

# Aunt Martha's Extravagance

## Part 5 – 'Debunking the Deplaning'

Via a Mississippi Open Records Act request, USMNEWS.net recently obtained a large batch of documents from USM relating to USM president Martha Saunders' university aircraft. This series, *Aunt Martha's Extravagance*, provides analysis of these documents. This installment departs from the prior four by examining a heretofore overlooked issue regarding Saunders' \$2 million airplane. How, when Saunders flies to Jackson, Gulfport, Mobile, New Orleans, and other locales that are easily within driving distance of Hattiesburg, does she get from the airport (her ultimate destination) to her ultimate destination (the airport)? Images of stretch limos, like those shown below, come to mind.



Whether it is a limo, a taxi cab, or a party bus, the use of plane-to-destination (and vice-versa) sources of transportation represent additional, *hidden* costs of Saunders' trips to nearby (Hattiesburg) locations. How much do these expenses come to on an annual basis? Only additional Mississippi Open Records requests can tell, as Saunders (1) has taken actions to hide the destination of her flights, and (2) has not been forthcoming with other pertinent information about the costs of maintaining this extravagance (airplane).