

## Oh Panama!

USM president Martha Saunders' [10-July-09 blog](#) about her recent visit to Panama is one for the surreal column. Her week-long trip across the Gulf, during a economic/budgetary crisis no less, is one for the ages. Now, however, the "USM family" is beginning to detect cracks in the Saunders administration's armor. For time being at least those cracks come across to them (the "USM family") as public relations shortcomings. However, with each problem, and there are many stringing themselves together these days (e.g., parking fee increase fiasco, Panama trip), those cracks come closer and closer to appearing like kinks of the policy kind that will inevitably have USM constituents questioning their choice of executive leadership. Saunders' career path will offer no other conclusion. Despite preaching about having taught "thousands of students" during her academic career, Saunders' academic itinerary includes mostly administrative stops at obscure universities like West Florida, Columbus State and Wisconsin – Whitewater. All of this was geared toward becoming the head of USM, Saunders' alma mater. Now the circle is complete, only Saunders appears to be showing herself as unqualified for the task at hand. As the days inch forward, accrediting agencies and the like will probably begin to pick up the same vibes. If so, it could be déjà vu all over again.