METP Attracts Top Talent to Mississippi Classrooms
Office Staff

President
Cheryl Howard, NBCT
700 East Friendship Road
Charleston, MS 39092
662-710-2765
tiggerabc12360@yahoo.com

Secretary-Treasurer
Devin Walsh
6 Nicolaus Drive
Hattiesburg, MS 35402
601-297-7222
devin.walsh@lamarcountryschools.org

Executive Director
Kelly Riley
205 Woodland Brook
Madison, MS 39110
601-573-6169
kelly@mpe.org

Deputy Director
Barbie Ferguson
barbie@mpe.org

Accounts Manager
Stephanie Miller
stephanie@mpe.org

Office Manager
Kathy Goldsmith
kathy@mpe.org

Receptionist
Jessica Ridgeway
jessica@mpe.org

President-elect
Lori Brennan
317 Jamaica Drive
Ocean Springs, MS 39564
228-661-4824
lorihghp@yahoo.com

Past-President
Dr. Brad Johns
125 Bruce Cove
Mendenhall, MS 39114
601-613-4122
brad.johns@rcsd.ms

2018 2019

District 1
Lisa M. Williamson
36 Macedonia Road
Pontotoc, MS 38863
662-619-7105
lwilliamson@pcsd.ms

District 2
Jennifer Gaston
8850 Hwy 51N
Oakland, MS 38948
662-230-0663
jgaston@coffeevilleschools.org

District 3
Julie Burton
3545 Hwy 322 Sherard Road
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662-902-6076
jburton@cmsd.k12.ms.us

District 4
Emily Edgar
3759 Plum Nellie Road
Columbus, MS 39701
662-488-3535
emilyedgar@gmail.com

District 5
Tamra Mills
47 Monroe Street
Hickory, MS 39332
601-327-0843
tmills@newton.k12.ms.us

District 6
Chris Chism
105 Airline Terrace
Pearl, MS 39208
662-549-2057
chism@pearl.k12.ms.us

District 7
Beckie Nieman, NBCT
609 Virginia Avenue
McComb, MS 39648
601-248-8585
beckienieman@bellsouth.net

District 8
Amanda Cummings
7101 Oakhurst Drive
Ocean Springs, MS 39564
662-816-9994
amandalcummings@hotmail.com

Rep.-at-Large
Shannon Eubanks
300 Nations Lane SE
Brookhaven, MS
601-757-3059
shannon_eubanks@hotmail.com

Community College
Dr. David Lowery
66 Kings Lane
Laurel, MS 39443
601-433-7019
lowerydavid1971@gmail.com

University
Dr. LaShundia D. Carson
1048 Lee Lane
Raymond, MS 39154
601-672-0939
dcarson@alcorn.edu

Retirees
Kevin Garrett
360 McLain Drive
Monticello, MS 38654
601-455-0895
kevin_garrett@hotmail.com

Executive Director
Kelly Riley
205 Woodland Brook
Madison, MS 39110
601-573-6169
kelly@mpe.org

Larry Boykin
9629 Hwy 37
Taylorsville, MS 39168
601-785-4408
(C) 601-297-8189
janboyk@gmail.com

Paul Welborn
252 Leroy Hill Rd
Laurel, MS 39443
601-319-6353
paul.welborn@icloud.com

Michael Goff
105 Carter Lane NE
McCall Creek, MS 39647
601-532-6556
(C) 601-384-6748
mikegoff@ftcweb.net

Julie Wilson
125 CR 434
Oxford, MS 38655
(C) 662-816-2753
jawilson2016lms@gmail.com

Randal Livingston
247 Livingston Road
Louisville, MS 38863
662-773-2577
(C) 662-803-8393
Jolivingston@hotmail.com

Kris Winter
1967 Oak Forest Rd.
Pontotoc, MS 38863
662-488-1740
kpwinter1010@gmail.com

Brenda M. Smith
P.O. Box 616
Leakesville, MS 39451
601-394-2847
(C) 601-394-8370
ssmith55@tds.net

Kelly Riley
Executive Director
kelly@mpe.org

Barbie Ferguson
Deputy Director
barbie@mpe.org

Stephanie Miller
Accounts Manager
stephanie@mpe.org

Kathy Goldsmith
Office Manager
kathy@mpe.org

Jessica Ridgeway
Receptionist
jessica@mpe.org

MPE STATE OFFICE
P.O. Box 22550
Jackson, MS 39225-2550
Toll Free: (800) 523-0269
www.mpe.org
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The third cohort of METP sophomores poses in front of the US Capitol as part of annual education policy trip to Washington, DC. Page 12

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Cheryl Howard

Take Advantage of Others? Or Take Advantage of Others!

Since I have “hooked” you with my title, let me elaborate. Take advantage of the career teachers in education; they have a wealth of strategies and knowledge that can be of great benefit for other teachers who are new, as well as not so new, to the field of education.

Take advantage of scholarships that are available to grow your brain and add to and build your knowledge. MPE offers scholarships for just that. All you have to do is be a member for one year and apply. If you have any problems or questions with the process, contact Barbie at our MPE office. She is always more than willing to help our applicants.

Take advantage of professional development sessions that are available; there are many that are of no cost to you. MPE offers sessions across the state, with free CEU credits for members. Share your findings with fellow teachers. They will appreciate your thoughtfulness. Always be willing to try new ideas and teaching strategies with and for your students; if it works, share, share, share. I enjoy attending sessions that are not my subject area or grade range to get ideas that can be modified or adjusted to fit my grade level or subject area.

