

Mississippi University for Women

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE FOR WOMEN AND MEN

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The University

HISTORY

When Mississippi University for Women was chartered in 1884, it made educational history as the first state supported college for women in America. The founders had been persistent and tireless in their efforts, which had spanned over 20 years. Activist Sallie Reneau's energetic campaigning in the 1860s and 1870s resulted in legislative approval, but no appropriations. A decade later, Olivia Valentine Hastings and Annie Coleman Peyton joined forces to lobby legislators and journalists in support of a public women's College. Originally known as The Industrial Institute and College (II & C), this institution was created by the Mississippi Legislature to combine a high quality collegiate education with practical vocational training for women. In a time when education for women was considered potentially disastrous, the state legislature recognized that Mississippi's young women needed to learn not only to think for themselves, but also to support themselves.

In October of 1885, the first session began in Columbus, the city that had won the college by virtue of its early interest in women's education and its willingness to commit hard cash to the endeavor. The city donated the buildings and grounds of the Columbus Female Institute, a private school founded in 1847, and offered city bonds in the amount of \$50,000 for any needed improvements on the property. That October, 341 girls embarked on a new educational experiment, and four years later, many of those same girls received their diplomas.

The Industrial Institute and College became Mississippi State College for Women (MSCW) in 1920. The new name more clearly reflected the institution's effort to integrate professional training with the four year baccalaureate degree. Mississippi University for Women (MUW) has always shown an ability to adapt and change with the times. In 1922, alumnae campaigned and voted for their former President, Henry Whitfield, in his bid for Governor of Mississippi. By 1974, as all eight Universities in Mississippi began adding and strengthening graduate programs, MSCW became Mississippi University for Women. While the University has been admitting men since 1982, MUW still maintains a distinct emphasis on professional development and leadership opportunities for women, while providing a high-quality liberal arts education for all.

ADMINISTRATION

The first Board of Trustees consisted of Governor Robert Lowry, James T. Harrison of Columbus, Dr. Lea Williamson of Como, John F. Smith of Vossburg, Dr. J.J. Gage of Grenada, T. M. Miller of Jackson, Mayor G.R. Higgins of Chotard Landing, Captain D.L. Sweatman of Winona, Dr. J.J. Thornton of Pass Christian, and Senator John McCaleb Martin of Port Gibson, author of the bill creating MUW.

The university has had thirteen presidents and seven acting or interim presidents:

Richard W. Jones, 1884-1888

Charles H. Cocke, 1888-1890

Mary J. S. Callaway (Acting President), March 1890-June 1890

Arthur Beals, 1890-1891

Robert Frazer, 1891-1898

Mary J. S. Callaway (Acting President), February 1898-June 1898

Andrew A. Kincannon, 1898-1907

Henry L. Whitfield, 1907-1920

John C. Fant, 1920-1929

Nellie Keirn (Acting President), November 1929-June 1930

R. E. L. Sutherland, 1930-1932

Burney L. Parkinson, 1932-1952

Charles P. Hogarth, 1952-1977

James W. Strobel, 1977-1988

Harvey M. Craft (Interim President), July 1988-October 1988

Delene W. Lee (Interim President), October 1988-April 1989

Clyda S. Rent, 1989-2001

Vagn K. Hansen (Acting President), July 2001

Lenore L. Prather (Interim President), August 2001-June 2002

Claudia A. Limbert, 2002-Present

History was made in 1989 when Dr. Clyda S. Rent became the first woman to serve as the University's President and the first woman to serve as the institutional executive officer of a public university in Mississippi. In that tradition, MUW is presently being guided by its second woman President, Dr. Claudia Limbert.

VISION, MISSION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vision

Building on its long tradition of excellence in liberal arts and professional education, as well as its historic focus on academic and leadership development for women, Mississippi University for Women will continue to be a university that prepares both women and men for successful lives by providing a high-quality education in a personalized learning environment.

Mission

A Carnegie Master's II public institution, Mississippi University for Women provides high-quality undergraduate and graduate education for women and men in a variety of liberal arts and professional programs, while maintaining its historic commitment to academic and leadership development for women. MUW provides education in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education and Human Sciences, College of Nursing and Speech Language Pathology, and the Culinary Arts Institute, utilizing small classes and emphasizing a personalized learning environment. The graduates of MUW are prepared for competitive careers and excellent graduate and professional schools. MUW provides educational opportunities throughout Mississippi and the United States while addressing the unique educational and public service needs of northeast Mississippi and adjoining counties in northwest Alabama.

Guiding Principles

MUW provides high-quality instructional programs that emphasize teaching and learning. With faculty and staff of the highest caliber, MUW is dedicated to providing a campus environment that encourages lifelong learning, strong career preparation, and personal growth. Graduates are expected to have skills in communication, technology, and critical thinking, as well as an awareness of self, gender-related issues, cultural diversity, and responsible citizenship.

MUW is student oriented. MUW provides small classes and emphasizes personalized student attention, so that each student will have the opportunity to succeed. MUW offers a student-life program that stimulates learning and leadership development.

MUW values research, scholarship, and creativity. While MUW is primarily a teaching institution, the university supports research, scholarship, and creativity to enhance the professional development of faculty and staff in order to better prepare students.

MUW is committed to diversity among its faculty, staff, and students. The faculty, staff, and students of MUW represent the global society in which we live. MUW believes that diversity allows students to grow in their understanding of self and others.

MUW endorses sound organizational principles and is committed to operational efficiency, collaborative strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, and creative problem solving.

MUW meets regional, state, and national needs for higher education. The University responds to the needs of the local community by providing cultural activities; programs for intellectual, professional, and social development; and by assisting in economic development. MUW extends its outreach to the state and nation, using multiple delivery methods, including the internet and other advanced systems.

MUW is committed to public service. MUW forms partnerships with businesses, as well as with educational, governmental, public service, and charitable organizations, to create opportunities that provide economic and social advantages for the institution, community, and region.

Accreditation

Mississippi University for Women is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) and is authorized to award the Associate, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees.

MUW is a member of Association of American State Colleges and Universities, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Southern Universities Conference. MUW is included among institutions whose programs are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC, 61 Broadway, 33rd Floor, New York, NY 10006 (800) 669-1656, extension 153), The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, D.C., 20036-1120. 1-202-877-6711), the National Association of Schools of Music, and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. The academic (i.e., Master of Science) program in Speech Language Pathology is accredited by the Council of Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech Language Hearing Association. MUW's Paralegal Program is approved by the American Bar Association. MUW's Business Program is accredited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs. Graduates are eligible for membership in the American Association of University Women.

Location

MUW is located in Columbus, Mississippi, a city with a population of about 25,000. One of the most beautiful and historic communities in the South, Columbus is the site of more than 100 antebellum homes and several hundred other buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The city is home to Columbus Air Force Base, one of only four Air Force undergraduate pilot training bases in the nation. The nation's first observance of Memorial Day took place in Columbus, and the city is the birthplace of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tennessee Williams. Columbus is a headquarters for the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway.

Campus

The MUW campus covers more than 114 acres within the historical district of central Columbus. Twenty-three of the more than 60 campus buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The architectural styles represented include Queen Anne, Gothic revival, and neoclassical.

MUW's Plymouth Bluff Center is only minutes from the main campus on a 190 -acre site with more than four miles of nature trails along the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. This beautiful, sylvan setting has 24 neatly furnished guest rooms and dining facilities seating up to 150. Plymouth Bluff also includes a state-of-the-art conference center, making it an ideal facility for retreats, workshops, and meetings.