

The Mississippi Society of Certified Public Accountants Outstanding Accounting Educator Award – An Outstanding Award?

According to a USM Marketing and Public Relations release dated January 20, 2005 James Crockett was named the 2005 recipient of the Mississippi Society of Certified Public Accountants (MS SPCA) Outstanding Accounting Educator Award. The release quotes Harold Doty as stating that, “We are fortunate to have faculty members of Dr. Crockett's quality and professionalism to help prepare our students for careers in business. This honor just underscores the fact that our faculty are serious about and love what they do.” Just how prestigious is this award? The award is so prestigious that the Mississippi Society of Certified Public Accountants lists no description of the award on its website and only lists the winners since 1987, represented by the two leftmost columns in the table below. “School” and “Items of Note” were added by the author of this document.

Year	Recipient	School	Items of Note
2006	W. Mark Wilder	University of Mississippi	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member Former MS SPCA Board Member
2005	James R. Crockett	University of Southern Mississippi	2006 MS SPCA Treasurer 2006 2006 MS SPCA Board Member
2004	Larry Lofton	Hinds Community College	
2003	Steve C. Wells	Alcorn State University	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member
2002	Jerry G. King	University of Southern Mississippi	
2001	Clyde Herring	Mississippi State University	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member MS SPCA President 2004-05
2000	Quinton Booker	Jackson State University	2006 MS SPCA Board Member
1999	John P. Quon	Delta State University	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member Former MS SPCA Board Member
1998	Dale Flesher	University of Mississippi	
1997	Paul Torres	University of Southern Mississippi	
1995	Tonya Flesher	University of Mississippi	Former Dean at Ole Miss 1987-1993
1994	Edward Milam	Mississippi State University	Former MS SPCA Committee Member
1993	James W. Davis	University of Mississippi	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member MS SPCA President 1983-84
1992	Zoel Daughtrey	Mississippi State University	
1991	James E. Dear	Mississippi College	
1990	Eugene Peery	University of Mississippi	
1989	Hugh Parker	Horne CPA	2006 MS SPCA Board Member MS SPCA President 1996-97
1988	Dora Herring	Mississippi State University	2006 MS SPCA Committee Member MS SPCA President 1990-91
1987	Charles Taylor	???	Former MS SPCA Board Member

The pattern of award winners is an interesting one. There is a definite pattern of award recipients serving in an administrative capacity with the MS SCPA either before, during, or after winning the award, which indicates that these are political people, or at least political enough to seek a position as and to be elected to an executive-level position in a state organization. Such individuals cannot be assumed to be above “politicking” for either an administrative position or the outstanding educator award itself. In essence, there seems to be a club effect, with current and former officers and members of the MS SCPA Board getting a significant share of the awards.

Also of interest is the fact that Crockett is the third member of USM’s faculty to win the award, following Jerry King and Paul Torres, both retired. The USM Marketing and PR piece omits this fact as well as the fact that the award is given annually (except in 1996), two facts that might make the award seem somehow less prestigious. However, it seems – at least from information available via the Internet – that King and Torres may have gotten the award the old fashioned way rather than the Crockett way.