Take advantage of mentors and mentees. There is so much to be learned from career teachers and teachers just entering the field of education. I love mentoring new teachers. They give me a fresh outlook and many new ideas for the classroom and lessons. New teachers need leadership and guidance, but along the way will inspire and light your fire for teaching with their eagerness to teach.

Take advantage of freebies and store teacher discounts. So many businesses offer discounts for teachers, not only classroom supplies but at restaurants and other stores as well. I always make a point to ask if a business has a teacher discount. My husband and I got a discount when we bought his truck because I am a TEACHER!

Take advantage of a rewarding career. My philosophy about teaching being a rewarding career is: If I teach one child one thing every day, that’s 180 school days, and look at what I have accomplished. Now if I reach more than one child, my rewards begin to multiply. So let’s look at this a little closer; at the end of 180 days, I have been rewarded many times over and I am feeling pretty awesome! Do this for thirty-two years like I have and my rewards continue to multiply. Yep, I know I am pretty awesome now! I get to see students succeed even after they leave elementary, middle, junior high, high school, and college knowing I played a part in their success. Again, my rewards continue to multiply! Rewards come in many forms, such as a smile, a hug, a complete lesson, or lesson activity, reading a book or working an equation, graduation, even a phone call or message from a former student to say, “Thank you for being THAT TEACHER.” Regardless of how big or small the accomplishment, it is a reward! So why not “take advantage of others” to benefit yourself, your students, and someone else?
As Educators, we are dedicated to mastering the science and the art of teaching with constant awareness of educational research, trends, and best practices that will enable us to support and encourage our colleagues. We do this to provide Mississippi students a quality education in a safe and respectful environment.

MPE’s Vision Statement above conveys our association’s firm belief in supporting our members in their endeavors to master the science and art of teaching. We do this in a number of ways, including via our scholarships and grants. We have provided the following financial support to members this fall:

- **NBCT Scholarships:** We awarded ten $475 scholarships the first week of September to members who are pursuing National Board Certification.
- **Classroom Grants:** During the last week of September, we notified forty-two members that they were receiving a classroom grant! The average grant award this year was $934.
- **Non-certified Scholarships:** The last week of October, we awarded two members $1,000 scholarships to pursue their undergraduate degrees.

In the coming weeks and months, we will award up to ten scholarships in the amount of $625 each to MPE members who wish to pursue renewal of their National Board Certification, as well as up to twenty scholarships in the amount of $1,000 each to MPE members who wish to pursue graduate level studies (see page 6 for details). Next spring, we will honor up to fifteen student members at our annual symposium with our $500 Linda Anglin Teacher Preparation Scholarship.

MPE has pledged our support to MDE’s Office of Teaching and Leading in their efforts to address Mississippi’s teacher shortage. I am excited to announce that MPE will offer four PRAXIS workshops throughout the state next semester and we are partnering with the Program of Research and Evaluation for Public Schools (PREPS) to provide a day-long forum for new teachers on January 12. This issue of our MPE Journal spotlights the Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program (METP), a collaboration between Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi to attract top-performing students to teaching. See page 12 for more information.

I expect several pieces of legislation to be introduced in the upcoming 2019 Legislative Session, which will begin January 8, to address the teacher shortage. As in years past, I will keep our members updated via my weekly emails as to significant developments at the capitol. Be sure to review our legislative resources on page 20. As we did last year, MPE encourages our members and other Mississippians to wear #BlueforMSTeachers each Friday throughout the legislative session in support of Mississippi’s public school teachers and students. Don’t forget to share your photos on social media using the hashtag #BlueforMSTeachers.

As 2019 is an election year in Mississippi, legislators will most likely steer clear of any controversial issues during the upcoming session, as they traditionally do so during election years so as to not offend voters prior to the elections. While MPE does not endorse political candidates, we encourage our members to be actively involved in the political process. We will unveil our new Advocacy Guide for Educators in the coming weeks. It will provide tips and resources for you to advocate with your elected officials on behalf of public education and your students.

Finally, I wish you, your families, and your students the merriest of Christmases and the most joyous of holidays, as well as blessings of peace and good health in 2019!
Mississippi Professional Educators will award up to twenty scholarships in the amount of $1,000 each to MPE members who wish to pursue graduate level studies at a college or university in Mississippi.

Eligibility requirements for the scholarship include:

• Applicant is a member of MPE
• Applicant will be under contract as a full-time educator in Mississippi during the 2019-2020 school year
• Applicant is accepted and enrolled in graduate coursework at a Mississippi college or university OR intends to enroll in such coursework if awarded a scholarship

For more information, visit www.mpe.org.

Applications must be received in the MPE office by February 22, 2019.
During my last round of Mississippi Teacher Council meetings, I heard concerns from several teachers about the need to recruit and retain educators. The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is aware of school districts’ struggle to attract and to keep quality teachers in their classrooms.

This is not just a concern for Mississippi, but for the nation as well. The teacher shortage affects every state, but it is felt acutely in rural states like Mississippi.

The MDE wants to do all that it can to elevate the teaching profession, to provide opportunities for teacher leadership, to promote mentorship of new teachers, and to provide additional funding for highly skilled and National Board-Certified Teachers (NBCT) who mentor new teachers.

Thanks to a $4.1 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a strong supporter of public education in Mississippi, the MDE is launching an initiative to increase the number of qualified teachers entering the profession through teacher-residency and performance-based preparation programs. The project aims to address the achievement gaps in high poverty, high minority schools by improving educator preparation pipelines.

