

31st & Pearl

Ghosts of Southern Mississippi

With the university administration hiring season quickly coming to a close, one has to wonder how two former CoB administrators – Harold Doty and Farhang Niroomand – have been faring in that realm of late. Thanks to one of USMNEWS.net’s more popular additions in recent months, the **Help Wanted** series, we know that neither has so far reached the finalists level on any of the numerous searches for b-school dean that have been underway during 2012-13. That’s probably not surprising, given the implosion USM’s CoB experienced during their 2003-07 reign as dean and associate dean, respectively. Still, we do know, thanks to numerous e-mails, that both remain active job seekers in that arena.

Having served through the Shelby Thames administration (2002-07) at USM, arguably the institution’s most disastrous period, it’s easy to see how their candidacies would fall flat. It took Thamesian connections to land the deans posts they hold now. In Doty’s case, getting to the b-school at the University of Texas-Tyler required UT-T first hiring Gregg Lassen and Peter Fos, two former Thamesians who once held the UT-T positions of vice president of finance and provost, respectively. As expected, however, after hiring Doty, UT-T promptly imploded as well. That saga is told throughout the pages here at USMNEWS.net. As for Niroomand, having former Thamesian Tim Hudson occupying the presidential suite at the University of Houston-Victoria certainly paid dividends in Niroomand acquiring the top spot in UH-V’s school of business.

Connections can take you only so far, however, and in the case of these two former CoBers, history may be too overwhelming when it comes to moving on. That may not be so, though, for yet another former Thamesian, as some believe Tony Henthorne, an associate dean at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, may soon become the new b-school dean at the University of New Orleans. If that happens, Henthorne can thank new UNO prez Peter Fos, who fled south after the UT-T debacle. Henthorne can only hope that the “six degrees of Peter Fos” line has some life remaining after all.

31st & Pearl is a series housed at usmnews.net that features commentary on aspects of life in the CoB, and at USM, from a variety of columnists.