

HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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New Alumni Association Officers



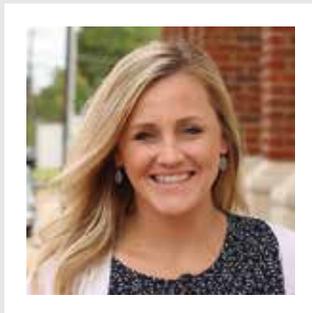
James Young, *President*

James E. Young was born in Thomastown and graduated from Holmes Community College in 1963. He went on to Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Seminary before being appointed by the International Mission Board for East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). He was in Bangladesh for 30 plus years with his wife, Guinevere, and their two children. Young has served in various positions and capacities in missions while in Bangladesh but now resides back in Mississippi where he is the pastor of McAdams Baptist Church.



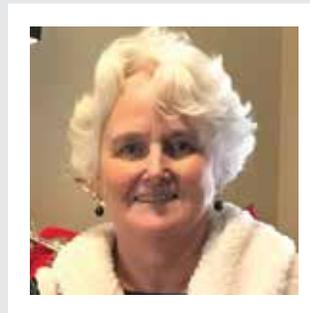
Derek Starling, *Vice President*

Derek Starling, Sr., of Madison is a 1986 alumnus. A graduate of Canton High School, he played men's varsity basketball under Coach Bennie Kimble from 1984-1986. Upon graduation from Holmes, he attended Mississippi State University and earned his bachelor's in industrial and systems engineering with a minor in mathematics while playing basketball at the college level. Today, he is the owner of SOL Engineering Services, headquartered in Jackson with offices throughout the Southeast. He and his wife, Daphenia, have one son, Derek, Jr.



Hillary O'Briant, *Treasurer*

Hilliary O'Briant is a graduate of East Holmes Academy and a 2007 Holmes alumna. During her time at Holmes, she was on the softball team, a Dazzler, an Ambassador and Homecoming Maid along with being in the Hall of Fame and a PTK member. O'Briant earned her degree in communication and minor in business administration from Mississippi College in 2009. Today, you can find O'Briant working at Ivey Mechanical as their Marketing Director. O'Briant and her husband Zac, (also a Holmes Alumnus) live in Sallis. They have three daughters, Charlie, Anna Mack and Mary Whitley.



Kay Asken, *Secretary*

Kay Gowan Asken is a 1963 Holmes alumna. Asken worked in different capacities with the State for 25 years. She started with the University of Mississippi Department of Intercollegiate Athletics then served as Administrative and Legal Secretary for the following agencies: State Personnel Board, Office of the Governor, Office of the Attorney General, Mississippi Public Broadcasting and Mississippi Department of Veterans' Affairs. Asken has also worked in the private sector as a director of a 501c3 support group and legal secretary but is now retired. She has three children, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

On the cover

Alumni Spotlight: Ashley Bridges DeFord

Ashley Bridges DeFord from Blackhawk is a rare find. She is a female welder who graduated from Holmes Community College and is working her way up in the field.

DeFord graduated from J.Z. George High School in Carrollton in 2006. She began working on a general studies degree at Holmes right after high school but the timing was not right and she did not finish. Not letting the grass grow under her feet, she held several jobs in the area, from waitressing to volunteer firefighting, before connecting with Holmes welding instructor Ben Lewis.

In 2016, DeFord started the Holmes' welding program. DeFord said the program's



*Ashley Bridges DeFord ('08),
Blazes a trail for future HCC
female welders.*

main focus was teaching quality welding. She enjoyed Lewis' welding tests and the push to achieve

perfect welding work.

"I had to stay focused, as I had a lot going on in my personal life at the time, but my instructor helped me stay on track," DeFord said.

As she completed the program in 2017, DeFord was employed as a production welder at Anel Corporation in Winona. Anel was incorporated in 1965 as an established supplier of hydraulic and fuel tanks, custom fabricated metal products and machinery. Anel is a

privately held company employing 140-150 people from Carroll and surrounding counties.

"I enjoy the fusion of materials and it is exciting to see what you put together," DeFord says.