The grant will fund the Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR) program, which is a collaboration among the MDE and pilot districts. The program will recruit thirty-five diverse teacher candidates, pay their undergraduate tuition, and place them in the classroom of a highly skilled or NBCT mentor for two years.

The teaching candidates will be AmeriCorps members and receive full tuition to complete their undergraduate studies. Mentor teachers will earn a $5,000 annual stipend. The grant will also fund a performance-based teacher licensure pilot program, which will help a select group of teachers with provisional licenses become fully licensed. The program is aimed at teachers who have proven to be effective in the classroom but are struggling to pass licensure exams.

In addition, the MDE has developed multiple strategies to align to the Mississippi State Board of Education’s goal to have effective teachers and leaders in every school. We want to work with our Educator Preparation Programs across the state to ensure that teachers graduate ready to instruct students in the state’s standards, and we will continue providing professional development while leading efforts to diversify the teacher and leader pipeline.

A great deal has changed since laws were enacted to address the critical teacher shortage in Mississippi. A new generation of technology-savvy students is in high schools and colleges, looking for a rewarding career to meet their needs and the needs of their communities. We want these bright, talented students to choose teaching as a career. Our students need them.

I strongly support a pay raise for teachers because I know how hard you work and I know the irreplaceable role you play in the lives of many children in our state. Ultimately, however, that decision is in the hands of our state elected officials.

What MDE can do is develop a communications campaign to spark interest in the teaching profession and to recruit teachers both inside and outside the state. You will hear more about those efforts in the coming months.

As a former teacher and principal, I have the highest respect and admiration for our educators and I want you to know that we continuously work to implement and develop innovative solutions to help meet the needs of Mississippi.
In my Winter 2017 article, I wrote about an initiative just beginning at the time that was being led by the public postsecondary institutions in Mississippi. The Complete 2 Compete (C2C) program at each of our community colleges and universities was created to identify former postsecondary students who had not finished their programs of study and examine their transcripts for two things. The first was to see if the person was now eligible for a degree and the second was how many hours were lacked to complete a degree. One year ago, it was estimated in Mississippi that 32,000 people had earned enough college credit but were not awarded a degree because they dropped out. Furthermore, 127,000 adults in the state were within a few courses of finishing a degree.

During the C2C’s first year, nearly 85,000 students that were eligible for a degree with or without additional coursework were directly contacted. Another 5.5 million adults were exposed to the C2C website using various forms of social media and other digital marketing. All of this led to nearly 500 degrees being issued by community colleges and universities, with another 714 students re-enrolling in postsecondary institutions.

C2C has positively impacted the individual, family, employers, and Mississippi’s economy. These people are college graduates and with the degree comes self-satisfaction and countless opportunities that can be quantified in terms of employment and wage gains. I am proud of the partnerships that created this program, the C2C leadership team, and most of all, the work being done by the community colleges. Without these collective efforts, a program of this magnitude would not experience the successes we are seeing. As a former college dropout myself, who many years later returned to finish, I understand from experience the impact of finishing the degree. I am proud of those individuals who stepped forward to seize this unique opportunity to complete their degree.

The Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi Community College Board are working together to draft an updated plan for Mississippi as a result of the Carl D. Perkins reauthorization in 2018. With K-12 and the community colleges working together on career and technical education awareness, alignment, and program quality, Mississippi has an opportunity to draft a modern and innovative plan for our state that prepares students for the workforce and connects them to career opportunities with elements that are critical to success. These include national credentials and state licensure as measures of student skill attainment; work-based learning opportunities, like apprenticeships, which provide opportunities for students to earn while they learn and connect people to careers; and essential workplace skills like Smart Start and the Career Readiness Certificate.

The 2019 legislative session is scheduled to convene on Tuesday, January 8, and conclude by Sunday, April 7. I encourage everyone to be aware of legislation that is introduced that could have an impact on education in Mississippi. By becoming engaged in the process, you can help ensure we have laws that will support all levels of education. An educated citizenry leads to a stronger Mississippi.

Thanks for all that you do to educate our students. I hope that each of you has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
During my first 100 days in office as Commissioner of Higher Education, I visited all eight public universities and the University of Mississippi Medical Center on a Listening Tour that included stops in thirteen locations. This gave me the opportunity to hear from the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community leaders about the challenges they face and learn more about the great things going on throughout the university system.

Through a tri-fold mission of teaching, research, and outreach, universities accomplish great things and make a difference in the lives of thousands every day. The partnerships the universities have with K-12 schools, community colleges, and businesses are vital in this work. Through their coursework and other experiences both on and off campus, students are gaining the skills necessary to succeed in their chosen career fields. When they graduate, they will be ready to enter the workforce and contribute to the success of the organizations they join.

Mississippi’s businesses depend on having a skilled workforce to meet their goals. Economic developers in Mississippi know the importance of having a skilled workforce when trying to attract businesses to Mississippi. The more we can demonstrate that Mississippians have the necessary credentials of value beyond high school, including associate’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and graduate degrees, the easier it will be to attract high-skill, high-paying jobs to the state.

We can look to other states that have higher educational attainment to determine how raising the educational attainment rate in Mississippi would impact our state and the quality of life we enjoy here. When educational attainment goes up, unemployment goes down. Poverty, infant mortality, and incarceration rates are also reduced.

What goes up is our median household income. When median household income increases, tax revenue also increases, giving the Legislature more funds to spend on all levels of education, infrastructure, and other state needs, all without raising taxes.

In January, we will ask the Legislature to invest in our university system. Our request will include an increase in appropriations for the university system that will cover increases in the employer contribution to the retirement system, increases in health insurance costs, and will restore funding to the FY2016 original appropriation level.

