

## Dr. Frances M. McNair Outstanding Educator

Dr. Frances M. McNair of Mississippi State University has been named the 2014 MSCPA Outstanding Educator and will be recognized during the Business Meeting at the Annual Convention at the Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort in Destin on Saturday, June 28.

Dr. McNair has been an academic for over 30 years. Prior to that time, she was in public practice with a CPA firm for 14 years. She earned her Bachelor of Accountancy, Master of Accountancy and Ph.D. in Accountancy from the University of Mississippi. Minor fields of study on her doctorate included Taxation and Management.

Dr. McNair is heavily involved in the Master of Tax program at Mississippi State University and is the faculty advisor for the MTX program. She assists students in all facets of the program, from academic advising, to mentoring, to teaching diverse tax subjects. In addition to her involvement in the Master of Tax program, she is active in the undergraduate program serving as coordinator of "Principles of Financial Accounting", the first accounting course that students take. This involves the development of the syllabus, making exams and administering exams. She is also actively involved in the doctoral

program and has chaired over 10 dissertations.

Active in research, Dr. McNair is author of numerous academic and practitioner articles and is the co-

author of two accounting textbooks, *Fundamental Financial Accounting Concepts*, which is in its seventh edition and *Survey of Accounting* which is in its third edition. The *Fundamental of Financial Accounting* book is used by over 120 schools. Dr. McNair is the author of over 23 articles which have appeared in leading academic and practitioner journals including the **Journal of Accountancy** (four articles), **Taxes** (two articles), and **The CPA Journal** (two articles).

Dr. McNair has served in leadership positions in professional organizations including the American Taxation Association, the IMA and the American Accounting Association. She was the liaison and faculty advisor for the IMA student chapter for approximately 15 years.



### 2014 MSCPA Convention

June 26-29, 2014  
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort



### 2015 MSCPA Convention

June 25-28, 2015  
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort

## 2013 Exam Medal Winners Announced

The MSCPA Awards, Education & Scholarships Committee has notified winners of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals from the 2013 CPA Exam.

These awards honor those who attained the highest scores in passing all parts of the exam in one sitting during 2013. Winners will be recognized during the Business Meeting of the MSCPA 2014 Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 28 at the Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort.

Medal winners from 2013 include:

- **The Fred T. Neely Gold Medal:**  
Amber Taylor Cole, Laurel
- **The T. E. Lott Silver Medal:**  
Melinda Bruscato, Oxford
- **The Silas M. Simmons Bronze Medal:** Jordan R. Church, Biloxi

## Benny Jeansonne: Public Service Award Winner

Bennett M. (Benny) Jeansonne of Natchez has been selected as the 2014 MSCPA Public Service Award Winner and will be recognized during the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, June 28 at Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort.

Active in the Natchez community, Benny is a member of St. Mary Basilica where he is past Chairman of the Development Committee for St. Mary Basilica/Cathedral School and serves as an Usher. He is a volunteer and supporter of the Natchez Community Stewpot, and an avid supporter of Troop 158, Boy Scouts of America.

Benny is currently Board Chairman and Member of Natchez Now (Economic Development), current Board member of Natchez, Inc., (Economic Development); member and Past President of the Rotary Club of Natchez; member and Past Chairman of the Natchez Adams County Chamber of Commerce; member and past Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce of Vidalia/Concordia Parish, Louisiana; Past President of the Natchez Kiwanis Club; Board member of the Mississippi Disaster Recovery Fund.

Benny was Chairman of the Development committee during Cathedral

School's Major Capital Campaign resulting in new elementary school classrooms and elementary school gym. He also participated in a major capital campaign for St. Mary Basilica resulting in renovations to the Basilica's interior. Recently, he was Co-Chairman of Cathedral School's



*continued on page 4*



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306 Southampton Row  
The Commons  
Highland Colony Parkway  
Ridgeland, MS 39157  
PHONE: (601) 856-4244  
FAX: (601) 856-8255  
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*Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official policy of the MSCPA. Advertising is accepted in good faith that the product/services are of value stated.*

## Welcome New Members

New members include: Valerie W. Bogart, Susan D. Burrell, Barry Duane McKenzie, Zachary Aaron Ring, and Sharon R. Stone.