Now DeFord leads her own team at Anel. She is responsible for making sure her team has the welding supplies they need, tools to get their job done, verifying the quality of parts being used for projects and scheduling orders. Her team consists of about eight people which are all local or from surrounding areas.

"Anel is a very personal place to work and they listen to what you need," DeFord said.

DeFord's message to current Holmes welding students is to keep pushing no matter how hard it seems.

Smith to be Inducted to MCC Sports Hall of Fame

On April 23, Charles Hughes "Sonny" Smith will be inducted into the Mississippi Community College Sports Hall of Fame at a special ceremony in Pearl.

Smith came to Holmes in 1954 from Cloudland High School in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. He mentioned he had been sick with some health issues as a kid but had started to improve and then along came his opportunity to play basketball at Holmes.

"I remember the warmest love and acceptance from the people of Goodman and Holmes Junior," Smith said.

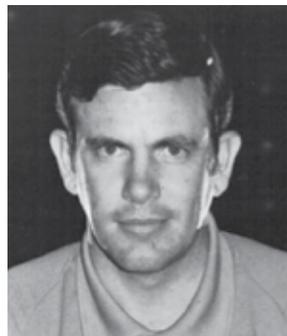
Smith played guard for Holmes basketball coach Gordon Carr. He was a part of the 1956 championship team and was named All-State. After Holmes, Smith went to Milligan College and earned a Bachelor of Science. He continued to excel on the court, making the All Smoky Mountain Conference

two years in a row.

Basketball was something Smith enjoyed. He followed his passion into the coaching side of the sport for nine years at the high school level and 20 plus years at college level starting as an assistant at William & Mary, Pepperdine and Virginia Tech. Smith's first head coaching job was at East Tennessee State (1976-78), then on to Auburn University (1978-1989) and Virginia Commonwealth University (1989-1998).

Among Smith's coaching accomplishments are an SEC Championship in 1985, CAA regular season in 1996 and CCA Tournament in 1996. He is best known for his career at Auburn in the 80's.

Smith has several honors that have come



*Charles Hughes "Sonny"
Smith, Holmes CC alumnus
(56) and 2019 Mississippi
Community College Sports
Hall of Fame inductee.*

with his successful career in basketball as both a player and a coach. He has been

inducted into several Hall of Fames including the Holmes Sports Hall of Fame in 2006, and he was SEC Coach of the Year twice.

Smith and his wife, Janice, live in Auburn and have two children: Sheri and Steve. They have four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Smith can be found as the color commentator for the Auburn men's basketball games on the Auburn Sports Network radio broadcast.

HCC SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Schedule of Events Thursday, April 4, 2019

2:30 - 3:00

President's Reception;

President's House

*Honorees check-in and visit with
Head Coaches and team captains*

3:00 - 3:15

Welcome by Dr. Jim Haffey,

President of the College

*Comments from: Andy Wood, Athletic
Director; James Young, President of
Alumni Association; Katherine H.
Ellard, Coordinator of Alumni Affairs*

3:15 - 3:30

Tour will travel to the chapel

*Honorees will meet family members
and invited guests*

3:30 - 4:00

HCC Chorale Performance

Chapel on the Hill

4:00 - 4:45

Honoree group travels to the
Donald E. Phillips Business Building

*Art Gallery and social with "Bully" &
"Major" in the PTK room*

5:00

Honorees, family members and
invited guests travel to Coliseum

*Honorees meet and socialize with
Alumni and general public*

6:00

Banquet & Awards Program

Frank Branch Coliseum

*Honorees introduced and officially
inducted into the Holmes Community
College Sports Hall of Fame*



**Sheila
Sullivan
Hickman
Coach**

Sheila Sullivan Hickman is no stranger to Holmes Community College. She served as the Holmes women's basketball coach from 1978-1987. Hickman hails from Winston County and went to Louisville High School. After high school, she attended and played basketball at the University of Mississippi.

While playing in college, she became the first player to score 1,000 points for her career and she did it in only three years. She finished with 1,475 points and currently ranks 10th on the all-time list. After earning her Bachelor of Science and Master of Education from the University of Mississippi and furthered her degree at Mississippi State University in Educational Leadership.

