Meet Your New MPE Board
Best Practices Symposium Highlights
MPE Scholarship Winners

MPE’s New President
Lori Brennan
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lori Brennan

Making a difference

This year has already been a whirlwind and it’s just getting started! With the legislative session ending shortly before our symposium, most educators in the state were upset with some things that came out of this year’s session. My vision for this year is for MPE to continue to be a strong advocate for education, but more importantly, for teachers to become strong advocates for themselves and make a difference at the polls! There have been talks of protests and walkouts in the last couple of weeks. Mississippi state law prohibits walkouts and prohibits organizations such as MPE in supporting such. I do not believe a strike or a walkout is the best way to advocate for our profession. Most of us can say that we became teachers to make a difference in students’ lives. We cannot do that if we are not in the classroom. However, we can show them how to stand up for themselves as we do the same. We can make more of a difference by educating ourselves before we head into the election in November. We can make a difference if we continue to have the difficult conversations with our legislators where we express our opinions respectfully. We can make a difference by continuing to prove to legislators that our students can be successful in spite of a lack of funding. None of us began this career to become wealthy; I am very grateful for the small raise, although I know that we are worth so much more. I appreciate that many legislators have begun to take note of our challenges in public education in the state of Mississippi.

This year I ask that all of you continue to share your passion with your students and with others. We need to continue the fight FOR public education in the state and we need to make certain that our profession is recognized, respected, and hopefully, rewarded. I ask that each one of you do as you tell your students—do your part to stand up for students’ lives. We cannot do that if we are not in the classroom. However, we can show them how to stand up for themselves as we do the same. We can make more of a difference by educating ourselves before we head into the election in November. We can make a difference if we continue to have the difficult conversations with our legislators where we express our opinions respectfully. We can make a difference by continuing to prove to legislators that our students can be successful in spite of a lack of funding. None of us began this career to become wealthy; I am very grateful for the small raise, although I know that we are worth so much more. I appreciate that many legislators have begun to take note of our challenges in public education in the state of Mississippi.

We will continue to be #BlueForMSTeachers and I will definitely #voteyourteachervoice this year. We can make a difference—that part’s easy because we do it every day!

MESSAGE FROM THE PAST-PRESIDENT

Cheryl Howard

The Value of a Teacher

What is the value of a teacher? For those who have been lucky enough to have an incredible pedagogue, the answer is “priceless.” An important message to send to teachers would be, “the incredible work they do every day is important and worthy!” A teacher’s impact lasts a lifetime. A great teacher is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to each year’s students. With all the fireworks in politics today, we as teachers feel a bit like we are on the edge of an explosion, a bit like we are being used and abused by the system called “politics.” We are the pawns of their games and shenanigans.

A good video to watch is “What is the Value of a Teacher,” Youtube – Tedxtalks, by Alan November.

Teaching is not that easy. There are students who disrupt ongoing classes, don’t do their work, do not pay attention in class, and much more. This makes it much harder to teach everything the students should know. The future depends on teachers to teach what our next generations should know.

For some reason there is an assumption that teaching is simply what happens while a teacher is in front of a class. This, my friend, is untrue. Teachers do a tremendous amount of work beyond basic instruction. The list is very long. We work all day and night beyond what is seen in the classroom.

A common thought to ponder is this: professional sports players get paid way more than teachers. Let’s compare someone’s salary that is teaching, $45,300, to someone that throws a ball around, $6.4 million. Think about someone who has devoted their life to teaching compared to someone who makes millions playing sports for entertainment. Some like to use the misconception that teachers don’t work as much as other professions. Don’t let me get started on that topic; that would be a whole other article.

Teachers are valued now for their test scores – how wrong can this be? The value of a teacher is inestimable. You can’t put a price on teachers, but it would help our feelings to be paid the national average. How much of our low salary do we put back into our school? At the end of each year when calculating that total that no one else sees, it is measurably more than other professionals. Don’t let me get started on that topic; that would be a whole other article.

Teachers are so stressed out that 40% to 50% of all new teachers quit within five years. Teaching is the 4th most stressful job in America. So, when a teacher says they are stressed, it is not a joke!