Now completing the membership process are:

**Samuel Ferrell Agnew** was born in Tupelo and is joining as an Associate Member. He received a BS from Mississippi State University, MBA from Louisiana State University and has additional study at the University of Mississippi. He is an Accountant with United Furniture Industries, Inc., in Okolona.

**Robert Moseley Crosland** was born in Flowood and received his undergraduate accounting degree and Master of Taxation from Mississippi State University. He is a Staff Accountant with Watkins, Ward & Stafford in West Point.

**Jennifer DeAnne Eubanks** was born in Neshoba County and is joining as an Associate Member. She received BBA in Marketing and BBA in Accounting degrees from Mississippi State University and is a Tax Accountant with McNeel CPA in Philadelphia.

**Clifton Haywood Hinson** was born in Baton Rouge and received a Bachelor's in Accountancy from Mississippi College. He is an Associate in Government Services for Horne LLP in Ridgeland.

**Leslie Ann Kilgore** was born in Chattanooga and received her BBA in Accounting & Finance from North Georgia College & State University and MBA from Belhaven University. She is a Tax Accountant with McNeel CPA in Philadelphia.

**Edith Williams McIlwain** was born in Greenwood and received her Bachelor of Accountancy and Master of Accountancy degrees from the University of Mississippi. She is the Finance Director for the City of Southaven.

## Dues Notices In The Mail This Month

Dues notices for fiscal year 2014-2015 go in the mail in late June to the 2615 members of the Society. The dues rates include no increase over the year just ending.

Dues are payable upon receipt of the statement and members may choose to pay by credit card. A copy of the 2014-2015 dues statement will be posted to the Society's website ([www.ms-cpa.org](http://www.ms-cpa.org)) so members may download a copy.

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**Thursday, August 14, 2014**

- 8:20am – Welcome and Introduction
- 8:25am - Morning Session
  - Lisa Parker, GASB Project Manager – GASB Update
- 10:15-10:30am - Break
- 12:00pm - Lunch Provided - Speaker – Potential Bonus 0.5 CPE Credits
  - TBD, State official
- 1:00pm - Afternoon Sessions – No breakout sessions
  - Donna Ingram – Fraud in Governments
- 2:40-2:55pm - Break
  - OSA – Legal Update and County/Municipal/School Update
  - KPMG & PERS - What the implementation of the Pension Standards will look like in Mississippi
- 4:35pm - Adjourn

**Friday, August 15, 2014**

- 8:20am – Announcements and Introduction
- 8:25am - Morning Session
  - Mike Inzina – Audit Update and Super Circular Update
- 10:15-10:30am - Break
  - Mike Inzina – Common Blunders in Audits of Governments
- 12:00pm - Lunch-Provided- Speaker – Potential Bonus 0.5 CPE Credits
  - TBD, State official
- 1:00pm - Afternoon Session
  - Mike Inzina – Common Blunders in Audits of Governments  
Continued
- 2:40-2:55pm – Break
- 2:55pm – Mike Inzina – Continued
- 4:35pm – Adjourn

**MEMBERS MAY REGISTER ON THE WEBSITE ([www.ms-cpa.org](http://www.ms-cpa.org)).**

## BENNY JEANSONNE

*continued from page 1*

Capital Campaign resulting in renovating the high school Science labs, bathrooms, kitchen and a new middle school building. He has previously spearheaded the School's annual appeal.

Benny's guidance and leadership in the area's Chambers of Commerce and the Economic Development entities have resulted in an increase in community interest and involvement among citizens and industry. With his involvement,

the Natchez Adams County Economic Development Authority was restructured with a renewed interest in Natchez and Adams County's industry and business development efforts, which has resulted in the hiring of an economic director, several new businesses, and both public and private sector investments in the development of the economy in Natchez.

Benny's enthusiasm for his profession has had an impact on the firm of Silas Simmons, LLP. His "lead by example" approach helps mold young staff into tomorrow's leaders in the profession and community. He is held in high esteem by his large and diverse client base due to his drive and determination, and to the equal attention and level of service given to all.

