

CoB News, 12 December 2008

“Sunday Morning With . . . Susan”

The CoB’s Center for Economic Education director, Susan Doty, recently sat down with Sid Salter, Perspective Editor of *The Clarion Ledger*, to talk about economic education in Mississippi and life in the CoB, all for Salter’s weekly public interest series, “Sunday Morning With . . .” In the 16-Nov-08 [interview](#), Salter asked Doty to inform *TCL* readers about her involvement with the Mississippi Council on Economic Education. According to Doty (see below), she became involved with the MS Council on EE in the summer of 2004, when her husband, former CoB dean Harold Doty, led the effort to establish the CEE in the CoB at USM.

The council is the umbrella organization that spearheads the campaign for improving economic and financial literacy with our K-12 students in the state by focusing on support of the teachers through education and teaching tools. The two university centers operate in seamless collaboration with the council for the betterment of Mississippi teachers and students. Together, we work with the state Department of Education, the College Board and local school districts to bring professional development to Mississippi teachers. I became involved in the summer of 2004 when my husband, Dr. Harold Doty, led the effort to establish the Center for Economic Education in the College of Business at USM.

Of course, long-time readers of USMNEWS.net recall that Doty led an effort, of which he informed then-USM provost Jay Grimes, to establish the CEE in USM’s College of Education and Psychology. In Doty’s mind, this plan avoided the obvious conflict of interest issues involved in hiring his wife at USM, bringing the Dotys’ total compensation to over \$200,000 per year. Later, however, a committee consisting of EFIB chairman George Carter and economists William Gunther and Akbar Marvasti would do the deed for the Dotys, bringing Susan Doty into the CoB as CEE director at \$50,000 per year.

Salter also asked Doty what got her interested in economics. Her answer, inserted below, is more about what got her interested in teaching.

I have an industry background and spent more than a dozen years as an executive in technology companies before turning to education. I am passionate about teaching and have taught at four universities, including the University of Arkansas and the Maxwell School of Public Policy at Syracuse University. My love of teaching comes naturally because I grew up in a family of educators; my father was a superintendent of schools. At Arkansas, I was introduced to economics education when I regularly taught a course called Economics for Educators. I suppose that’s when I became “hooked” on teaching teachers because it is the ultimate multiplier.

Doty tells Salter that she is “passionate about teaching” and that she has “taught at four universities.” We know that three of those are Arkansas, Syracuse, and USM. She doesn’t provide information on the fourth. In this answer Doty also talks cryptically about her “industry background” as “an executive in technology companies.” Of course, she omits the fact that she does not hold a master’s or PhD in economics.

The final bit of the interview covered here is Salter's request of Doty to bring *TCL* readers up to speed on USM's College of Business. In doing so Doty chimes in (see below) with one of her husband's phrases – "developing careers" – without telling *TCL* readers that the CoB's AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation Peer Review Team found the phrase underwhelming as a mission statement, forcing the subsequent interim administration of Alvin Williams to rewrite the CoB's mission during a probationary "6th Year Review" process in the summer and fall of 2007. Susan's husband, Harold, vacated the CoB dean's suite in cloud, just after receiving the bad news from AACSB in the spring of 2007.

The Mississippi Council talks about "giving our children the tools they need to succeed," Southern Miss "unleashes the power of the individual" and in the College of Business, we discuss "Developing Careers" - pretty synergistic agendas! We see recruitment up as students increasingly see the value of a business education. Our career services organization has been successful in helping these students get good internships and post-graduation placement. New dean, Dr. Lance Nail, has familiarity with a Center for Economic Education from his experience at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and he will now serve on the board of directors for the Mississippi council.

Doty closes this portion of the interview by pointing out new CoB dean Lance Nail will be taking her husband's former seat on the BoD of the MS CEE.

Sahar Bahmani Grasse at GSU

Arguably the most controversial of the [ECO job candidate finalists](#) of 2007-08, Sahar Bahmani Grasse (shown below), is now a new assistant professor of economics at **Georgia Southern University**.



Bahmani's candidacy was made controversial by former CoB associate dean, and ECO professor, Farhang Niroomand's ties to Mohsen Bahmani-Ooskoee, Grasse's father *and* a professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. One **Breaking News** report here at [USMNEWS.net](#), [Payback?](#), described these ties and how they had been used by Niroomand in the past. With Grasse's appointment at GSU, this chapter in CoB political history may have been closed.