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Sharon Nichols Joins Small Business Center as State Director

New leader brings seven years' experience from Oklahoma center

DECEMBER 14, 2018 BY MICHELLE THOMPSON



Sharon Nichols

OXFORD, Miss. – The **Mississippi Small Business Development Center** has hired Sharon Nichols as the organization's new state director.

The MSBDC state office is housed on the University of Mississippi's Oxford campus and is administered through a partnership with the **School of Business Administration**.

"We are thrilled to have Sharon join our team in the SBDC in this leadership role," said Ken Cyree, dean of the Ole Miss business school. "We have an excellent center with experienced, capable and dedicated staff who fulfill the mission of helping transform Mississippi's businesses, and Sharon brings experience and passion to help expand the success we have enjoyed.

"I believe the future is bright for the MSBDC under her leadership and I look forward to the impact we will have in the future on Mississippi businesses and the economy."

Nichols brings more than seven years' experience with the Oklahoma SBDC, where she served the last three years as assistant state director. She succeeds interim director Judy Forester, who resumes her position as associate state director.

"I am so grateful for the outstanding job Judy Forester did as interim director," Nichols said. "Her leadership has been invaluable to the program and cannot be overstated.

"I truly believe in the mission of the SBDC, and I've witnessed firsthand the impact it can have on people's lives. Mississippi has such a strong program and I am excited to be part of this team and help prepare our centers for a successful future."

Nichols received a bachelor's degree in general studies from the University of Central Oklahoma and an MBA specializing in organizational leadership and change management from Northeastern State University. Her certifications include Economic Development Finance Professional, Professional in Human Resources and Certification in Technology Commercialization.

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the **U.S. Small Business Administration**, the MSBDC provides services and support at no charge to any Mississippian who wants to start a small business or is looking to grow an existing business.



Comprising seven regional centers across the state, the MSBDC offers a wealth of knowledge and information via trained counselors with backgrounds in banking, finance and business development. For a list of available workshops and counselors in your area, see <http://www.mssbdc.org> or call 800-725-7232 in Mississippi.

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Campus Briefs

Fifth Annual Mississippi Entrepreneurship Forum Set for March 8

OXFORD, Miss. – The 2019 Mississippi Entrepreneurship Forum will be hosted March 8 at the Cabot Lodge Millsaps in Jackson. Formerly known as the Rural Entrepreneurship Forum, the event will bring together leading entrepreneurs, economic developers, innovators and future business owners to learn more about the current entrepreneurial climate and future of entrepreneurship in Mississippi. Registration begins

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Endowments Expand Mike Overstreet's Legacy at UM

OXFORD, Miss. – Helen Graeber Overstreet knew how her late husband, Mike Overstreet, felt about the University of Mississippi. When she was ready to expand his legacy, she turned to their alma mater to establish six endowments that will impact the university for generations to come. "I knew where his heart was, and I knew

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Mississippi Business Journal: UMMC's MIND Center homing in on Alzheimer's