The teaching profession is constantly having to defend itself from callous politicians (not all of them, but most), uninformed parents, and broad stereotyping. Teachers face social, economic, and political negativity constantly, and if that wasn’t enough, we are also blamed for falling test scores and worsening student performance, even though we are the most important line of defense against these trends. So not only are teachers facing undue criticism from all sides, but we are starkly underpaid while doing so. Combine the stress, the overwork, and attacks with low salaries and you can see that only the stoutest of souls and only those who truly love educating are capable of being teachers.

It is truly an elite field.
I'm sitting in the lobby of Jackson State's College of Education and Human Development on a stormy Saturday morning as I write this article. I am encouraged by the fifty individuals who have driven from all over the state to attend our Praxis workshop. MPE has partnered with the Mississippi Department of Education and Impact Education Group to provide these workshops throughout the state as a means of addressing the teacher shortage. Our participants this morning are young/old, black/white, male/female, teacher prep students, assistant teachers pursuing their dreams of their own classrooms….They are all committed to entering the profession that prepares all other profession-teaching.

I’ve thought a lot about our founder, “Miss Linda” Anglin, this morning. She would be so excited to see these workshop participants going the extra mile to prepare to earn their certification. When we lost her in early March at the age of 89, she had touched thousands of lives and impacted multiple generations. She did whatever it took to support her students and her fellow teachers. As a retired educator who did her student teaching with Miss Linda shared, “She had little patience for those who were not fully invested in the important work of education.” Read more about Miss Linda’s legacy on page 1.5.

I firmly believe Miss Linda would have been as troubled as the rest of us by the legislative leadership’s decision to insert additional funding for vouchers into a non-education bill in the final hours of the legislative session. As one of her sons shared with me, one of his earliest memories of his mother’s MPE efforts involved telephone calls encouraging MPE members to make personal contacts with their respective legislators, even if that contact occurred at church. Miss Linda held legislatures accountable for their actual votes, not just their verbal promises. She firmly believed that MPE members should be active and engaged citizens. Our Advocacy Guide for Educators, which we will release this summer, will provide resources to assist our members in strengthening their advocacy skills.

Miss Linda would have loved our annual Best Practices Symposium on March 30. Gerry Brooke’s humor and videos were intertwined with significant strategies for effective schools. The entire ballroom was roaring with laughter. Our concurrent sessions were informative and engaging. Marshall Ramsey was the icing on the cake as he emphasized the power of teachers: “Don’t let anyone ever tell you that what you’re doing isn’t making a difference. The kids you’re teaching now will be the leaders one day.” It was truly a powerful day as we celebrated our 40th anniversary. Visit pages 12-13 for a gallery of photos from the day.

A highlight of symposium was the election of our officers and new directors for the coming year. Lori Brennan, Literacy Curriculum Coordinator for the Ocean Springs School District, will lead our association this year! We welcome Gennella Graham, Nicole Spinks, Missy Bufkin, and Amber Combs to our board. Visit page 10 to learn more about our newest board members in strengthening their advocacy skills.

I am excited to share that MPE is partnering with the MDE to recruit up to 250 diverse practitioners from throughout Mississippi to pursue National Board Certification. Funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will enable us to provide “seed money” for these candidates to pursue certification. With 4,166 NBCTs, Mississippi ranks fourth in the nation for the percentage (12.9%) of teachers who are NBCTs, but only 8% of these NBCTs are teachers of color. This project will focus on the stormy Saturday morning as I write this article. I am encouraged by the fifty individuals who have driven from all over the state to attend our Praxis workshop. MPE has partnered with the Mississippi Department of Education and Impact Education Group to provide these workshops throughout the state as a means of addressing the teacher shortage. Our participants this morning are young/old, black/white, male/female, teacher prep students, assistant teachers pursuing their dreams of their own classrooms….They are all committed to entering the profession that prepares all other profession-teaching.

