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## MSCC Foundation Names Mike Murphy Chair Emeritus

Mike Murphy, who followed in the footsteps of W.L. Barbour Jr. and Forrest N. “Joe” Jenkins in service to the Mid-South Community College Foundation Board, has been named Chairman Emeritus of the organization.



***From left, MSCC President Dr. Glen Fenter, Foundation Board “Chair Emeritus” Mike Murphy and newly-elected Foundation Chair Phillip Brick***

“Mike has played a very important role in this community for a number of years, and what he has done for the college is extraordinary,” said MSCC President Dr. Glen Fenter. “We have been blessed with visionary and proactive leadership beginning with Bill Barbour and continuing with Joe and Mike. All

three of them have kept us focused on serving the greater good of Crittenden County.”

“The commitment from Mike, the Carlson brothers, and Fidelity National Bank has been nothing short of miraculous, and they have been great role models for philanthropy in our community. It would be difficult to find someone who hasn’t been touched by Mike’s generosity or the generosity of Fidelity National Bank.”

Murphy, who joined the Foundation Board in 1999 and who served as chair beginning in 2005, said he considers the honorary appointment very special.

“I’m overwhelmed by this; it’s a tremendous honor to me,” Murphy said. “I’m just glad to have been so much a part of what has happened at the college, and I’ll continue to be there to help in any way I can. It’s been an honor, and it’s been fun.”

“I’ve been involved in several things in this community, but serving on the Foundation Board has been the most important to me because of the need we have for education in this area. Without this college, there would be so many who would not be able to continue their education after high school.”

Created in 1992 as an independent entity charged with furthering the development and expansion of the College, the Foundation secures funds — above and beyond state and local appropriations — to further enhance the efforts of the institution. Barbour was the obvious choice as the Foundation’s first chair, and he served in that capacity for more than in decade. In November 2007, MSCC named a campus courtyard in his honor.

Foundation Board members elected Jenkins chairman in 2002, and he guided the organization until retiring from the banking business and relocating to Florida. In October 2003, MSCC dedicated the Jenkins Garden and the Linda Jenkins Health Science Hall on the South Campus in honor of the couple’s contributions to the college.

Murphy, a graduate of Gould (Arkansas) High School, said his six years as chair of the board passed quickly and enjoyably, thanks to other board members and employees at the college.

“We’ve been fortunate to have really good people who are interested in education and who understand the importance of it,” Murphy said. “It meant a lot to me as chairman. It goes without saying that Dr. Fenter has done a wonderful job, but he’s also built a really good team of management people. The staff at MSCC can make you look really good.”

“Several business and individuals have come forward with major contributions, and we’ve been blessed with great generosity locally and nationally. The college has grown to proportions that no one ever dreamed, and everything you hear about it is positive.”

Murphy said MSCC complements everything else that is happening in Crittenden County.

“What the college has done and is doing now is going to pay off in the future, and the future is what we’re all about,” Murphy pointed out. “We’ve come a long way and have already made a significant impact. That’s only going to grow.”

Patti Coleman, MSCC Director of Advancement, said Murphy has been a great resource for her since she began working at the college in 2006.

“As someone relatively new to fundraising, I have found Mike’s advice and direction invaluable,” Coleman said. “I am so glad he is willing to continue to lend his expertise to our efforts on behalf of the students of MSCC. He has always been a great supporter of the College’s mission to provide access to higher education to everyone in our community.”

To create the chair emeritus position, MSCC’s Foundation Board found it necessary to waive its bylaws. The motion passed with unanimous support. Phillip Brick has taken the reins as chair, and Franklin Fogleman Jr. is serving as vice chair.

“Phillip will do a great job; I have no doubt about that,” Murphy said.

Dr. Fenter echoed that sentiment.

“We’re very fortunate to have someone with Phillip Brick’s abilities to step into the chair position. We certainly are excited to have Phillip assuming the leadership role in the Foundation, and we’re expecting great things from him.”

Brick said replacing Murphy will not be easy.

“Mike has left some big shoes to fill, but he has also provided us with a great road map,” Brick said. “And it helps that he plans to remain involved with the Foundation and will continue to attend meetings.”

Dr. Fenter said Murphy’s expertise will continue to be utilized.

“While the chairman emeritus role might be considered by many to be an honorary position, we have no intention of treating it that way,” MSCC’s president said.

“We anticipate seeking out Mike’s guidance and wisdom on a regular basis.”

Murphy graduated with honors from the University of Monticello with a degree in political science. He later completed Financial Management School at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He also attended Ohio State University, Northwestern University, and Vanderbilt University and completed finance and executive management programs at each institution.

He came to West Memphis in 1988 to become Chairman/President/CEO of Fidelity National Bank after serving as Senior Vice President for FirstSouth Bank in Pine Bluff.