling to predict and study oil movement and distributions; observing oceanographic properties; analyzing land cover changes before and after oil landfall; determining the level of oil in sediments; and evaluating toxicity and its effects on aquatic organisms, marine life and coastal species.

We are also fortunate to have other Mississippi-based resources, including the Gulf Coast Research Lab, the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology and the Northern Gulf Institute studying this disaster.

In June, our universities began participating in a comprehensive analysis of the spill’s economic impact on the Gulf Coast. This year-long study, coordinated through the Office of Governor Haley Barbour, will collect and analyze key economic indicators including employment data, tax revenues, and socio-economic information. The data will be used to form economic forecasts and the potential impact of the spill on Mississippi’s economy.

However, our universities’ research extends far beyond economic analysis. MRC institutions are monitoring the spill’s effect on the Gulf’s water quality, marine life and fisheries, as well as the physical and mental health of Coast residents. Research scientists are also interested in community outreach and developing programs that local schools can use for lessons on the spill.

Our long-term commitment to studying this disaster has the potential to be groundbreaking, instructive and universally significant. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill can be seen as an opportunity to study and learn what must be done to prevent these kinds of incidents or how to respond to a similar event. The Gulf Coast’s response and recovery will depend heavily on the level of expertise at Mississippi’s research universities. I am extremely pleased with our response thus far and confident in our abilities to continue contributing to the scientific research on the impact of the oil spill.
TEACHING – MORE THAN A DENTAL PLAN

Barry Morris, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education
William Carey University

Working with children is not a vocation or a job. It is a profession and a life ministry. As a young intern forty years ago, my supervising teacher introduced her fourth grade class as “a pit of snakes, never turn your back on them.” She then proceeded to divide her class into three groups: the good brains, the lazy brains, and the retarded brains. She was my first glimpse of a Disease Model Teacher. Children lowered their personal expectations to reach down to the expectations of their teacher.

I would meet my second internship teacher that same day after lunch. She introduced those same defeated, discouraged children as her writers, singers, engineers, leaders, and readers. She was my first glimpse of a Gifted Model Teacher who celebrated the gifts, rather than practiced the diseases.

There I encountered the struggle between two teaching philosophies with the children on the battleground. These daily experiences would have eternal implications.

Developing a Shepherd’s Heart

There is a boot camp mentality that has unnaturally increased the pressure on students to perform. While boot camp is a valuable tool to build men and women into soldiers, when these same techniques are applied to the learning community in order to raise test scores, then school becomes a gray, frightening existence. All of these behaviors are evidence of a teacher’s heart that is far from a shepherd’s heart.

Developing a shepherd’s heart is a lifestyle quality. It is a change of mind from the boot camp to the shepherd’s valley. The atmosphere in the shepherd’s classroom is a place where you want to go. Often outsiders marvel at the miracles taking place with those children. The shepherd is never surprised. The miracle was already present. It only needed to be nourished and protected.

Star Teachers

Martin Haberman interviewed many educators working in inner city schools. In each school he identified the best educators and sought to build a profile of the truly successful teacher. He found there were three types of educators: the Quitter, the Failure, and the Star.

Many individuals who decide to become educators believe it will be easy and fun until they are faced with the reality of each working day. Recently a teacher remarked, “You wouldn’t believe what a fantastic teacher I could be if I just had a different set of kids.” For the beginning educator the environment can become too threatening. His vision of changing young lives may be lost because this educator is the Quitter. The classroom becomes a threatening place forcing the young teacher to run seeking shelter. The tragedy has within it the seeds of hope. It is vital that young educators have caring, experienced mentors surrounding them, giving them the advice, encouragement, and hope that their teaching skills will develop within time. It is the agony of being left alone without adequate support and professional companionship that increases the anxiety of these young adults and moves them inevitably to personal failure.

The second educator is the Failure. These teachers may stay in the classroom thirty years consistently failing every day. Characterized by poor planning, limited goal setting, and low expectations, their classrooms are a dismal wasteland with children assigned to babysitting services instead of learning. They transfer blame and responsibility to others believing that it is always someone else’s fault for the classroom failures. Many of these educators end their careers bitter because the children have become so uncontrollable and the parents so uncaring. This category of educator is more a custodian managing students as things rather than ministering to children. This person is putting in time and has failed to accept the calling.