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All over the world an educator is among the most noblest of professions. Educators teach persons in ALL other professions such as engineers, lawyers and nurses, including LAWMAKERS. Today, Mississippi requires the highest Praxis test scores for prospective educators, but is nationally ranked amongst the lowest in salaries. Highest scores-lowest salary just doesn’t seem to add up. Due to this reason a large number of your colleagues have moved to other states for better pay. But in spite of all the challenges you face each day, you still remain dedicated to the profession in Mississippi. The majority of educators are working hard at being effective in the classroom. So, please know that you are VALUED. You are VALUED most importantly by your students, parents, and other educators. Each day you serve in multiple roles such as mother, father, social worker, and counselor–these are just a few hats you will find yourself wearing as an EDUCATOR.

So some may ask, why do you do it? The answer is easy; you do it because you understand what it takes to reach a student beyond paper and pencil. Educators, you are positive role models for students and often build life-long, respectable relationships with them. Therefore, know your VALUE in society because you are the ones who make it all possible for other professions. I know I am preaching to the choir, but sometimes we become so overwhelmed with work and life that we forget our SELF-WORTH. Now, take time to reflect on your journey as educators and remember you are impacting students’ lives every day. Often, the people who are on the outside looking in really do not understand what it takes to be an effective leader in the classroom. Then they undervalue you simply because they have been out of the education arena for fifty to sixty years. Educators, you hold the POWER. Think about how you are able to make an impact on student learning; your VOICES are POWERFUL. You have the ability, knowledge, and skills to make changes. Brighter Days are ahead. So as educators, we will continue to Remain Dedicated and We Will Not Rest Until Good is Better and Better is Best.

Dr. LaShundia Carson
MPE Board of Directors

Mississippi Educators, You are Valued

2019 GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Belinda Beech
University of Southern Mississippi

Rose Cherie Bowie
University of Southern Mississippi

Sandra Childs-Jones
Belhaven University

Jennifer Finley
University of Southern Mississippi

Alice Halley
Delta State University

Lamenda Hase
University of Southern Mississippi

Julie Ingram
Belhaven University

Katie Jones
William Carey University

Andy Schoggin
William Carey University

Sara Stygles
William Carey University

Anita Wansley
Mississippi State University

LaVonda White
University of Mississippi

Candies Wintun-Cook
University of Mississippi

Kristen Zemek
University of Mississippi

Anna Zinke
University of Southern Mississippi
MPE WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

GENNELLA GRAHAM - DISTRICT 1

Gennella teaches English at the Corinth High School Academic and Performing Arts Center. A member of the University of Mississippi Writing Project Summer Institute Leadership Team, as well as a teacher consultant for Educational Testing Services (ETS), she has served on the Praxis II National Advisory Council for English Language Arts Middle School. Gennella earned her Bachelor of Arts in English from Mississippi State University and her Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education from the University of Mississippi. A member of MPE since 2008, she received a 2013-14 MPE Classroom Grant.

NICOLE SPINKS - DISTRICT 3

Nicole is a kindergarten teacher at Bell Academy in the Cleveland School District where she serves as District Grade Level Chair. She is also an art instructor for the Delta Arts Alliance. A member of Delta State University’s Partnership University Leadership Team, Nicole earned her National Board Certification in 2017 and is a member of the Mississippi NBCT Network. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, her Master of Education in Elementary Education, and her Educational Specialist in Elementary Education from Delta State University. A member of MPE since 2010, Nicole received a 2018-2019 MPE Classroom Grant.

MISSY BUFKIN - DISTRICT 5

Missy serves as Federal Programs Director, Early Childhood, Curriculum and Gifted Coordinator for the Jones County School District. She earned her National Board Certification in 2000 and recertified in 2010. Currently enrolled in the Doctoral Program for Educational Leadership at William Carey University, Missy earned her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Southern Mississippi, her Master of Elementary Education from William Carey University, and her Educational Specialist in Elementary Education from Delta State University. A member of MPE since 2010, Missy received a 2018-2019 MPE Classroom Grant.