In addition, we will ask the Legislature to approve a bond bill to provide funds to be used to provide students with the living and learning facilities they need, along with projects to address infrastructure and safety needs. We will also request an appropriation for repair and renovation needs to help the universities with routine maintenance needs that will help save money over time.

The state’s investment in education pays dividends over time. As educators, you play an important role in this investment and the future of our state. Thank you for your dedication to your students and to making our state a better place to live and work.
It’s the holiday season and for many of us, “It’s the most wonderful time of the year!” It is hard to believe we are halfway through the school calendar. It seems like we just started school last week and now we are approaching the downhill slope. Hopefully, for most of us the speed at which this year has passed is more of a mark on how great our year is going and not our hurtling faster toward old age!

As we approach the new year, it is customary for many of us to make resolutions to improve ourselves, be a little better toward others, or just finally use that whatsit that is sitting in the corner as a clothes rack. As you set about making a list of those things you want to endeavor to do this next year, allow me to suggest a few to consider:

**Take Care of Yourself.** This isn’t anything you haven’t heard before: eat healthier; exercise a little; try to cut back on bad habits; find a hobby that relaxes you; read for enjoyment; etc. But the point is you’ve got one body and only one go-round with it. The secret to longevity and happiness begins with your health and wellness, both physical and mental. And for goodness’ sake, if you are feeling unwell, call in sick. Don’t feel guilty about missing due to illness – the school will still be there when you return. But if you don’t take care of yourself, nothing else matters.

**Make Time for Yourself.** This is not a call for chronic absenteeism, but there is more to life than the four walls of the classroom. You have two personal days – use them. Have a spa day, go shopping with friends or loved ones, spend a day in the woods, whatever you need to do to mentally compress from the stress that exists in today’s schools. Forget waiting until “the holidays” because we often find the holidays add to, not take away from, stress. This is about “you” time – spend it on yourself.

**Let It Go.** Yes, I’ve now given you an earworm. But the truth still remains: you cannot move towards a better future if you are still hung up in the past. We have all been slighted or injured, but healing can only happen when we accept that the past is the past. Regrets? Sure, we all have a ton. But learn from the mistakes of the past, not relive them every moment and wish for a different outcome. No, this isn’t always easy and some may need help in moving forward. But for most of us, to let go or not is as simple as releasing our grip.

Finally, if you make these or any other resolutions and fail to meet them, don’t fret too much. Making resolutions helps remind us of who we want to be, not who we are. Trying is what matters, because it can put us on a lifelong path toward a better us.

Have a great New Year!
GOLDING HONORED BY PI KAPPA PI

Anthony Golding, principal of Houlka Attendance Center in Chickasaw County, was recognized in July as a 2018 Pi Kappa Phi 30-Under-30 Award honoree. The award, which was presented to thirty recipients nationwide, recognizes young alumni of the fraternity for their achievement after their undergraduate careers have ended. Golding has been a member of MPE since 2013.

ASK FOR MORE JACKSON CELEBRATES JONES AND MOORE

In recognizing the critical role that educators play in the lives of scholars, Ask For More Jackson, with support from Community Foundation of Mississippi, celebrated five Jackson Public Schools’ Outstanding Educators in September for their commitment to scholars’ success by engaging scholars in challenging and meaningful work. Richard Lee Jones and Renna Moore were among those honored. A member of MPE since 2011, Richard teaches at Spann Elementary. Renna joined MPE last year and teaches at Forest Hill High School.

INGRAM HONORED FOR FBLA SERVICE

Julie Ingram of Florence Middle School in the Rankin County Schools was recognized at the 2018 National Leadership Conference for Future Business Leaders of America as Mississippi’s Local Adviser of the Year. A member of MPE since 2013, she has served as the FBLA adviser for ten years.

GORDON SELECTED AS ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

East Central Community College recognized Gina Hollingsworth Gordon as Alumna of the Year during the college’s 2018 Homecoming celebration on October 4. A member of MPE since last year, Gina is a gifted education teacher with the Newton Municipal School District.

MPE AWARDS NBCT SCHOLARSHIPS

MPE is pleased to have awarded the following ten members our 2018 NBCT Scholarships this past September. We award up to ten of these scholarships each year to members who are pursuing National Board Certification:

- Rose Cherie Bowe, Colmer Middle School (Pascagoula)
- Eva Butler, T. L. Weston Middle School (Greenville)
- Rebecca Feather, Mooreville Middle School
- Kara-Le Green, Blue Mountain School
- Katie-Beth Grimsley, Sumrall High School
- Jessica James, Columbus High School
- Lisa Jones, Grenada Career and Technical Center
- Emily Knight, Columbia Elementary
- Anamaria Moore, Vardaman High School
- Jane Wohlscheid, Bay Springs Elementary

Is your MPE membership profile UP-TO-DATE?

Have you switched schools? Do you have a new home address, cell phone number, or email address? Please let us know! *Go to “Sign In” at www.mpe.org and update your profile today! *Use your username located on the back of this journal to access your account for the first time. You may reset your password upon signing in.
OXFORD, Miss. — The Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program at the University of Mississippi is helping bring new talent into Mississippi’s education workforce by creating a pipeline of highly qualified new educators into K-12 classrooms across the state.

Established in 2012, METP is the nation’s most valuable teacher education scholarship and provides four years of full tuition, housing, living expenses, a study abroad experience, funding for professional development, and more. All graduates make a commitment to teach in Mississippi for five years after graduation; however, graduates may defer their teaching commitment to pursue a graduate degree following their undergraduate studies.

