

Mississippi College supporters celebrate Founder's Day

Special to The Clinton Courier

Mississippi College celebrated Founder's Day on the Clinton campus.

From President Blake Thompson to scores of students stopping by the cafeteria for treats, the Founder's Day participants celebrated the history of their school.

Steven Smith, the college pastor at First Baptist Church Jackson, played



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Late last month, President Blake Thompson (left) took part in his first Founder's Day at MC. He is pictured with Savannah Moore (right), an employee with Campus Dining, the university's food service provider.

a major role at his alma mater for the annual event. A member of the 1992 MC Hall of Fame, he delivered the

keynote speech at a chapel program at First Baptist Church Clinton. The activity showcases the university's beginnings, dating back to its chartering in 1826, as well as key developments in the modern era.

America's second oldest Baptist college, MC has a rich history. Mississippi College is the state's oldest institution of higher learning.

"This is a good way of remembering our history," says freshman Carmen Harris, seventeen, of Vicksburg.

For the Vicksburg High graduate, it marked her first MC Founder's Day. And it was the inaugural event for President Thompson, who began his tenure as MC's twentieth president on July 1.

The Warren County resident met Dr. Thompson for the first time at the Phillips House during a Welcome Week reception for new students.

"I love how he interacts with students," Carmen Harris said. "He's great. He's student-oriented."

Surviving tough times like the Civil War and the Great Depression, Mississippi College boasts many accomplishments during its nearly 200-year history. Enrolling 5,138 students, MC today is an attractive institution for a variety

of reasons, school supporters say. "I like its environment," said sophomore Esther Urbina, nineteen, of Pearl. "It's awesome."

An award-winning faculty combine with a close-knit family atmosphere to make MC a viable option to pursue higher education degrees. And national publications continue to give the institution high marks. In the fall, *U.S. News & World Report* rated Mississippi College number sixteen as a "best value" among the South's regional universities.

At the January 22 Founder's Day, MC students received stickers spelling out the university's core values. They include: excellence, stewardship, service, respect and integrity. Others are inquiry, knowledge and fidelity.

Mississippi College's commitment to service was seen at Tuesday's blood drive on the Clinton campus to benefit Mississippi Blood Services. Blood donated Tuesday and Wednesday goes to more than forty hospitals around the state. Blood supplies statewide are low and need a boost, MBS officials say.

On Monday, MC Law School students in Jackson participated in

a Habitat for Humanity project to refurbish homes in the capital city. It was among many community projects across the state and nation during



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Mississippi College students are pictured (l to r) enjoying pieces of cake at the university's Founder's Day: Madeline Porter and Scarlett Hodges, both of Madison, and Kelsey Powell of Sterlington, Louisiana.

the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

President Thompson stopped by the cafeteria for a few minutes to welcome visitors. Savannah Moore, an employee with Campus Dining, the university's food service provider, was delighted to hand the president a slice of cake. "I love his family," she said.

Dr. Thompson, his wife, Jana, and their three children have been warmly received since arriving in the summer at Mississippi College.

Produced by an MC graduate, the BeanFruit coffee was enjoyed by university constituents at Founder's Day on the Clinton campus.



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