AMBER COMBS - DISTRICT 7

Amber serves as school counselor at Franklin County Middle School, as well as District Test Coordinator. After earning her National Board Certification in 1998, she recertified in 2008 and 2010. Amber earned her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the University of Southern Mississippi, her Master in Guidance Education from Alcorn State University, and her Specialist in Counseling from Delta State University. A member of MPE since 2011, she is a 2013 MPE Graduate Scholarship recipient, a 2014 and 2018 MPE Classroom Grant recipient, and a 2017 NBCT Renewal Scholarship recipient. She served as a judge for our 2016 NBCT Renewal Scholarship.

MPE MEMBERS EARN ADVANCED DEGREES

Kelsey Nobles graduated with her Master of Education in Educational Administration and Supervision from the University of Mississippi in July 2018. A member of MPE since 2014, she teaches 8th grade math and high school geometry at Pelahatchie High School in the Rankin County School District.

Jill Rousseau recently completed her Specialist in Instructional Leadership at William Carey University. She is a 6th grade ELA teacher at North Pike Middle School and has been a member of MPE since 2001.

Jennifer Sills, a National Board Certified Teacher and Assistant Band Director at Madison Central High School, recently completed her Specialist in Instructional Leadership at William Carey University. A member of MPE since 2010, she received an MPE Graduate scholarship in 2017.

MPE MEMBERS HONORED AS MISSISSIPPI’S 2019 TEACHER, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Two MPE members were named by the Mississippi Department of Education on March 29 as Mississippi’s 2019 Teacher of the Year and 2019 Administrator of the Year.

Hannah Godd has been selected as Mississippi’s 2019 Teacher of the Year. She serves as the 6th – 12th grade choir director and music appreciation teacher at Lafayette High School in the Lafayette School District. She joined MPE last year.

Dr. Lee Pambianchi has been selected as Mississippi’s 2019 Administrator of the Year. She serves as principal of Northshore Elementary in the Rankin County School District. She has been a member of MPE since 2016.

LOWE NAMED DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH & INNOVATION

After having served as the Interim director of Outreach and Innovation since March of 2015, Melinda Lowe was named the director for Outreach and Innovation and coordinator of education at Mississippi University for Women (The W) this past February. In her new role, Lowe looks forward to continuing to promote regional stewardship that will benefit both The W’s campus and the region by strengthening K-12 partnerships. Before joining The W in 2012, Lowe worked for the Columbus Municipal School District for 16 years. She has been a member of MPE since 1994.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Pratt of Houston Alternative School was named last fall as a recipient of the first-ever National University System-Sanford Teacher Award. Only fifty-one teachers around the country—representing each state and the District of Columbia—were selected for this honor. The teachers each receive $10,000 for demonstrating their commitment to creating inspirational and harmonious classrooms that support student development and achievement. A member of MPE since 1999, Jennifer also serves as an MPE Building Rep.
MEET YOUR MPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Missy Bufkin; District 7, Amber Combs.

Members elected for three-year terms to the Board of Directors are: District 1, Gennella Graham; District 3, Nicole Spinks; District 5, President-elect, Devin Walsh, K-1 teacher at Oak Grove Primary School in Lamar County; Secretary-Treasurer, Tamra Mills, MPE elected its 2019-2020 officers and new board members at its 2019 Best Practices Symposium held March 30 at the Jackson Arts curriculum chair at Newton County Elementary. Past-President, Cheryl Howard, PreK Inclusion Teacher at Quitman County Elementary.

join the premiere organization for professional educators in Mississippi.

Alfalfa Field. You earn a free year's membership for simply ** member must have previously been made inactive for a period of three months or more** between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020. You will receive $5 per student member recruited. **Free memberships will be credited towards the next year's membership.**

### Recruitment Incentives

**Recruitment Incentives**

MPE’s recruitment incentives provide a great way for you to earn a free membership, as well as a little extra money. You earn a free year’s membership for simply recruiting five new members and you earn even more money for each new member recruited after five. Encourage your professional co-workers and friends to join the premier organization for professional educators in Mississippi.

