

LEAP

LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT + ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIP

The W: Nationally Ranked, Mississippi's Overlooked Asset

Mississippi University for Women outperforms peers across the South and the nation in access, value, and outcomes — yet remains one of the state's most under-recognized assets. These rankings are not just honors; they are evidence that Mississippi's investment in The W pays measurable, lasting dividends for its people, its economy, and its future.

A University of National Distinction

The W continues to earn national recognition across multiple independent ranking systems — including U.S. News & World Report, Money.com, The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse, Washington Monthly, and Niche.com. These consistent placements demonstrate that The W delivers exceptional educational outcomes, affordability, and value — outpacing larger universities across the South and the nation.

#1 in Mississippi – Best Regional University - South (U.S. News & World Report, 2026)

- #8 Social Mobility Regional (South)
- #9 Best Value (South)
- #15 Top Public Regional (South)
- 33 overall among all U.S. regional universities

#1 in Mississippi – Best Colleges for Nursing (Niche.com, 2026)

- Vandergriff College of Nursing & Health Sciences ranks The W among the top 4% of U.S. nursing programs.
- Top 10 public universities nationally for nursing
- #29 overall among all U.S. nursing schools

#1 Public University in Mississippi – Money.com “America's Best Colleges” (2025)

- The W earned four stars out of five, the highest among Mississippi's public universities.
- Recognized for affordability, graduation rates, and alumni success.

Top Rankings by U.S. News & World Report (2025)

- #8 – Top Performers on Social Mobility (Public Regional South)
- #9 – Best Value Schools, Regional Universities (South)
- #15 – Top Public Schools, Regional Universities (South)
- #16 – Best Colleges for Veterans (Nationally)
- #21 – Top in Social Mobility (Regional South)
- #33 Overall – Regional Universities (South)
- #181 – Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programs (Public Institutions)

#1 in Mississippi, #16 in the South – “Best Bang for the Buck” (Washington Monthly, 2025)

- **Ranked highest in Mississippi** among “Best Colleges for Your Tuition (and Tax) Dollars”
- Recognized for exceptional return on investment in higher education.
- #31 among Top 100 Master’s Universities nationwide.

#1 Nursing School in Mississippi (RegisteredNursing.org, 2025)

- Cited by SuperTalk Mississippi as “the state’s top nursing program.”

One of America’s Best Colleges to Work For – 13 Consecutive Years

- Recognized for professional development, shared governance, and faculty well-being.
- On the Honor Roll nine times — a category reserved for institutions with exemplary campus culture and mission alignment.

The Value Behind the Rankings

RANKING AREA	WHAT IT PROVES
Access & Affordability	The W consistently delivers one of the lowest tuition rates and highest value-to-cost ratios in the South — a key factor in national “Best Value” and “Bang for the Buck” lists.
Student Outcomes	High graduation and employment rates, especially in nursing, business, and health sciences, show that The W turns opportunity into tangible workforce results.
Social Mobility	Top-10 regional performer for social mobility — proof that The W changes life trajectories for Mississippi families, particularly women and first-generation students.
Faculty Excellence	The W’s long streak as a “Best College to Work For” underscores faculty commitment and stability — a predictor of student success.
National Reputation	Consistent recognition by independent evaluators shows that The W meets and exceeds national benchmarks for teaching quality, student experience, and fiscal efficiency.

Why It Matters: A University Celebrated Everywhere But Home

Despite its standing among the most affordable, accessible, and effective regional universities in the country, The W continues to face limited recognition — and investment — from its own state.

This contrast is stark: National evaluators consistently affirm The W's excellence, yet state support and public perception lag behind. The result is a paradox — a Mississippi institution that exemplifies national best practices in access and outcomes, while struggling under outdated funding models and political headwinds.

In other words, **The W is nationally respected but locally under appreciated.**

This pattern weakens the very return on investment that national rankings celebrate. Mississippi taxpayers already receive extraordinary value from The W's performance — the challenge now is ensuring that value is not taken for granted.

The Case for Reinvestment

Mississippi has in The W a proven, high-performing public university that:

- Delivers first-rate outcomes at community-college cost.
- Trains a large share of the state's healthcare workforce.
- Keeps graduates in Mississippi, strengthening communities and local economies.
- Provides national visibility for Mississippi as a leader in affordable, high-quality public education.

Every national ranking is not merely a badge — it is evidence that Mississippi already owns a top-tier, high-performing university. Reinvesting in The W means reinforcing a proven formula for access, affordability, and achievement that serves every region of the state.

Be a Voice for The W!

The W's strength is in its people — and that means you. The Key Person Network is a tool to make sure our alumni are heard at the Capitol and in home districts.

You can serve in one of two vital roles: **1) Key Person** — identified as having a personal or professional relationship with a legislator and takes responsibility to deliver specific messages and updates to that legislator through the Network. **2) Advocate** — ready to mobilize quickly with emails, letters, or phone calls to committees and legislators when alerted by the Network.

Your voice matters. Help us protect and promote The W's future. To get involved, contact us at developmentandalumni@muw.edu.