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## Rural Entrepreneurship Forum Scheduled for April 5-6

**Event brings together business owners, other stakeholders to foster economic development in state**

MARCH 18, 2018 BY **EDWIN B. SMITH**



The fourth annual Rural Entrepreneurship Forum is set for April 5-6 at the UM Insight Park and the Oxford Conference Center. Photo by Nathan Latil/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – The fourth annual Rural Entrepreneurship Forum is set for April 5-6 at the University of Mississippi's Insight Park and the Oxford Conference Center, where experts will discuss economic development opportunities in Mississippi.

Sponsored by the UM **McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement**, the event is part of the Catalyzing Entrepreneurship and Economic Development initiative.

“Our fourth annual Rural Entrepreneurship Forum is focused on bringing business owners, economic development professionals, universities and community members together to learn from each other and to develop avenues to improve our state,” said J.R. Love, CEED project manager. “Since the CEED initiative’s inception, community-campus partnerships have been developed to foster entrepreneurship and economic development throughout Mississippi.”

A “meet and greet” is scheduled with Teresa Hubbard of CITE Armored from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. April 5 at Insight Park. Hubbard was selected as the Mississippi Business Journal’s 2018 Business Woman of the Year.

The **Mississippi Small Business Development Center** will host a pre-forum workshop on small business set-up, led by Mitch McDowell, the center’s assistant director, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Insight Park.

Speakers for April 5 include Jon Maynard, director of the Oxford-Lafayette Economic Development Foundation and Chamber of Commerce; Denotee Martin, of the Minority PUL Alliance; Josh West, of Blue Delta Jeans; and Allyson Best, UM director of technology management.

Presenters scheduled for April 6 at the Oxford Conference Center are Karen Kurr, owner of NoTime2Cook; Janet McCarty, of Cotton’s Cafe; Leonard Brown, of Brown’s Farm and Shiitake Mushroom; Phillip Ashley Rix, of Phillip Ashley Chocolates; Ryan Snow, a CEED innovation fellow at Ole Miss; Sheena Allen, of Capway; Lee Ingram, of Collegiate Tutoring; Taeisha Gambrel, of Sisters of the Faith; Eli Harnett, of Aerial Production Photography; Bethany Cooper, of Base Camp Coding Academy; Vince Jordan, of Lobaki Inc.; Eli Gross, of Trustmark National Bank; Alan Branson, of Hope Credit Union; Tasha Bibb, of Innovate Mississippi; and Albert Nylander, director of the McLean Institute.

William Nicholas, UM director of economic development, said Insight Park officials are looking forward to hosting the Rural Entrepreneurship Forum, which complements its mission of entrepreneurship.

“I’ve attended this event in the past, and it is an honor to host the opening session this year at Insight Park,” he said. “The staff and students at the McLean Institute care deeply about Mississippi and they demonstrate it by the tireless service they provide year after year.

## Campus Briefs

MARCH 9, 2018 BY **EDWIN B. SMITH**

OXFORD, Miss. – The McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement at the University of Mississippi, in partnership with the Entrepreneurship Center at the Mississippi Development Authority, announces the 2018 Spring Webinar Series. The series kicks off at noon Tuesday (March 13) with a presentation on MDA’s Minority Certification program. Derek Finley of MDA

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## Thank You To Our Donors

MARCH 10, 2018 BY **BILL DABNEY**

OXFORD, Miss. – Dwight Tays of Nashville, Tennessee, says the University of Mississippi gave him the knowledge base he’s needed to be successful throughout his more-than-four-decade career as a political science educator. Now, he wants to give back. “The Department of Political Science at Ole Miss not only provided me with a sound education but

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“The Rural Entrepreneurship Forum is just one example of how the McLean Institute empowers Mississippians to improve their communities.”

The CEED initiative works with UM students and faculty to build partnerships with communities across the state. These partnerships aim to increase entrepreneurship and promote economic development in rural Mississippi.

Since the CEED initiative started in 2014, students, faculty and community partners have created connections to more than 26 counties in Mississippi.

The registration deadline for the forum is Friday (March 23). To register or get more information, visit <http://www.mclean.olemiss.edu/ref>. For questions about the forum, contact J.R. Love at [jrlove@olemiss.edu](mailto:jrlove@olemiss.edu) or 662-915-8832.

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