- Five new members = one year’s free membership
- 6-9 new members = one year’s membership + $15 per member*
- 10-14 new members = one year’s membership + $16 per member*
- 15+ new members = one year’s 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, 2019, and June 30, 2020. 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**

### A Tribute to MPE Founder Linda Anglin (1929-2019)

Linda McCluney Anglin (“Miss Linda”) died this past March 6. She graduated from Houston (Mississippi) High School as valedictorian before attending Millsaps College, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA in Sociology in 1951. In 1970 she earned a Master of Education degree from Mississippi State University in 1974. As MPE celebrates our 40th anniversary this year, there is no question of Miss Linda’s invaluable support and love for our association. She provided the leadership and foresight for MPE to become Mississippi’s premier education association. Miss Linda founded MPE in 1979 at her kitchen table because she wanted teachers to have an individual right to address their school board. She served three years as our new association’s first president. She chaired our scholarship committee for numerous years. Even as her physical state became frail, she would call our office with a suggestion or drop by for a surprise visit to make sure we were taking care of our members. MPE’s renaming of our undergraduate scholarships the “Linda Anglin Teacher Preparation Scholarships” in 2017 was only a minute expression of our gratitude, love, and appreciation for Miss Linda and her service to our association. She loved her family and her church, but she also loved MPE and the support we provide to teachers throughout Mississippi. We will strive to continue to uphold her principles, beliefs, and passion as we serve our members each day.

As a classroom teacher, she was appointed to numerous committees and was active in several professional organizations, including: Jackson Area Reading Council, Mississippi Reading Association, Mississippi Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and Delta Kappa Gamma (the Tau Chapter in Jackson honored her with its first Red Rose Award). In 1996, Miss Linda was honored as a Distinguished Teacher at the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars after being named by a former fifth grade student who was a Presidential Scholar that year. She was also active in Jackson-Hinds Retired Teachers Association and was a member of Mississippi Retired Teachers Association.

As the passage of the 1982 Education Reform Act. As he shared when we surprised Miss Linda with a tribute in the Winter 2007 issue of the MPE Journal, “No one has been a more faithful supporter of education in our state than she has. As a classroom teacher for many years, she helped shape the lives of countless young people who learned not only from the subjects which she taught, but also the example she set.”

Miss Linda served as secretary to the Mississippians for the Implementation of the Education Reform Act and worked endlessly with Governor William Winter in the passage of the 1982 Education Reform Act. As he shared when we surprised Miss Linda with a tribute in the Winter 2007 issue of the MPE Journal, “No one has been a more faithful supporter of education in our state than she has. As a classroom teacher for many years, she helped shape the lives of countless young people who learned not only from the subjects which she taught, but also the example she set.”

Linda served in many capacities, including: Jackson Area Reading Council, Mississippi Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and Delta Kappa Gamma (the Tau Chapter in Jackson honored her with its first Red Rose Award). In 1996, Miss Linda was honored as a Distinguished Teacher at the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars after being named by a former fifth grade student who was a Presidential Scholar that year. She was also active in Jackson-Hinds Retired Teachers Association and was a member of Mississippi Retired Teachers Association.

Miss Linda’s teaching career spanned thirty-nine years. She not only impacted her students’ lives, but her co-workers’ lives as well, at St. Andrews Episcopal School (1952-53), Carthage Elementary (1956-57), McWillie Elementary (1957-80) and Casey Elementary from 1980 until her retirement in 1994. While serving in many capacities, including: Jackson Area Reading Council, Mississippi Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and Delta Kappa Gamma (the Tau Chapter in Jackson honored her with its first Red Rose Award). In 1996, Miss Linda was honored as a Distinguished Teacher at the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars after being named by a former fifth grade student who was a Presidential Scholar that year. She was also active in Jackson-Hinds Retired Teachers Association and was a member of Mississippi Retired Teachers Association.

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Congratulations to the recipients of MPE’s 2019 Linda Anglin Teacher Preparation Scholarship Award. Each student member was awarded a scholarship in the amount of $500.