The third educator is the Star. These women and men truly love what they are doing. They come into the classroom seeking challenges and are not surprised when children misbehave. They believe misbehavior is an opportunity for training and would discipline (train) a child rather than discipline one. They never transfer responsibil-
ity for the children’s learning. They truly love their work and find the teaching experience a lifelong wonder, challenge, and mission. Star educators are often able to describe the teaching mission. They believe in their schools and work diligently to find ways around the bureaucratic and economic strangleholds. They see the school as a living community of learners worthy of their time and talents. They see themselves as missionaries, not employees.

Promised Land or the Wilderness
From the first day of school, Disease Model teachers begin to unconsciously make decisions about their children’s potential for learning. After a time of evaluation, these teachers bring their children up to the river that divides the classroom into two parts: the wilderness and the Promised Land. Disease Model teachers have decided who will cross over. They have decided which of the children they can teach. As they begin to celebrate the new adventures and exciting opportunities for learning on the Promised Land side, the river closes. No one seems to notice that some children have been left behind. They sit on the wilderness side of the river, watching the others sample the richness of the classroom. Only a few feet away, yet these wilderness children are separated from their teacher’s love and attention. Some will try temper tantrums, clowning around, hyperactivity or outbursts in a vain attempt to capture the teacher’s attention. They know that being punished is a far better option than being forgotten.

The Agony and Loneliness of Learned Helplessness
What causes these forgotten children and their teachers to be so separated? Learned helplessness is about two problems: fear and loneliness. The Disease Model Teacher recognizes the weaknesses of all his children and knows he does not have enough expertise or energy to reach them all. Therefore the teacher builds a classroom much like an emergency room. Services are provided for those students who best can be helped. Educational triage is performed. The others are told to make their wilderness comfortable and be quiet.

The Gifted Model Teacher accepts learning helplessness as a reality and then moves forward building a foundation that all children can thrive and learn. The classroom becomes the learning community that bears one another’s burdens, challenges one another without the threat of overwhelming competition, and celebrates each day as a wonder and an opportunity for discovery. The classroom thrives and the children learn.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

WAYNE COUNTY PRINCIPAL HONORED AS 2010 MISSISSIPPI ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

The State Board of Education honored Wayne County High School Principal Billy Ray Jones Jr. as the 2010 Mississippi Administrator of the Year in June. A member of MPE since 2005, Jones has served as principal of Wayne County High School since 2007.

“It is my personal belief that the most important things needed for learning to occur are for genuine, effective relationships and clearly defined high expectations to be in place,” Jones said. “If there is anything that has served me well thus far, it is the fact that I have always treated all the students I have been charged with as my own and have always had very high expectations of all my students.” Recognizing that community involvement is essential to developing and maintaining a successful school, Jones works closely with the school’s adopters program, as well as the Lion’s Club and the local youth court.

Jones has a degree from Southwest Mississippi Community College. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Mississippi, a master’s degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and is currently working on a doctorate from the University of Southern Mississippi.

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ACHIEVE GOALS

MPE’s Graduate Scholarship Program began in 2008. MPE awards up to five scholarships each year in the amount of $1,000 each to MPE members who wish to pursue graduate level studies at a college or university in the state of Mississippi. Scholarship recipients appreciate this benefit which promotes professional growth and development.

Sharon Prescott, a third grade teacher at Sherard Elementary in Coahoma County, received one of MPE’s first scholarships in 2008. A resident of Clarksdale and a member of MPE since 2001, she received her Doctor of Education from the University of Mississippi this past May. Prescott shares, “I am so happy to be finished! The MPE scholarship really helped.”

Loria Newsome, a member of MPE since 2007, received a graduate scholarship in 2009. At the time, she taught sixth grade at Glade Elementary in Jones County. Newsome was recently named Assistant Principal of South Jones Elementary. She shares, “I graduated this past December from MSU-Meridian. The MPE scholarship was an encouragement to me. It was an honor to receive. My degree has opened this door for me! I am thrilled to be at South Jones Elementary, and I look forward to serving the students in the Jones County School District.”
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Why MPE?

The premier package of benefits for the least amount of money!

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<tr>
<th>2010 - 2011 DUES</th>
<th>MPE</th>
<th>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<td>Professional with liability insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired Educator without insurance</td>
<td>$10</td>
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Professional liability protection of $2 million with $3 million maximum (other organizations provide only $1 million with $3 million maximum)

Up to $10,000 for legal assistance related to employment or professional matters

$10,000 in accidental death & dismemberment coverage (one organization offers as an optional benefit at an additional cost and one provides AD&D benefits to new members for one year)

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Graduate & Undergraduate Scholarships awarded annually

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Every dollar of your dues stays in Mississippi for your benefit!

MPE does not utilize dues to support political candidates.