

CoB News, 10 December 2008

Houston – Victoria Has Eyes

Yesterday's **Breaking News** [story](#) about the possibility of Farhang Niroomand becoming the next dean of business at the University of Houston – Victoria has readers buzzing. A recent visit to the UH – V website [revealed](#) that the university is advertising for the position. Whether or not Niroomand makes the cut for it is another story, though sources indicate that he has a “close” relationship with current UH – V president Tim Hudson, the former provost at USM. Look for follow-ups on this story here at USMNEWS.net in the coming days.

More “Planegate” Turbulence by 31st & Pearl Columnist

All of the various facets of the “planegate” episode now going on at USM, from whether or not the Beechcraft King Air 200 was already leased by USM when it asked Mississippi's IHL board permission, to CoB associate professor of finance John Clark's potential involvement in the deal, and everything in between, are intriguing. Now that the institution has apparently leased the plane already, the story promises juicy headlines well into the future. Given that the plane's movements are traceable via the web, we'll soon know whether or not Martha Saunders uses the 8-seater to get to and from New Orleans on/around 21-Dec-08, when USM takes on Troy University in the R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl. Certainly use of the plane for a 220-mile round trip for the bowl will make for some interesting reading. How about finding out that Saunders is indeed making annual visits to Jacksonville's Mayo Clinic for physical examinations (is Forrest General too slummy?) via movements of the BKA 200? One would think that calls for justification of use of MS taxpayers' funds for routine medical care from out-of-state facilities would arise anew. What would we make of a flight from the Hattiesburg-Laurel Regional to Whitewater, Wisconsin? One would have to surmise that such a trip involved legal matters surrounding Saunders' firing of various deans/administrators when head of the university there. Yes, “planegate” promises to get more interesting before it gets boring. Luckily we'll all have good seats (and more than 8) for the turbulent ride.

Salter'd

The mention at the end of yesterday's **CoB News** [installment](#) that former CoB real estate faculty Sean Salter blocked former CoB dean Harold Doty's attempt to eliminate the CoB's real estate program has sparked interest among some of USMNEWS.net's readers. Salter, [who is now](#) an assistant professor of real estate/finance at Middle Tennessee State University, held a similar position in USM's CoB from 2002-03 through 2006-07. Since 2001 Salter has put together an impressive research portfolio that includes contributions to a number of real estate journals, including the *Journal of Real Estate Research*, *The Appraisal Journal*, the *Journal of Real Estate Portfolio Management*, the *Journal of Housing Research*, the *Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics*, the *Journal of Real Estate Literature* and the *Real Estate Law Journal*.



USMNEWS.net reporters learned that former USM president Shelby Thames was upset by Doty's attempt to eliminate real estate *and* by Doty's unwarranted attempt to vacate Salter's employment with USM's CoB.¹ According to sources, Thames decided that action would be taken by central administrators vis-à-vis Doty's management of the CoB, particularly in regard to the situations involving the CoB's real estate program. Shortly thereafter, Doty shocked the USM community with a surprise resignation (on 9-April-07). His associate dean (Niroomand) resigned as well that same day. Many interested observers link these resignations to Thames' views on the real estate matters earlier that same semester. As such, Doty's ill-advised actions rebounded and appear to have led to his own demise.

¹ Prior reports here at USMNEWS.net have indicated that Salter had accepted a position with Middle Tennessee State University at the time Doty and former CoB associate dean Farhang Niroomand met with Salter in the spring of 2007 about vacating Salter's employment in the CoB. These stories (and more) are covered in reports housed in USMNEWS.net's archives.