



Mississippi University

for Women

*A Tradition of Excellence for Women and Men*

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December 21, 2007

Ms. Susan Puckett  
President  
MUW Alumnae Association  
Columbus, Mississippi

Dear Susan,

As you know, many members of the MUW Community met on October 29 as a part of "MUW 20/20: Envisioning Our Future, Fulfilling Our Promise." Faculty, staff, alumni, business leaders, political leaders, and students were invited to attend the day-long session. About sixty individuals gave us that day as we explored strengths and opportunities as well as challenges facing MUW. The purpose of the day was to engage our constituents in an authentic search for the brightest future possible for our institution. I am sorry that your schedule did not allow you to attend.

It seems especially important to be undertaking such a thinking process as we also consider our upcoming 125th anniversary in 2009. As we plan celebratory events to honor our treasured past, we must also be about the business of planning for our future. Anyone associated with higher education knows that change from all sides is greatly impacting universities. Changes in student demographics, increasing expectations in the area of accountability, state and accreditation mandates, and expansion of educational competition all combine to trigger multiple challenges and opportunities that we must face and address.

Envisioning our future in the midst of this environment requires careful deliberation, what I would call "deep listening," and the collective thinking of all of our constituents. To continue to be the high quality institution our founders envisioned, it is essential that we set aside personal agendas, give up preconceptions, and allow room for creative thinking. No predetermined agenda or outcomes exist for this envisioning work; rather, the envisioning process is based upon the belief that we have the capacity and the will to build-together-the best institution possible. I am committed to making certain that the envisioning process itself mirrors the kind of institution that we value: collegial, open, data-informed, innovative, and based upon the pursuit of excellence.

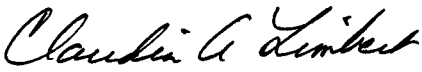
With these thoughts in mind, the University is proceeding with the next phase of the envisioning process. Beginning in January, approximately one hundred MUW faculty, students, and staff will meet in one of ten focus groups to share their thoughts about the future of the university. The focus groups will meet to discuss and assess our strengths and challenges as well as to suggest opportunities that we need to explore for the future. The work of the various focus groups will be collected and shared with a 20/20 Campus Envisioning Task Force who will review all the

information coming from the 20/20 session and make recommendations to me concerning our next steps.

Like all parts of the MUW Family, members of the MUW Alumnae Association are important to the success of the University. To that end, I invite the MUW Alumnae Association to participate in this process through a focus group(s) at its February 2008 meeting. Please contact me if the Alumnae Association is able to be a part of this exciting and important undertaking.

I want this envisioning process to be as inclusive as is logistically possible, so I hope that all called upon will agree to be part of either the focus groups or the 20/20 Campus Envisioning Task Force. This is a very important step in the life of our cherished institution and, together, we willingly take these steps in order to lay a strong foundation for our future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claudia A. Limbert".

Claudia A. Limbert, Ph.D.

President