

**MCLEAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
Albert Nylander, Director  
2013-2014

**I. PRIMARY FUNCTION, MISSION AND GOALS**

The McLean Institute is currently completing a strategic planning process, which is expected to conclude in the spring 2015 semester. As part of this development, the McLean Institute has revised its mission statement as follows, based on input from campus stakeholders, advisory board members, and external consultants:

*The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement  
creates pathways through which the University of Mississippi cultivates  
mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance the quality of life for all  
Mississippians and instill a commitment to community and civic  
engagement in all members of the University community.*

Although a working draft, the revised mission statement is a more focused articulation of the Institute's commitment to address poverty while engaging the University community in reciprocal relationships with community partners. The ongoing strategic planning process will further clarify the role that the McLean Institute will play on campus and in communities across Mississippi.

**II. SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING GOALS (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014)**

The McLean Institute supports student engagement and mutually beneficial partnerships with Mississippi communities with several key initiatives, all of which thrived in the 2013-2014 academic year.

- The **McLean Mentors Program** offers University of Mississippi students the opportunity to work with young students throughout north Mississippi through tutoring and mentorship opportunities. These commitments culminate in field trips to the University of Mississippi campus that foster college-going aspirations. In spring 2014, the McLean Institute piloted this program with University of Mississippi volunteers who tutored students at Calhoun City Excel and hosted them for a visit to campus.
- **SOC 451: Social Issues in the Mississippi Delta** is a credit-bearing course to study social issues in the Mississippi Delta. This course allows students to explore contemporary issues in education and poverty before spending a week of service and academic exploration in the Mississippi Delta during spring break.
- The McLean Institute supports **service-learning** with faculty grants, workshops, toolkits, and an annual symposium to exchange ideas and best practices. In the 2013-2014 academic year, the McLean Institute supported courses in the departments of Psychology and Teacher Education.
- In April 2013, the McLean Institute hosted the inaugural **Celebration of Service** in partnership with the Dean of Students to recognize exemplary servant leaders in the Lafayette County-Oxford-University community with the prestigious Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award.

- **Horizons at the University of Mississippi** is a six week summer learning program which aims to eliminate summer learning loss for low-income students, positively impact student perceptions of school and learning, and increase student self-confidence through academics, enrichment, and recreation. In summer 2014, the Horizons program served rising 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from the Oxford school district. The McLean Institute also deepened its involvement with two local education campaigns: Excel by 5, a coalition working to improve early childhood wellbeing, and LOU Reads, which supports grade-level reading initiatives.
- The **Community Engagement Minor** is a joint initiative with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation. To understand the baseline for campus engagement, the McLean Institute created a survey to gauge student involvement in service-learning and co-curricular service, and to assess interest in a community engagement minor. Over 2,000 students responded to the survey. The McLean Institute developed a framework for the minor, including core competencies, required courses, electives, and a capstone.
- On an ongoing basis, the McLean Institute **collects and analyzes data** around service-learning, volunteerism, community engagement and community partnerships, with the goal of tailoring campus programs to meet the needs and interests of students, faculty, and community partners. These efforts have contributed to efforts that earned the University of

Mississippi a place on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor roll for the 2013-2014 academic year.

### **III. ADDITION OF OR MODIFICATIONS IN PROGRAMS, DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE, SPACE AND FACILITIES, ETC.**

In August 2013, the McLean Institute moved its offices from Vardaman Hall to Howry Hall. The work space in Howry Hall is more conducive to executing major grants, and meetings with funders.

### **IV. NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

In the past year, the McLean Institute has brought in over \$2 million in grant projects that will positive impact quality of life in Mississippi and beyond.

- The McLean Institute serves as the administrative lead agency for the **Delta Leadership Institute**, with nearly \$1 million of support from the Delta Regional Authority. The DLI offers training in leadership, advocacy, and community development to 52 leaders from economically distressed communities in the eight-state Mississippi River Delta region. The orientation session of the DLI was held on the University of Mississippi campus in November 2013.
- In the fall 2014 semester, the McLean Institute will launch the **Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development initiative**, which works with students and faculty to develop entrepreneurial approaches to

addressing poverty and improving quality of life in rural Mississippi communities. This initiative will provide funding to ten undergraduate students (\$8,000 per year for two years, plus \$3,000 for summer work), four graduate students (\$20,000 per year for two years, plus \$3,000 for summer work), and two faculty members each year (research grants of \$10,000 each). This project is funded by a \$1.6 million grant from the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation.

- Also in fall 2014, the McLean Institute will initiate **LOU Saves**, a partnership with the Mississippi Community Financial Access Coalition and the 1:1 Fund which offers matched college savings accounts and financial literacy training to low-income students and families in the Lafayette County-Oxford-University community. This is a scalable and replicable program with potential to expand across the state. The McLean Institute received a grant in June 2014 from the United Way of Oxford and Lafayette County to provide these accounts to 25 low income students from the Oxford and Lafayette County School Districts. This program builds on a partnership with the Mississippi Financial Access Coalition, which co-presented a session on child savings accounts with the McLean Institute at the Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference in Lubbock, Texas, in October 2013.

## **V. PERSONNEL CHANGES**

The McLean Institute has expanded its staff in order to meet its commitments to University of Mississippi students and faculty, as well as to communities across the state.

- **Laura Martin**, who began as a program coordinator in January 2013, was hired as a project manager in October 2013. In the past year, Laura has focused on executing the Delta Leadership Institute, developing service-learning resources, and supporting campus-community partnerships.
- **Emma Tkachuck** was hired as a project manager in October 2013. Emma directs Horizons at the University of Mississippi and represents the McLean Institute with the Excel by 5 and LOU Reads Coalitions.
- **Ryan Parsons**, who started as a VISTA member in August 2012, was hired as a program coordinator in October 2013. Ryan provides support in executing the Delta Leadership Institute, leads planning for the Alternative Spring break, and will direct the CEED Initiative as a project manager in the coming year.

## **VI. FUTURE NEEDS, GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

As the McLean Institute leads the university community in transformative engagement initiatives that will impact poverty across the state, it will be important to ensure adequate institutional support to fund staff positions so that McLean gifts may support students, faculty, and programmatic efforts.