Courtney Eubanks
William Carey University

Hannah Dean
University of Southern Mississippi

Morgan Angell
Belhaven University

Abby Cantrell
Mississippi State University

Mallori Smallwood
Delta State University

Anne Petrov
University of Mississippi

Ro’Myrus Preston
Alcorn State University

Kasi Matthews
Millsaps College

Shanna Lowrey
University for Women

Lauren Mott
Blue Mountain College

Taylor Hathorn
Mississippi College

Mississippi's K-12 teachers, community college instructors, and university professors are driving the state’s economy, giving the state’s business and industry the employees they need to grow and thrive and giving students a pathway to a good job.

More than ever, education is a prerequisite for a good job. A recent report from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (CEW), in partnership with JPMorgan Chase & Co., Three Educational Pathways to Good Jobs: High School, Middle Skills, and Bachelor's Degree, found that there are three distinct pathways to a good job: high school, middle-skills, and bachelor's degree.

Good jobs are defined as jobs that pay at least $35,000, average $56,000 for workers with less than a bachelor's degree, and average $65,000 for those with a bachelor's degree or higher. The report finds that between 1991 and 2016, good high school jobs dropped from 15 million to 13 million. During that same time period, good jobs in the middle-skills pathway grew from 12 million to 16 million and good jobs in the bachelor’s degree pathway grew from 18 million to 36 million.

Spring brings graduation season, when students celebrate moving on from Kindergarten, middle school, high school, and college. It simultaneously marks both the end of one phase and a new beginning for students. For educators, it closes the chapter on one class of students and begins the next chapter. Students may move on, but your commitment to them remains and is evidenced by the work you do with each student in each class.

You are doing the work that drives results for our schools, our universities, and our state. Mississippi public universities awarded 18,248 degrees during the academic year. Each time a student walks across the stage and receives a degree, it represents the culmination of the efforts many educators, from the K-12 level through university level, have devoted to that student.

Each educator that a student has plays an important role in his or her learning and development. Each educator contributes to the skills students hold when they graduate and subsequently bring into the workforce.

Mississippi's economy depends on a well-trained, capable workforce. Some jobs require at least a bachelor's degree; other jobs require a two-year degree; some require only a high school diploma. All jobs contribute to Mississippi's economy and provide our citizens with the resources to purchase goods and services, which also contribute to Mississippi’s economy.

Educators do far more than just prepare the workforce of the future. They also prepare our students to be responsible citizens who contribute to their communities. Educators serve as role models and mentors to our students, providing instruction on far more than just the material provided in a textbook.

With each graduation season, doors of opportunity open to students as they earn their diplomas. Thank you for the hard work and dedication you devote to helping open these doors of opportunity and providing students with the skills needed to be successful throughout their lives.

Educators do the work that drives results.
I want to take this time and thank you for the hard work, passion and commitment over this last school year. Because of you, Mississippi's public school students have completed another year of education that will move some to the next grade, some to the next course, and others into college, the workforce or military. YOU did that.

The work of taking children where they are and helping them to get where they need to be is worthy of every honor and accolade. I appreciate each of you.

Teachers give their all before the day arrives to their classrooms, throughout the day and well after students have gone home for the day. It is because of your dedication that Mississippi is making the gains that we’ve seen over the last decade and it is my honor to represent the trajectory of the state.

We are currently tied with Washington state for being No. 1 in the nation for gains in 8th grade reading from 2015 to 2017 on the National Assessment for Educational Progress. Here are Mississippi’s ten-year NAEP rankings:

- No. 2 in the nation for gains in 4th grade reading
- No. 4 in the nation for gains in 4th grade math
- No. 7 in the nation for gains in 8th grade math
- No. 12 in the nation for gains in 8th grade reading

These rankings show you that Mississippi is making faster progress than most other states in the country. It also shows the level of professionals we have in our classrooms. Students benefit from the investment you make in them each day and we are seeing the return on the investment.

I hope you take some time this summer to enjoy family and friends and rest in knowing that you have completed another school year with a job well done. The majority of Mississippi’s school children depend on you and while that responsibility is great, it is needed to change the trajectory of the state.

Have you retired?