Currently, 94 percent of METP graduates are teaching in Mississippi public schools, with the remainder pursuing graduate degrees.

“We accept high-performing students to teach in our schools in Mississippi,” said Ryan Niemeyer, METP director. “It’s a big win for the School of Education and the students, but it’s even a bigger win for our state to have these future teachers in our classrooms. It’s all about looking at education from a broader picture in our state.”

To date, more than 130 students from twenty-one states have joined METP at UM, and the diversity and quality of candidates continues to grow. Last August, the program inducted its sixth cohort, which then included twenty-eight students from eleven states, with an average GPA of 3.88 and ACT score of 29.4. The sixth cohort may grow in December.

METP serves a critical need. The scholarship program attracts top-performing students into the profession and increases the number of qualified teachers in the state. National trends support how Mississippi can benefit from this sort of investment in teacher training and recruitment. According to ACT.org, the number of high-performing students interested in teaching as a career is shrinking. Among the 1.9 million students tested by the ACT in 2015, approximately 88,000 expressed an interest in education as a career—a four percent decline. Within that group, only 3,700 students reported an interest in STEM education.

“Our long term goal is to improve the perception of the teaching profession, to make it an attractive career path for those who would not have otherwise considered it due to various factors,” said Blake Adams, METP program coordinator. “We seek to graduate high-performing, well-trained, civic-minded students who will impact not just their future students and the communities in which they will serve, but the profession itself at a systemic level in Mississippi and beyond.”

A joint effort with Mississippi State, which recruits a partner cohort each year, METP was established with a $12.9 million investment from the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation of Jackson. The program was renewed...
in 2016 with a second investment of more than $28 million, which will fund the program through 2021. Alumni from the program are currently teaching in both top-tier and critical-needs schools across the state. At least six alumni are currently on faculty in the Rankin County School District in the Jackson area. There are six alumni teaching on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in both the Ocean Springs and Gulfport school districts. Others are currently serving in critical-needs schools, like Drew Hall at Quitman County Middle School and Jenna Smiley at Yazoo County High School.

“My professors and courses focused on more than just learning how to be a decent teacher but how to go above and beyond by showing empathy and putting the students first,” Hall, a Pearland, Texas, native said.

Other students like Shelby Knighten and Mary Kathryn Barry are simultaneously teaching while pursuing prestigious graduate studies. They are both recipients of the Bread Loaf Fellowship at Middlebury College, which is an intensive English graduate program hosted at various universities around the world such as Oxford, England.

Along with many other benefits, the program also includes at least two meaningful trips for the students. Sophomores travel to Washington, D.C., each winter to study American education through a policy perspective. And each summer, rising seniors travel out of the country to experience education through different cultural perspectives, with past trips to Finland, Sweden, and Canada and an upcoming experience in London and Scotland.

One recent change to METP includes the expansion to elementary, science, and special education. The first few years of the program were limited to secondary English and mathematics education. The newest cohort includes education majors in all disciplines, including three special education students and three science education majors.

“My favorite thing about METP so far has been meeting my class and getting to know them,” METP freshman cohort member Julianne May, a math education and public policy major from Memphis, Tennessee, said. “The small groups that we have and our shared interest of being great teachers makes it easier for us to connect with each other, but at the same time our group is diverse and different people are doing such different majors so we can learn from each other.”

METP is unique in that it allows members to begin classroom observations in September of their freshman year – an entire year before traditional education students begin observation.

“Being able to go into classrooms already as a freshman is really neat,” METP freshman cohort member Natalie Dixon, an English education major from Hudson, Wisconsin, said. “No one else except for METP gets to do that. The METP program really makes you think about how important it is to be a teacher and what the best ways of teaching are. It makes me appreciate my future profession more.”

Students from Quitman County Middle School take a silly picture after bi-weekly Marks Project Saturday tutoring. As part of METP Fellows’ mission to make positive impacts during their four years at Ole Miss before they enter the profession, METP hosts disadvantaged students from surrounding communities for intensive intervention tutoring every other Saturday during the spring. This is a collaboration with the North Mississippi VISTA Project, METP, the School of Education, and other campus partners.
THREE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS EARN NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON HONORS

The U.S. Department of Education recognized three Mississippi schools in October as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2018. The recognition is based on a school’s overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. The three schools earning the national distinction for exemplary high performance are:

- **Center Hill Middle School**, DeSoto County School District
- **Eastside Elementary School**, Clinton Public School District
- **North Bay Elementary School**, Biloxi Public School District

Congratulations to these school families and their communities! Now in its thirty-sixth year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed recognition on more than 8,800 schools. The 2018 honorees were recognized at an awards ceremony November 7-8 in Washington, D.C.

MPE MEMBERS EARN ADVANCED DEGREES

**Bridgette Jackson** earned her Master of Education from William Carey University in August. A member of MPE since 2009, she teaches second grade at **Gary Road Elementary School** in the Hinds County School District.

**Dr. Doug Jones**, sixth grade principal at **Madison Middle School**, received his doctorate from William Carey University in August. Jones has been a member of MPE since 2014.

**Teresa Osbirn**, kindergarten interventionist at **Mooreville Elementary School** in Lee County, graduated in May from Mississippi College with a Master of Education in Dyslexia Therapy. She then became a Certified Academic Language Therapist in July. Osbirn has been a member of MPE since 2013.