Benny received a BS in accounting from Louisiana State University in 1983. He is also a Certified Valuation Analyst and Accredited in Business Valuation. He is a member of the Mississippi Society of CPAs, Louisiana Society of CPAs, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts, Mississippi Banker's Association, Louisiana Banker's Association, the Sub Chapter "S" Bank Association, Inc., the Home

Builders Association, and was awarded the Accountant Advocate of the Year, State of Mississippi, Small Business Administration in 1997.

He is married to the former Amanda Ferguson of Natchez, celebrating their thirty year anniversary this year, and they have a daughter, Madeline.

Members of the MSCPA Public Service Award Committee this year include Anna Langley, Oxford; Laura Cerra, Laurel; and Wil Crawford, Jackson.

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# Minimize the Risk from Viruses

Randy Johnston, Shareholder, K2 Enterprises

Our K2 team of professionals take great pride in teaching about the latest technology. We also try to be practical and realistic in our recommendations. The K2 team has some really spectacular people, including CPAs, and proficient technologists. During the past year, we have been warning people that the current virus attacks are more aggressive and invasive than any we have seen in the past. These attacks are frequently delivered via email, social media, such as Facebook, and embedded in PDF files. The anti-virus companies are having more issues keeping their software ahead of the threats and the creators of viruses and malware are becoming smarter in their attacks. Even if your IT team or managed service provider is diligent in updating your firewalls and anti-virus (AV) signatures, your organization is still susceptible to attacks. So how do we minimize and mitigate this risk?

Further, why are we so concerned about the attacks now? Haven't viruses been around since the early 1980s? The first virus discovered in the wild was the Elk Cloner on the Apple II in 1981 and the first PC virus, Brain, was reported in 1986. Some key things to know about viruses include:

- This year will bring new virus attacks with the discontinuance of security updates for Windows XP and Office 2003.
- Aggressive viruses like Cryptolocker are charging ransoms for an unlock key after systems have been infected. CPA attendees at our webinars report these keys work and have been worth the amount charged.

- Viruses exploit weaknesses in operating system controls and human patterns of system use/misuse.
  - Destructive viruses are more likely to be eradicated by anti-virus software.
  - Key logging viruses transfer information from your system(s) to the authors. This can include user ID and passwords, bank account information and other confidential data.
  - Non-destructive viruses remain resident on your systems and slow your operations day after day.
  - An innovative virus may have a larger initial window to propagate before it is discovered and the "average" anti-viral product is modified to detect or eradicate it.
- Infected systems are normally unusable during the recovery period. Viruses make attempts to hide intelligently and re-infect the systems where they have made initial entry. It may take 24, 48 or 72 hours to completely eradicate the viruses from your systems and to restore all of your files to a usable state. What will you have your team do while their computers are not working? How do you teach them to be careful in the first place?

Have end users attend regularly scheduled and ongoing prevention training. This training should be recorded in human resources records so that there is a permanent record of training. This provides for accountability and liability protection. An employee should sign an acknowledgment that training has been received and understood. Such training should include customized basic training for your firm, especially since firms have unique virus protection strategies. All team

members of the firm should be required to attend from the janitor to the CEO/Owners.

## How Do We Minimize Risk?

Security threats change regularly. Team members don't recall what to do. To remind everyone of the appropriate strategies, schedule security training at least annually for your organization. The importance of compliance with your firm's policies, steps to prevent infection, recovery methods and other techniques can be explained. Well thought out security training helps everyone understand the issues. Investing time in training can reduce the risk of a catastrophic loss of time due to an infection.

We recommend covering at least the following topics:

**1) Name the product being used:** It is important for team members to know if your firm has GFI VIPRE Antivirus, Trend Micro, AVG, Sophos, etc. Train on the basics of that specific product to familiarize the end users with the protection they have been provided by their company such as:

a) "Here is the Icon for VIPRE Antivirus". See it in the Windows tray (VIPRE is just an example – different products may be in use in your firm)?

b) Note the color of the icon has meaning. Blue indicates that protection is on, active and up to date. Green indicates a scan in progress. Yellow means there is a problem with the program and you need to contact your IT support team immediately. Red is a severe problem and you should also contact your IT support team immediately.

*continued on page 7*

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## MINIMIZE VIRUS RISK

*continued from page 6*

c) If you do not have an icon, contact your IT support team immediately.