If you have retired, please contact the MPE office and let us know. Retired membership in MPE is just $10 per year, or a one-time charge of $70 for a lifetime Retiree membership. Retired membership includes the MPE Journal 3x per year, discount rates on long-term care insurance, auto/home insurance, and dental and vision insurance. Additionally, many of our retired members join us for our annual symposium. As a retired member, you will continue to receive priority registration at a discounted rate.

By the time you receive this edition of MPE Journal, the school year will be wrapping up and graduation ceremonies should be just around the corner. When I was at East Mississippi Community College and later Shelton State Community College, this was always an exciting time for me as we celebrated the accomplishments from the previous year in addition to the successes of our students.

I offer congratulations to the newly elected MPE Officers and Board of Directors. Each of you play an integral role in helping to lead and guide the state’s largest teacher group. Also, congratulations to each of the scholarship recipients. Because of MPE’s commitment to expanding educational opportunities for members and others across the state, the number of quality educators in our classrooms will expand, which benefits everyone.

As you are aware, the 2019 legislative session came to an end on Friday, March 29, which was a week ahead of schedule. For FY 2020 appropriations, the community colleges will receive approximately $245.3 million, which is an increase of $14.2 million, or 6.17%, compared to FY 2019. Included in this increase is money to cover the increased PERS employer contribution and health insurance rates, $7.3 million from the Capital Expense Fund for construction and/or repair and renovation projects on each of the campuses, and an increase of $874,000 into the funding formula. The Mississippi Community College Board received an increase of $46,191 for the increases in PERS employer contributions and health insurance. Additionally, the community college system will also receive $25 million in bonds for capital projects on our campuses.

For general bills that have already been signed by Governor Bryant, a few items that may be of interest are Senate Bill No. 2049, which will require postsecondary institutions to charge in-state residency rates for the spouses and children of active duty military, and Senate Bill No. 2053, which will require the IHL board, along with the individual community college boards of trustees, to adopt policies for the awarding of educational credits for military training or service. Both of these bills will benefit military personnel and show the rest of the nation that Mississippi is a military-friendly state.

One other bill that I would like to mention is Senate Bill No. 2749, which removes the restriction of educators from serving on our board, the Mississippi Community College Board. It also does away with a provision about board members not being appointed from the same community college district. We still have ten members, two that are pulled from each of the pre-2000 congressional districts.

I hope that each of you has a restful and relaxing summer and that you are able to recharge your batteries during the next few weeks. Thanks for the role that you play in educating all of our students!
2017-2018 CLASSROOM GRANT RECIPIENTS

MPE invites its members to apply for classroom grant funding each year to try out a new idea or buy the “extras” for an already great lesson plan or project. 108 members submitted applications for the 2017-2018 school year, with forty-three receiving grants of up to $1,000 for their class projects and instructional program. We are pleased to spotlight several of the grants below for your enjoyment, as well as your reference for ideas for your own classroom.

Heather Howell and Robbie Sellers
Petal High School, 9th-12th Grade Special Education Life Skills
The Panther Brew

Thank you MPE for funding “The Panther Brew” classroom grant that provided the opportunity for participation in real-life occupational experiences, previously and solely practiced in the classroom using only hypothetical scenarios. Our students gained experience in skills such as money handling, customer interactions, food preparation/clean up, decision making, following work directions and requirements, and working cooperatively with others. The outpouring of positive feedback, friendly comments, and daily interactions from students, faculty, and administrators in the #1 school district in the state of Mississippi have truly empowered and supported students with disabilities and established a life-changing precedent in our school and community.

Christie Lowery
Davidson Elementary School, 1st Grade Science
Workshops: Watch Us Grow

Thank you MPE for funding this classroom grant. It provided the students at my school with hands-on experiences with plant life and weather instruments. It enhanced our science curriculum and provided an opportunity for our students to take leadership roles. Our first graders took pride in the care of our classroom plants. They developed theories and made discoveries throughout the year. This grant gave our sixth graders leadership responsibilities as they designed and created the weather station for the entire school to use. Through this grant, I purchased plants, indoor plant lighting, center resources, an electronic weather monitor, and the materials need to create our new outdoor weather stations.

