

## Saunders Administration Grows, Yet Again

HATTIESBURG – Despite the economic and fiscal challenges facing USM and Mississippi, the Martha Saunders administration continues to grow. It grew yet again this week, as David Tisdale’s 7-Dec-2010 [USM presser](#), entitled “Payne Named Associate Director for External Affairs for Alumni Association,” points out. According to Tisdale, Jennifer Payne, a USM speech communication graduate, has taken the position of associate director for external affairs with the USM alumni association, a job that reports to [Jerry DeFatta](#), the new executive director of the USM alumni association.



**Jennifer Payne**

Tisdale’s presser also states that “Payne has spent the last three years with Southern Miss serving as the Centennial Celebration Coordinator,” a position that has had her planning USM’s 1910-2010 centennial celebrations and related events. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that members of the USM family, particularly USM faculty, will likely be surprised to learn that the Saunders administration has employed, *for three years now*, a centennial celebrations director. Some sources also state that Payne’s new position almost certainly pays at least \$50,000 per year, and more likely pays at least \$75,000 per year. One source, however, suggested to USMNEWS.net that Payne’s salary might be nearer \$90,000 to \$100,000, especially given that the CoB’s [new director of external relations](#), James Tisdale, [is currently earning](#) a \$90,000 annual salary. Part of the Tisdale story centers around his family connections to USM. It is not known now whether Payne is a member of the (extended) Payne family of USM financial supporters (as in the Payne Center).