

## Galtney Center Goes High Tech in Comfort and Style

The University's Galtney Center for Academic Computing, located in renovated Weir Hall next to the Library, has been open for over a year now, and the folks working there still have reason to celebrate.

"It is so much better than what we had before," says Teresa McCarver, manager of Information Technology's Helpdesk, located just inside the main

entrance to the building. "It is a warm, friendly, comfortable space, which is not usually what you expect in a computer center."

"I worked here before the renovation, and this is a major improvement," says Chris Simmons, an IT Media worker and graduate student majoring in remote sensing and anthropology. "The architect did a really good job of designing an attractive, peaceful place where you can spread out and get your work done."

The facility opened in November 2002 and was made possible by a \$4 million gift from Ole Miss Alumni Will and Susanne Galtney of Houston, Texas.



In November 2003 the Galtney family paid a visit to the Center to see the results of their generous gift. Pictured (l-r) are Susanne, Will, Drew, Jeb, Gloria, and Bill Galtney.

In addition to the Helpdesk, the first floor also houses the Faculty Technology Development Center (FTDC), PC and Macintosh teaching labs, a conference room, and IT Media, which provides mobile video equipment for use across campus. The Department of Computer and Information Science, part of the School of Engineering, has offices and classrooms on the second floor of the building.

The main destination for students, though, is the first floor's spacious computer lab, which has 70 computers (58 PCs and 12 Macs), a scanner, color and standard printers, and a copy machine.



The main computer lab averaged 14,000 student visits per month last fall.

"We've got comfortable chairs and workspaces available for students who want to bring in their own computers," explains Ron Savell, Computer Lab Manager. "They can hook up to the internet with the wireless signal available or through numerous ports in the room. Even when this room is full, it doesn't feel like it, and it's got a great view at night with all the windows looking out on the fountain between the Library and Chapel."

A small high-end multimedia lab also is available for student use. The room features five PCs with flat panel displays, video-editing hardware and software, and a projector and screen, so students can work together to produce and rehearse class presentations.

At the IT Helpdesk, formerly located in Powers Hall, they've seen a big jump in the number of people served.

"This location is much more central to campus," notes

*continued inside*

### We're Open for Business!

Thanks to additional funding from the Provost's Office, the computer lab in the Galtney Center is open 24 hours a day during the spring semester, starting Sundays at 1:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Fridays. It is also open Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The IT Helpdesk is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The FTDC is open 8:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For Carroll Hightower,

## Language and Technology Make a Great Match!

The Language Resource Center (LRC), which opened in the basement of Bondurant Hall in August 2001, isn't anything like the tape-based language lab you might remember from college days, and that's just how Director Carroll Hightower wants it.

With a \$100,000 gift from Ole Miss Alumnus Bryan Barksdale and assistance from Provost Carolyn Ellis Staton, Hightower has created a state-of-the-art facility to meet the growing technological needs of faculty and students in the Department of Modern Languages.

"We have a main lab with 28 Macintosh work stations where students can do their assignments, listen to CDs they check out, or burn MP3s onto their own disks to take home," she explains. "It is also equipped as a multimedia classroom and has the equipment to project DVDs, video tapes, and computer screens. That room is busy all the time!"

The LRC has a second Mac lab with 20 seats, a media room where students can watch reserved videos on small TV/VCRs, and a reception room with a helpdesk and lounge area often used for tutoring and "language coffee hours."

With undergraduate and graduate degrees in German literature from UNC-Greensboro and Yale, Hightower seemed an unlikely candidate to become what she calls "a geek." She was working toward a Ph.D. at Yale, though, when she had a life-changing experience.

"In 1995 I had just hooked up the modem on my computer, and I was able to look up a book in the Library of

Congress catalog, while in my study at home in my pajamas, and I was like, 'Oh, wow,'" she says. "The accessibility of information was really exciting to me."

She went to the Academic Computing department and asked what might be involved in combining a language degree with an interest in technology. While still teaching in the Department of Germanic Languages, she also began working part-time in Yale's Microcomputer Support Center. Eventually she applied for a job at Minnesota's Carleton College as Academic Computing Coordinator for the Humanities and got it.