**2) Explain how your firm's AV protection works:** Explain what the firm has purchased and installed:

a) Email gateway Antivirus  
b) Exchange Antivirus  
c) Firewall based Antivirus  
d) Desktop Antivirus products to help protect our computer network from email threats.

e) You need to point out that this protection only works if it is enabled, up to date and employees follow these basic principles:

- i) Don't click links in emails without determining where they go first
- ii) Don't open attachments unless you know the source of document AND were expecting to receive it
- iii) When surfing websites and popup windows come up, (ALT-F4) is the proper way to close them
- iv) When in doubt, don't open a file or click through a link

**3) Protect Outlook properly:** Outlook has improved its virus protection and spam filtering with each version, but there are

still fundamental features to consider and use:

a) Turn off the reading pane for the Inbox. This is not as great of a threat as it once was, but the reading pane can still be exploited for virus infections.

b) Disable links for messages in the Junk Email Folder (Outlook). This should disable attachments too.

**4) Ensure your AV is on and current on your desktop at all times:** AV is only as good as the most current signature file. Vendors frequently release updates to protect for known threats in the world and these change hourly worldwide. Often, it can be several days or even weeks before some vendors have updated definitions (the file that allows identification of the viruses) to protect from the newest threats. It is not unusual for it to be several days, and on a couple of occasions, several weeks before the vendor released new specific definition protection for the new variant. Since different AV products have different signatures, some IT teams and providers will recommend different products be installed on your firewalls and desktops to provide more protection. Sometimes these products will conflict with each other and cause problems of their own.

**5) Do not open emails that are not**

**recognized:** or any file that may have questionable business content, especially if the email has hyperlinks or attachments. If you are not expecting correspondence or are suspicious of the content, it is perfectly acceptable to ask the sender if the message was from them. Be exceptionally cautious with email from unknown sources. Frequently spammers will create spoofed ("fake") emails from Intuit, Bank of America and Citibank.

*continued on page 8*

## Do we have your current email address?

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## MINIMIZE VIRUS RISK

*continued from page 7*

a) Malicious email authors are very clever nowadays and often include spoofed senders (senders pretending to be someone they are not), content that seems to come from valid business senders, and my personal favorite currently are emails "spoofed" from Intuit that contains a QuickBooks update that needs to be installed NOW to correct a program problem or improve performance. These emails have hyperlinks to an external virus payload and ZIP attachments that contain executable files which are email worms or Trojans, that is, programs that hide and attach themselves to your systems causing infections. These emails actually contain images from Intuit's website and appear very legitimate. We need users to ask themselves, did I contact Intuit support and speak with someone about a specific problem that I needed an update for? Should I be receiving unsolicited email notices from Intuit about updates when that process is managed by my IT Support team? Staff need to regularly communicate with their IT Support team or the senders before opening questionable emails or files.

b) Even more recent, we have seen

spoofed emails sent from Citibank containing valid images from Citibank's website that linked to external virus code and included ZIP attachments containing executable files that appeared as PDF (payroll) files, but were actually executable files with subject line "Payroll processing received" and the body contained instructions to open the attached PDF file to verify the amounts of each employee's payroll amounts. Needless to say, these emails were not sent to the Controller nor were they actually requested by anyone. However, these worms were opened because staff thought they might actually get a peek at what others in the company are getting paid. If they would have paused before opening the attachment or links and asked themselves, did I contact Citibank for payroll information or am I actually running payroll thru Citibank, then they would recognize they received a new worm email variant that their Antivirus was not protecting them from and the worm would not have been unleashed.

**6) Explain your procedures for recovery:** Hopefully, you never have to recover, but if you do:

a) Outline your reporting and shutdown procedure

b) Have everyone stay off of their

systems until given the all clear

c) Unplug infected machines from the network

d) Explain how you intend to estimate the recovery time

e) Explain what systems are likely to be made available first

**7) Consider other topics related to security:** You probably don't get your team together frequently enough. Take this opportunity to discuss other important security related matters such as:

a) Review the firm's acceptable use and other computer policies

b) Encryption

c) Protection of portable computers and removable media

d) Properly handling USB devices from home or clients

e) Password strength and changes

f) Social networking site safety

g) Security of smartphones and tablets

h) Instant Messengers – AOL, MSN, Google Chat, ICQ

i) Weather Bug – should not be used

j) Personal email access from Gmail, Yahoo or Outlook.com

k) Transferring documents to and from clients via your portal or secure email

**Training is the best prevention**

*continued on page 11*



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# Beware of Business Associate Agreements

By Suzanne M. Holl, CPA

In 2013 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the omnibus regulations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), including implementing changes made by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) (the final rule).