Hickman started her coaching career as the University of Mississippi graduate assistant for the women's basketball team. She was drafted by the Milwaukee Does of The Women's Professional Basketball League.

"I enjoyed celebrating with players who received special honors such as Homecoming Queen and All-Stars," Hickman said.

After coaching at Holmes, Hickman returned to Louisville High School as the girls' basketball coach and tennis coach. As her position evolved, she served as assistant athletic director and school administrator.

Among Hickman's career accomplishments she has been President of the M-Club at Ole Miss and inducted into the Ole Miss Sports Hall of Fame in 1995.

Hickman and her husband, Hap, live in Louisville. They are both retired, but still involved in their community and attend First Methodist Church.



**Richard
Wayne Akins
Football**

A native of Attala County, Richard Wayne Akins graduated from Ethel High School before enrolling in Holmes Community College in the fall of 1973. Akins played football for Dr. Tommy Davis and ran track for Ode Burrell.

After Holmes he coached football at Grenada High School and Horn Lake High School. In 1983 Akins went to work at Mississippi State University as a strength and conditioning coach.

Akins continued on to Mississippi State University to earn a Bachelor of Science. He did not stop with just an undergraduate degree, he completed both his Master of Science (1979) and Education Specialist in School Administration (1985).

As a strength and conditioning coach at Mississippi State some of the teams he worked with were very successful. Men's Basketball had eight SEC Western Division Champions, seven NCAA Tournament appearances, two NIT appearances, one Final Four appearances in 1996 and one SEC Tournament Championship; Women's Basketball had five NCAA Tournament appearances, six WNIT appearances and one Sweet Sixteen appearance in 2009; MSU Baseball (1983-2004) had 21 NCAA Regional or Super Regional appearances and three SEC Tournament champions; and Women's Soccer had one SEC West Championship under their belt.

Akins and his wife, Cindy, live in Raymore, Missouri now. They have two children Ronald (41) and Elizabeth (39). Akins and his wife still visit the Starkville area on a regular basis.



**Robert
William Gates**
Football

Robert Gates hails from Decatur, Georgia, where he attended Cedar Grove High School. He played football at Holmes Community College for the 1995 and 1996 seasons under Head Coach Hugh Shurden and Position Coach Jeff Koonz.

Gates enjoyed Holmes because his coaches gave him a chance to prove and make something of himself.

Being a Georgia boy in college in Mississippi had its challenges for a young man, as he was responsible for making his grades and being successful. The real challenge was for his mom to pay his tuition that was not completely covered by his scholarship.

As a defensive back at Holmes, Gates played alongside other Holmes Sports Hall of Famers, Chris Avery and Alvin McKinley. Gates was recognized as First Team JUCO All American and All-Region 23 in 1996. He was credited with 67 tackles, including 36 solo hits, during his sophomore season. He also caused five fumbles, and had 21 QB pressures that season. The mighty Bulldogs of the 1996 season were the first to win the North Division since 1988.

Gates earned his associate's degree from Holmes and continued on to the University of Mississippi where he lettered twice with the football team. After the University of Mississippi, Gates played Arena Football in Richmond, Virginia.

"Holmes prepared me well for the next level in the classroom and as an athlete by helping me be disciplined," Gates said.

Gates lives and works in Decatur, Georgia today. He is a full-time HVAC technician and part-time insurance claims adjuster and home inspector.



**Gregory Neal
Holloway**
Soccer

A native of Byram and a graduate of Terry High School, Gregory Neal Holloway played soccer on the Ridgeland Campus during the 2002-2003 season.

"The entire experience, the team experience at Holmes was the most memorable," Holloway said.

He played under Coach Matt Convertino at Holmes and the team finished the year with more wins than the last four seasons combined.

Holloway continued on to Mississippi College (MC) to earn a bachelor degree in accounting. His first job after MC was with Harrold Contracting a general contracting firm in Florida, on their estimate and bidding team. Later he moved to their program management team and began building high-rise condominiums.

After working with Harrold Contracting Group he moved in as a partner with Tenax Aerospace, LLC. Tenax was a special mission leasing company that leased aircrafts to different government entities. In January 2018, Tenax Aerospace was sold to another investment firm in Connecticut.