TUPELO HONORS TEACHERS OF DISTINCTION

During a luncheon this past September, Tupelo’s CREATE Foundation honored twenty-five teachers and assistant teachers from across the Tupelo Public School District as Teachers of Distinction. MPE would like to recognize the following members who were honored during the celebration:

- **Bridgett Burnett Hawkins** of Parkway Elementary (not pictured)
- **Keila Glenn** of Lawhon Elementary
- **Jodie Thompson** of Joyner Elementary (not pictured)
- **Janice Brock Ward** of Joyner Elementary (not pictured)

Congratulations to all the educators honored by the Tupelo community!

BOWE RECOGNIZED FOR CHORAL EXCELLENCE

**Cherie Bowe**, choral director at **Colmer Middle School** in Pascagoula, was selected as a quarterfinalist for the 2019 Music Educator Award™ presented by the Recording Academy™ and GRAMMY Museum®. More than 2,800 initial nominations were submitted. Bowe is the only quarterfinalist from Mississippi. Cherie has been a member of MPE since 2015.
MPE Regional Training

MPE is pleased to offer the following regional training sessions. Participants will receive .6 CEU credits for each full-day course. MPE will also offer 5 SEMIs for the Improving Student Achievement Through Counselor Effectiveness full-day course. Each session’s content is timely for educators during the 2018-2019 school year.

INTEGRATING CODING IN THE K-8 CLASSROOM: A hands-on coding training that is limited to the first twenty participants. The training will examine the CS4MS (Computer Science for Mississippi) Initiative, in which coding is a major component. This workshop trains teachers how to teach computer science fundamentals through mediums such as Code.org’s curriculum and Google’s CS First program. Participants will get hands-on experience building programs that control robots such as Sphero’s SPRK+, Wonder Workshop’s Dash and Dot robots, and Ozobot. No prior experience necessary to attend this training. All participants must bring a fully charged laptop to the training. (No cost for MPE and MS NBCT Network members to attend and receive CEUs. Non-members must pay $25 to attend, which includes CEUs.)

- February 7
  USM Gulf Park Campus, Long Beach (full-closed)

INTEGRATING CODING K-8: THE NEXT LEVEL: This next-level training session is for instructors who have already started implementing basic coding concepts into their content areas and want to increase their own level of expertise. The training will be limited to the first twenty participants. All participants must bring a fully charged laptop to the training. (No cost for MPE and MS NBCT Network members to attend and receive CEUs. Non-members must pay $25 to attend, which includes CEUs.)

- January 17
  Hinds Community College, Muse Center, Pearl

IMPLEMENTING MISSISSIPPI’S COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS – SCIENCE: This session will explore the components of the 2018 MCCRS for Science using hands-on activities and group discussions. Teachers will deepen their own content and pedagogical expertise by working with peer teachers to outline and plan instruction while sharing ideas about activities and resources. (MPE and MS NBCT Network members receive CEUs free of charge and non-members may receive CEUs for $15.)

K-2 SCIENCE TRAINING
- January 14
  Northwest Community College, Oxford

3-5 SCIENCE TRAINING
- January 31
  Marion County BusinessPlex, Columbia

6-8 SCIENCE TRAINING
- February 13
  Lake Terrace Convention Center, Hattiesburg

9-12 BIOLOGY TRAINING
- January 23
  The Mill Conference Center, Starkville
- February 19
  Hinds Community College, Muse Center, Pearl

IMPLEMENTING MISSISSIPPI’S COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS – SOCIAL STUDIES: This session will share techniques and strategies that will support student learning across the full spectrum of courses under the 2018 MCCRS for Social Studies. Session participants will grasp strategies and activities that will increase engagement and deliver content aligned with the 2018 social studies content standards. MPE and MS NBCT Network members receive CEUs free of charge and non-members may receive CEUs for $15.)

K-5 SOCIAL STUDIES TRAINING
- February 11
  Life Church, Laurel

6-12 SOCIAL STUDIES TRAINING
- January 29
  The Capps Center, Indianola

To register, go to www.mpe.org, click on the “Professional Development” tab, and then click on the hyperlink for the respective training you wish to attend. If you need additional assistance, contact Barbie Ferguson at barbie@mpe.org.
MPE has student chapters on campuses throughout Mississippi. We are honored to support these student members in their studies and journeys through their respective educator preparation programs. Several of our chapters are invested in their local communities via service projects described below. We are excited to welcome our newest student chapter at The University of Southern Mississippi!

**DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

The MPE Student Chapter at Delta State University has been meeting regularly to plan for our upcoming service project. The chapter conducts a service project at a local elementary school each fall and spring semester. The students are working on plans to create a mural at one of the local elementary schools in Cleveland. They want to help foster a love for the arts in elementary school children by getting them involved in designing and painting the mural to help beautify part of their school.

**MISSISSIPPI STATE**

The Association of Educators at Mississippi State (AEMS) is an organization open to all teacher education students in elementary, secondary, music, special education, and physical education. The chapter promotes professional excellence among aspiring educators and participates in service projects that promote student excellence in public schools.

During the Fall 2018 semester, the Student Chapter of Mississippi Professional Educators at The University of Southern Mississippi was formed. The chapter has eighteen founding members. The following students serve on the executive leadership team: President Dru Elkins, Vice-President Abby Coleman, Secretary Caitlyn Dobson, and Treasurer Eugene Tibbett. The faculty advisor is Dr. Stacy Reeves (MPE President in 2006-2007). The chapter held its first leadership meeting via video conferencing in October and decided to have a book drive for a local community organization, with donations accepted through the November break. The chapter’s first open meeting with students and faculty was held in conjunction with the Education Majors Student Association (EMSA) at USM in early November. As Caitlyn Dobson shared, “We are excited to be a part of MPE at USM!”
We would like to recognize the following eleven members who have already earned a free membership for their recruitment efforts during the first quarter of this year:

Lance Bolen, Pascagoula-Gautier School District
Karen Bryant, Simpson County School District
Karin Hagan, Lamar County School District
Cheryl Howard, Quitman County School District
Brad Johns, Rankin County School District
Kimberly W. Jackson, Marshall County School District
Christie Moss, Hattiesburg Public School District
Traci Sullivan, Marion County School District
Kenya Travis, Hattiesburg Public School District
Devin Walsh, Lamar County School District
Lisa Williamson, Pontotoc County School District

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 money for each new member recruited after five. Encourage your professional co-workers and friends to join the premiere organization for professional educators in Mississippi.