Some of the sweeping changes directly affect CPAs who are considered "business associates" of health care clients that are defined by HIPAA as "covered entities." Covered entities are revising their Business Associate Agreements (BAAs) to include some of the new requirements.

CPAs who have access to protected health information (PHI) are considered business associates regardless of whether that access comes directly from a covered entity, which may be your client, or through another third party (a business associate) of the covered entity. A business associate may be a CPA firm's client in an unrelated engagement. A CPA is considered a business associate if the CPA has access to PHI when performing duties and responsibilities, regardless of whether

the CPA actually exercises this access.

With the revised regulations in 2013, HHS clarified that business associates are directly liable under the HIPAA privacy and security rules for:

- impermissible use or disclosure of PHI,
- not providing breach notification to the covered entity,
- not disclosing PHI as necessary to satisfy a covered entity's obligations related to an individual's request for an electronic copy of PHI,
- not disclosing PHI to the Secretary of HHS to investigate or determine the business associate's compliance with the rules,
- not complying with minimum necessary standards,
- not entering into Business Associate Agreements with subcontractors that create or receive a covered entity's PHI on its behalf,
- not providing an accounting of disclosures, and
- not complying with the electronic security requirements.

Although there is direct enforcement authority for business associates committing the above acts or omissions, BAAs are still requested to address other requirements under the HIPAA privacy and security rules. Business associates/subcontractors remain contractually liable under those business associate/subcontractor agreements. As such, HIPAA-compliant BAAs are being executed in accordance with the final rule for covered entities to obtain from their business associates' satisfactory assurances that the business associate will appropriately safeguard the PHI it receives or creates on behalf of the covered entity.

Before contractually binding the firm to the terms and conditions of a BAA, CPAs should take the time to understand all the implications of the agreement's legal terminology and make certain that the terms and conditions do not contractually expose the CPA firm to standards higher than those with which the firm is already obligated to comply as business associates under the new

*continued on page 11*

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## MINIMIZE VIRUS RISK

continued from page 8

The best training is customized for each firm. Your staff should know how they are being protected and what the limitations of that protection are. Human Resources and IT should work together to deliver ongoing, regular training that is recorded into employee records. In between regular training sessions, IT should inform staff of high risk known threats via alerts whether that is through email, intranets or bulletin boards. There should also be training required for new employee onboarding since the next regular training might be months away and the new employee might put the entire training program at risk unless we educate them. If you are from a smaller organization, your IT provider should be able to provide guidance. Otherwise, the ideas above can serve as a starting point for building your own security training agenda. Remember to hold a training session at least annually with your team to minimize your risk of virus infection.

*Mr. Johnston is a shareholder in K2 Enterprises, where he develops and presents continuing professional education programs to accounting, financial, and other business professionals across North America. You may contact him at [randy@k2e.com](mailto:randy@k2e.com).*

## BEWARE

continued from page 9

regulations. Many BAAs contractually shift liability and obligations from the covered entity to the CPA firm.

For example, HIPAA does not require the business associate to accept the responsibilities and duties of the covered entity with respect to required notifications to the affected individuals in the event of a breach. Nor does HIPAA require the business associate to indemnify the covered entity, yet many BAAs have indemnification clauses that would put the CPA firm at great risk.

It is therefore important for CPAs to review the BAA, accept only the terms required by HIPAA, and not contractually agree to terms that expand exposure to the firm.

*Suzanne M. Holl, CPA, is senior vice president of loss prevention services with CAMICO ([www.camico.com](http://www.camico.com)). With more than 18 years of experience in accounting, she draws on her Big Four public accounting and private industry background to provide CAMICO's policyholders with information on a wide variety of loss prevention and accounting issues.*

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continued from page 12

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*continued on page 11*