While owning Tenax Aerospace, Holloway invested in a lot of different companies of diverse backgrounds; from commercial real-estate to manufacturing.

Holloway and his wife, Traci, live in Madison with their two children Eli and Mattie.



**John
Anthony "Tony"
Stanford**
Football

John Anthony "Tony" Stanford came to Holmes Community College after graduation from Winona High School and played football. He attended Holmes from 1972-74 and played for Tommy Davis, Ode Burrell and Quimby Morgan.

During Stanford's time at Holmes he saw many changes happen on the Goodman Campus. He noted that new dorms were being built and the Frank Branch Coliseum was constructed.

Stanford continued on to Delta State University and earned a Bachelor of Science in Education. He also focused on what skills he would need to become a coach while at Delta State which led him to his first coaching job at Carroll Academy. In 1986, Stanford earned a Master of Education from Mississippi State University.

Coaching was a calling for Stanford as he has made a 43-year-career of coaching. He has coached all over Mississippi and is still coaching today at Starkville Academy.

During Stanford's coaching career he has been very active in the Mississippi Association of Coaches (for 43 years) including being past president. He has had many achievements such as MAC Coaches Hall of Fame (2013) and 4A State Championship (1995) to list a few.

Stanford and his wife, Sue, live in Louisville. They have one son Anthony Stanford. Anthony (34) has followed in his father's footsteps of being a teacher and coach.





HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Goodman | Ridgeland | Grenada
P.O. BOX 527, Goodman, MS 39079

Stay in touch! Helping you stay connected to Holmes Community College and to each other is what the HCC Alumni Association is all about. Update your contact information by sending an email to: kellard@holmescc.edu

Sports Hall of Fame

April 4th
Frank Branch Coliseum
Goodman, MS

Pop's Concert

April 30th
Corey Forum
Grenada, MS

Golf Tournament

May 8th
Deerfield Golf Club
Madison, MS

Class Reunions

Class of 1963:
April 18
Lake Tiak-O'Khata
Louisville, MS

**Classes of 1975, 76, 77,
78, 79 and 1980:**
July 20th
Frank Branch Coliseum
Goodman, MS

Alumni Lunches

July 9th
Grenada County
Montgomery County
Webster County

July 10th
Attala County
Choctaw County

July 16th
Madison County
Yazoo County

July 17th
Holmes County
Carroll County

Homecoming

October 24th
Holmes CC
Goodman, MS

SEVEN

Ways to Stay Involved as an Alumni:



1. Golf Classic

Sponsor a course hole (or a team!) at the annual Holmes Foundation Golf Tournament at Deerfield Golf Club in Madison. Proceeds from the charity event benefit the Holmes Development Foundation. Includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, door prizes.



2. Memorial Brick

Add your personal touch to the Chapel on the Hill Courtyard. Buy a brick through the Alumni Office to leave your mark on the HCC campus, or to honor a friend of the college.



3. Homecoming

Each Fall, homecoming is a great opportunity to bring friends and family to visit the Goodman Campus of your alma mater. Meet notable Alumni, watch live performances from HCC Choral groups, and cheer on the Bulldogs football team to victory!



4. Sports Hall of Fame

The Alumni Association honors athletes and coaches who have made major contributions to Holmes athletics by inducting them into the HCC Sports Hall of Fame. Join us each Spring at a banquet and induction celebrating these athletes.



5. Chapel on the Hill

In addition to meeting the spiritual, emotional and inspirational needs of Holmes students, the chapel is used for special events, weddings, revivals and meetings. It is located in the center of the Goodman campus; built with bricks from an old dorm.



6. Holmes House

The Holmes House is provided to alumni, staff and friends of the college to use. All profits are used for the refurbishment and upkeep of Holmes House. The Holmes House is used as a bed and breakfast and reception location for special events.



7. Alumni Spotlight

Each year, the HCC Alumni Association spotlights alumni through the school's website, Paw Prints (the HCC Alumni publication) and the Foundation's Annual Report. We are always looking for unique stories from our alumni so submit yours to: kellard@holmescc.edu.