"That was a massive learning experience for me," she comments. "I did all the support for 30 or so faculty, and as time went on, I realized I was most interested in the curricular aspects of technology. How will this change teaching and learning? It's a brave new world in that regard."

As enthusiastic as she is, Hightower also understands that such change is not always easy.

"I know what it is to be resistant to technology," she explains, "because in the mid-80s I had a professor who wanted me to give up my manual typewriter and use a word processor. I resisted because he was pushing me. I had to find my own way to it, which I did, and then I never went back."

Hightower came to the University of Mississippi in May 2001 from Carleton College, and it's not just the warmer weather here that makes her happy.

"I really get to see the difference I'm making," she says. "There were just these empty rooms, and now we've got this wonderful facility. This is just a great fit for me, and I love being here."



Carroll Hightower

### Galtney Center *continued*

Brent Warner, a junior MIS major who has worked at the Helpdesk for two years. "People didn't really like walking up to Powers. Plus, with the labs being right next door, students are more likely to come to us with questions or problems. It's great, too, because we have better equipment and a bigger workspace."

Penny Rice and Amelia Rodgers in the FTDC have seen their business increase as well.

"We've definitely had more users here than in the Library," Rice states. "It helps that faculty and staff training takes place in the labs down the hall. We get a lot of our regulars coming in, but then new people come for training and find out what we've got to offer."

Those offerings include a wide range of equipment, such as flatbed and 35 mm scanners, and the ability to digitize video and create VHS tapes and DVDs. Rice and Rodgers provide assistance with Blackboard, Scantron, PowerPoint, and other technological needs that faculty might have. They also sell site licenses for Microsoft Office and Adobe products to academic departments at cost.

"I use Blackboard with all my classes," states Ed Sisson, Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, "and the staff is very helpful in setting up new classes and batch enrolling students for me. They are constantly updating their hardware



Need a break? A café are located on the first

### Visit the Galtney Center Online!

Go to [www.olemiss.edu/helpdesk](http://www.olemiss.edu/helpdesk) for the IT Helpdesk.

The FTDC is at [www.olemiss.edu/depts/ftdc](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/ftdc) (a link to the reservation calendar for the teaching labs is on the front page).

Make reservations with IT Multimedia at [www.olemiss.edu/itmedia](http://www.olemiss.edu/itmedia).

Reserve the Student Multimedia Lab at [www.olemiss.edu/itlabs](http://www.olemiss.edu/itlabs).

## Tech Tip from Buster Clark

in the Telecommunications Center

### WeatherBug Provides a Desktop Eye on the Skies

**W**eatherBug is a free program that allows access to real-time weather data from equipment on the roof of Baxter Hall. This information is also shown on Channel 16 of the campus television system and occasionally used by WREG-TV in Memphis in their weather reports.

In Telecommunications we use WeatherBug to see what is predicted when we are planning to open a ditch to place a conduit. There is also an option to check weather in other locations when making travel plans.

To download the program, simply visit [weatherbug.com](http://weatherbug.com). One negative is that you have to deal with ads on the screen, but there is an option to pay an annual fee for ad-free service.

Once downloaded, the program displays the current local temperature next to the clock in your taskbar. To see additional data, just click on the icon. If there is a thunderstorm, tornado, or flash flood watch or warning, then the icon changes to a "bug" and flashes until you click to see what has been issued.

At this time, WeatherBug is available for Windows PCs only.



### SAP Users Group Meets

**John Samonds**, Associate Dean of the McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College, shares some Excel tips and tricks in a December 2003 meeting of the SAP Academic Users Group. Other presenters included Eddie Lovin from the Athletic Department and Wayne Shaw from the College of Liberal Arts. The group was formed as a way for the deans' offices and academic service units to disseminate knowledge, reinforce processes, increase expertise, and set priorities on new functionality. Members of the group also share information and ideas through an e-mail list.



and vending machines floor.

and software, which makes it an excellent resource for me."

"I love FTDC!" enthuses Laura Antonow, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Art. "I don't have an office filled with tech gadgets, so it's kind of my home away from home. The new location is really comfortable, and it's great having that coffee shop around the corner."