RECRUITMENT SPOTLIGHT

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

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, 2018, and June 30, 2019. Free memberships will be credited towards the next year’s membership.

* credit will be given for each additional member after five
** member must have previously been made inactive for a period of three months or more
Bruce Mize
West Point High School, 9th-11th World History
Bringing Virtual Reality to the Classroom

I want to thank MPE for its generous grant that allowed me to bring the world to my students and to enhance the learning experience for so many through the use of virtual reality. Bridging the gap between rural schools and the world around us is a key component in creating well-rounded students who see the world around them as a means to explore and to embrace. With this technology, students are able to explore the world without ever leaving the classroom. No passports are needed when we are able to take a tour of Paris while standing in our classroom in West Point, MS. Students are able to experience and appreciate other cultures throughout the world. Thank you again for your kind and generous support of our program.

Sarah East
Northwest Rankin Middle School, 7th-8th Grade Project
Lead the Way
3D Printer

Thank you MPE for funding the classroom grant that provided my students with 3D printing technology. My students have expanded their 3D modeling skills greatly over the past several months. I can attribute that growth through the connections they are making with concrete models. My goal was to become a manufacturer for my engineering design students. As they progressed through the design process, students gained appreciation for the skills of brainstorming, sketching, and dimensioning because it led to an improved final product that they could hold and evaluate. My students have benefited tremendously from the investment you made in my classroom.

Ashley Rouse
West Hancock Elementary, K-Full Curriculum
ABC…ABC…Watch Me Read!

I would like to express my overwhelming gratitude to MPE for awarding and funding our Kindergarten classroom with the MPE Classroom Grant. When I applied for this grant, I wanted to offer my Kindergarten students the opportunity of not only having a literature-rich library within their own classroom, but being able to teach them how individual letters are used with other letters to make sounds, words, and sentences through trade books. My students had the opportunity to learn about a new letter, while seeing it in nonfiction and fiction text! As the year progressed, all of my students had the opportunity to take these books home to their parents to read aloud or have their parents read to them and relate newly learned content knowledge from class to the new books they were reading at home! Wow! It has been so wonderful to have this opportunity to serve my students and help build a strong foundation for learning. My students and I are so grateful for this huge gift you have given to our classroom!

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.
Mary Ann Johnson
Kossuth Elementary - Kindergarten Literacy
Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn

Thank you MPE for funding the classroom grant that provided multiple listening reading technology and opportunity in my classroom. Realizing the importance and impact a good listening station could have on my students’ reading ability and overall student growth, I was on a mission to put as much text as possible into the hands of my students. Through the grant, I was able to purchase three Kindles and three protective cases to go along with my other set of Kindles, eleven sets of headphones, a headphone splitter, and the Headsprout Early Reading Program. The remainder was spent to place books into our classroom Kindle listening library.
The 2019 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature will convene at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. MPE will keep our members updated throughout the session via our weekly email updates, as well as Facebook and Twitter. MPE encourages our members to be actively involved in the political process and we offer the following for your reference in contacting your legislator regarding critical legislation under consideration.

**LEGISLATIVE BILL TRACKING**
MPE staff will develop our bill tracking spreadsheet of the bills we will be monitoring throughout the session after the February 5 deadline passes for committees to report general bills originating in each chamber. We will update this tracking spreadsheet each Friday and post it in the “Legislative News” section of our website (www.mpe.org). You may track bills, as well as view the language of particular bills, by visiting the “Bill Status” portion of the legislative website at http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us.

**TIMETABLE FOR PROCESSING LEGISLATION**
The timetable for processing legislation includes the following significant legislative deadlines:

- **February 5** - Deadline for committees to report general bills originating in own house
- **February 14** - Deadline for original floor action on general bills originating in own house
- **February 27** - Deadline for original floor action on appropriations bills originating in own house
- **March 5** - Deadline for committees to report general bills originating in other house
- **March 13** - Deadline for original floor action on general bills originating in other house
- **March 19** - Deadline for original floor action on appropriations bills originating in other house
- **March 28** - Deadline to concur or not concur in amendments from other house to general bills
- **March 30** - Deadline for conference reports on appropriation bills to be filed
- **April 1** - Deadline for adoption of appropriations conference reports and for conference reports on general bills to be filed
- **April 3** - Deadline for first consideration of conference reports on general bills
- **April 7** - Sine Die

**LEGALISTIC ROSTER/CONTACT INFORMATION**
You may find legislative contact information in the “Quick Links” menu at the bottom of our homepage (www.mpe.org), as well as via the Mississippi Legislature’s homepage at www.legislature.ms.gov. Below are phone numbers and email addresses for key legislative leaders.