Amanda Seago
Biggersville Elementary, 5th and 6th Grade Math and Science
Modular Frame Design

Thank you, MPE, for funding the classroom grant that provided the new technology of 3D printing in my classroom. I had two main goals for integrating this technology into my classroom. The first goal was to implement a creative system of learning that would promote critical thinking skills. The other goal was to execute an instructional environment that included student-centered learning. The printer has enabled my students to create the image in their minds, design the image in the program’s software, and then watch the process become a reality with the actual printing. Through the grant, I was able to purchase a 3D printer, a 3D printing pen, maintenance accessories, as well as eighteen spools of PLA filament. I feel confident that the use of this device, in addition to the use of the accessories, will continue to enhance my current and future students’ educational experience, as well as strengthen their educational competency.

Virginia Kittrell
Sand Hill School, 6th Grade Cyber Foundations
Critical Thinkers

My students and I are extremely grateful to MPE for providing the funding for three Sphero robots and five tablets for my classroom. Students desperately needed this technology in order to learn problem solving skills, teamwork, and coding. It was amazing to see how my students opened up and reacted differently to hands-on activities, which gave them an opportunity to excel in their own way. It is fulfilling to see students achieve their goals successfully because it gives them such a feeling of accomplishment, pride, and self-confidence. I am very pleased with the outcome of the project and appreciate the support of the grant to help fund it.

Carly Parker and Wendy Lacy
Harper McCaughan Elementary School, 5th Grade Gifted
Workshops: Code Blue and Mini Golf

Thank you for funding the workshop project, Code Blue and Mini Golf. Providing students with a chance to choose their own activity increased intrinsic motivation, student learning, and gave them a chance to work on their 21st century skills. We were excited to offer two real-world simulations in which the students would actively engage. Some students were able to be involved in a pig heart dissection, while others relaxed while playing mini-golf, once they finished the construction of the course. It did seem like fun and games, but it was also challenging while meeting our state objectives. Once again, thank you MPE.

Sylvia Jinkerson
Church Hill Elementary, 1st Grade
Reading Cafe

“Could we get books with white dogs?” I have never seen children so excited over new books and it is because of MPE that we had such a generous budget and were able to order the kinds of books the students themselves requested. All year we worked toward the goal of our first-grade students mastering their reading skills, while building a love of reading and learning. Our end-of-year reading showcase project, called Reading Cafés, facilitated our efforts to achieve that goal as we also built family-school connections and connections within the school. Four classes and numerous families were blessed through this grant and they will continue to be blessed as their love of reading and learning continues to grow. Words cannot properly express our appreciation to MPE for providing the support and funding for this project.

Jessica Burns
Longleaf Elementary, 2nd Grade
Wondering Warriors

Thank you MPE for funding the classroom grant that provided the opportunity to bring STEM supplies into my classroom. The funding for the Wondering Warriors project allowed students to be at the center of their own learning experience, lending valuable opportunities for them to make connections across disciplines and contextual settings. The STEM projects have proven to support my students in problem solving activities that have fostered communication, developed student interests, and supported critical thinking skills through these investigative projects.
The Mississippi Professional Educators would like to thank our Platinum Sponsors who contributed to our 2019 Best Practices Symposium.
WHY MPE?

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 - 2019 DUES</th>
<th>MPE</th>
<th>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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†May reflect last year’s dues
†Liability insurance not included

May not include local dues

Your MPE membership includes...

Professional liability protection of $2,000,000 with $3,000,000 maximum
Legal assistance related to employment or professional matters per MPE policy
$10,000 accidental death & dismemberment coverage
$2,500 assault related property damage
Identity theft coverage
Graduate & undergraduate scholarships awarded annually
NBCT scholarships awarded annually
Non-certified personnel scholarships awarded annually
Classroom grant opportunities awarded annually
Free regional trainings offering CEUs to members at no cost
Unlimited professional advice available 24/7
MPE Journal published three times per year
Staff monitors legislation at the state capitol, with weekly updates provided to membership
Every dollar of your dues stays in Mississippi for your benefit! MPE does not support political candidates.