"That coffee shop" is a small café operated by Aramark at the rear of the building.

"It's great because they have these tables outside with probably 20 or 30 ports available for plugging in your lap-

top," says Andy Young, an IT Media worker and senior majoring in MIS and banking and finance. "You can sit out there on a pretty day, visit with a friend, and check your e-mail."

He concludes, "This building just has an all-around nice environment, so you're more likely to come here and do the work you've got to do."

### IT/SAP Scholarships Awarded

**S**cholarships funded by the SAP Corporation and facilitated by the Office of Information Technology have been awarded to six University of Mississippi students for this academic year.

The recipients are Indika Jayasinghe, a junior in computer science from Sri Lanka; Timothy Johnson, a senior in MIS from Shiloh, IL; Darius Leland, a senior in computer science from Batesville, MS; Yi Liu, a graduate student in engineering science from China; Jeremy McKnight, a senior in MIS from Randolph, MS; and Derek Park, a senior in computer science from Milan, TN.

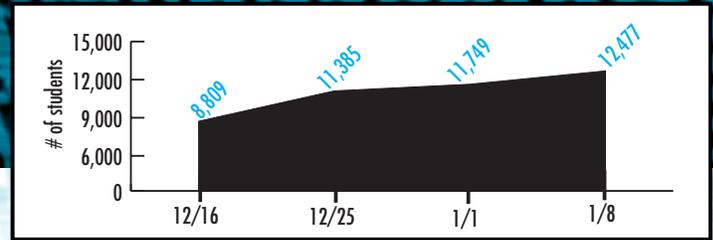
"I'm honored to be the recipient of an SAP Scholarship," states Johnson. "The financial assistance is especially appreciated because, as an MIS and marketing student, I have a very large course load and will have an extra semester of tuition to pay. I've been hearing more and more about the positive impact of SAP products on businesses around the globe, and I'm really glad we can utilize it here at Ole Miss, too."

# What's New in Campus Management...

## Students Eagerly Check Fall Grades Online

The Ole Miss campus may have looked deserted on December 16, but the university's computer systems were abuzz with activity as the viewing of fall grades opened. From 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., students checked their grades at a rate of more than 1000 hits per hour. The peak hour, from 11:00 a.m. to noon, saw 1,674 hits (almost one every two seconds). By the end of the day, 8,809 students had checked their grades online.

The numbers for first time access continued to climb (see graph). By Christmas Day, 83% of students had checked their grades. During the first full week of January, when Law School grades became available, the total number reached 12,477.



## Two New Class Roll Services Offered

Instructors can now receive all class rolls by e-mail as tab-delimited text files that can be easily imported into Excel. This allows instructors to retrieve class rolls for all sections they teach in one step rather than downloading them individually.

Instructors can also generate a list of students who have added or dropped from a section within a certain number of days.

Both features can be accessed by visiting the Online Services page, clicking on "Class Rolls and Grades," and choosing the academic term and year from the selection screen.

## Cool Tech Corner from Penny Rice and Amelia Rodgers

in the Faculty Technology Development Center

### Jot Your Thoughts with a Tablet PC

Don't like to type? Ever wish your computer could read your handwriting? Maybe you need a Tablet PC.

What's a Tablet PC? It's a device with a touch sensitive screen that allows the use of a pen to input text. The pen can also be used as a mouse to point at items on the screen, click buttons, etc.

The Tablet we purchased for the FTDC is basically a notebook computer with the ability to transform between a traditional laptop and a digital pad of paper. At first glance it looks exactly like a small notebook, but the screen can be rotated 180 degrees and folded flat on top of the keyboard to activate the "tablet" mode.

How well does it work? Pretty well, even for left-handers and those with poor handwriting. You can write in

either print or cursive. Windows Journal, which is included with the operating system, allows you to doodle, draw, write free-form, and later select the handwriting to be translated into text. Make a mistake? Simply scribble through the word, and it will disappear from the screen.

If you would like additional information about Tablet PCs, or if you want to take a look at ours, come by the FTDC in Weir Hall.



[www.olemiss.edu/technews](http://www.olemiss.edu/technews)

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