- Governor Phil Bryant; Pat.Ross@governor.ms.gov; 601-359-3100 or 601-359-3150
- Lt. Governor Tate Reeves; ltgov@senate.ms.gov; 601-359-3200
- Senate Education: Senator Gray Tollison; gtollison@senate.ms.gov; 601-359-2395
- Senate Universities and Colleges: Senator Josh Harkins; jharkins@senate.ms.gov; 601-359-3246
- Senate Appropriations: Senator Buck Clarke; bclarke@senate.ms.gov; 601-359-3250
- Speaker of the House Philip Gunn; info@philipgunn.com; 601-359-3300
- House Education: Rep. Richard Bennett; rbennett@house.ms.gov; 601-359-2860
- House Universities and Colleges: Rep. Nolan Mettetal; nmettetal@house.ms.gov; 601-359-3331
- House Appropriations: Rep. John Read; jread@house.ms.gov; 601-359-3340

**#BLUEFORMSTEACHERS**
MPE encourages our members and other Mississippians to wear #BlueforMSTeachers each Friday throughout the legislative session in support of Mississippi’s public school teachers and students. Share your photos on social media using the hashtag #BlueforMSTeachers. Tag MPE on Facebook and on Twitter (@MSProfEd).
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MPE AWARDS NON-CERTIFIED SCHOLARSHIPS

MPE awarded $1,000 scholarships in October to two of our non-certified members to pursue their undergraduate degrees! Congratulations to the following members for receiving a scholarship:

Lori Fowler, an assistant teacher at North Jones Elementary, has been a member of MPE since 2013.

Elizabeth Hollingsworth, an assistant teacher at Oak Grove Lower Elementary, has been a member of MPE since 2011.

MPE 2018 MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

MEMBERS OFFER FEEDBACK VIA MPE’S ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY

MPE conducted our annual online member survey for three weeks in October. 1,409 members participated in this year’s survey. Survey results included the following:

- 83% of respondents joined MPE for our professional liability insurance.
- 95% of respondents are satisfied with their MPE benefits.
- With regard to training topics, 21% prefer training on teacher leadership, 19% would like training on curriculum standards, and another 16% would like training on accountability/accreditation.
- PERS/retirement is the policy issue most important to 27% of respondents, followed closely by teacher/assistant teacher pay at 24%.
- 46% of respondents cited teacher pay as the greatest contributing factor to the state’s teacher shortage crisis, while 25% cited a lack of support/respect for public education.
- 62% of respondents support legislation that would allow teachers who have retired to return to the classroom and draw their retirement.
- 75% of respondents oppose the diversion of state funds from public schools to nonpublic schools, home schools, or virtual schools via vouchers, tuition tax credits, scholarships, individualized education funds, or other means.
- 48% of respondents support legislation that would allow properly trained school employees to carry guns on school campuses.
- 86 respondents work in either a community college or university, with 43% of these members citing faculty/staff salaries as the issue of most importance to them.

Jamie Dowd, a teacher at Northside Elementary in Clinton, and Gina Yarbrough, a teacher at George County Middle School, won the two free memberships we gave away via a drawing to survey participants.
MPE STUDENT MEMBERS TAPPED AS MSU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENT AMBASSADORS

MPE is proud to recognize the following eight student members from Mississippi State University who have been selected to serve as College of Education Ambassadors. The ambassadors serve as liaisons for the college’s faculty and staff to students, prospective students, alumni, and other constituents at various events. Congratulations to the following MPE student members:

- Claire Hamblen, a sophomore elementary education major from Franklin, Tennessee
- Savannah Lowe, a sophomore secondary education major from Brandon
- Crista Alexis Martin, a junior elementary education major from Greenville
- Claire Elizabeth McNatt, a junior special education major from Henderson, Tennessee
- Jensen Reed, a sophomore elementary education major from Maben
- Brandi Smith, a junior secondary education major from Tishomingo
- Laura Beth Thigpen, a junior elementary education major from Manning, South Carolina
- Maggie Worthy, a junior secondary education major from Gore Springs

Good for us, Better for you!

Ross & Yerger was recognized as a “Best Practices” Agency by The Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America

It’s the twentieth year in a row we have received this recognition. Ross and Yerger provides innovative and cost-effective risk-management solutions for businesses across many industries nationwide.

Ross & Yerger

Know the possibilities

Joey Hutto, Senior Vice President
Special Accounts Division
662-840-5422 | JHUTTO@ROSSANDYERGER.COM
Offices in Baton Rouge, Jackson, and Tupelo
ROSSANDYERGER.COM

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Please join us for MPE’s 2019 Best Practices Symposium featuring **Gerry Brooks**, the Kentucky principal known for his humorous and encouraging social media videos. His focus is on encouraging teachers to improve their instruction through personal climate and culture strategies. He desires to help administrators focusing on how to lead all staff in a positive and constructive manner.

**Marshall Ramsey**, editorial cartoonist for the Clarion-Ledger, two-time Pulitzer finalist, and nationally syndicated cartoonist will also be with us. He will bring a fresh perspective to issues facing educators and public education.

The day’s agenda and additional details will be announced in December. Priority registration will open for MPE members in January. Registration will open for non-members in March if space allows. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us on March 30!

Engaging Speakers  Legislative and budget news  Great door prizes  CEUs available

**Save the Date!**

**Saturday, March 30, 2019**  
The Hilton  
Jackson, MS

Registration for MPE members will open January 15. Non-members may register beginning in March, if space is available.
WHY MPE?

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018 - 2019 DUES</th>
<th>MPE</th>
<th>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$489*-$576*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couples</td>
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<td>-NA-</td>
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<td>First Year Professional</td>
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<td>Lifetime Retiree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired Educator</td>
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<td>$60*-$70*</td>
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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.