

One Thing Leads to Another

How USM's Relationship with Idgroup Often Morphed

Recent reports here at USMNEWS.net have shown how lucrative having Martha Saunders sitting atop USM from 2007 to 2012 was for Mona Amadeo, head of the Pensacola-based consulting firm Idgroup. This report takes the next step in that process by looking into how the consulting contract for **\$8,300 per month** in services from Idgroup to USM often morphed into other money-making opportunities for Amodeo's business concern. Of course, we have already seen one such opportunity, with the USM centennial video, *The Southern Miss Story*, which cost USM students and Mississippi taxpayers some **\$76,650**. Another example comes with the insert below, which is a 21-Oct-2009 requisition for payment to Idgroup of **\$14,934.50** for production of a student-recruitment commercial.

1064401

Requisition

Ship To: 2609 WEST 4TH STREET
HATTIESBURG MS 39401

2009 OCT 22 PM 10
USM PROCUREMENT

Business Unit: USMPO	
Req ID: 0000045083	Date: 10/21/2009
Requester: Polly	Page: 1
Requester Signature:	Currency: USD

10H10-100001-06000

Line-Schd	Item	Description	Mfg ID	Quantity	UOM	Price	Extended Amt	Due Date
1-1		Two and 1/2 day production, development, and editing for a recruitment commercial.		1.0000	EA	0.00	0.00	
Vendor: 0000034757 IDGROUP								
Line Total:							0.00	
Total Requisition Amount:							0.00	

First invoice is attached for payment; Invoice #2744. The estimated cost for this production is \$29,869 - \$31,500.

The requisition above notes that production of the commercial spot would take 2 and ½ days, including production, development and editing. The invoice mentioned in the requisition above is also inserted at the top of the next page. Both documents reveal that USM ultimately paid just under **\$30,000** for the commercial shoot, which encompassed on-campus videography and food, travel and lodging for a six-member production crew. As with other payments from USM to Idgroup under Saunders' leadership, Saunders' secretary Polly Odom marked this one "ok to pay" (on 2-Oct-2009).

Sales Tax (6.5%)	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$14,934.50
OK to pay Polly Odom 10/21/09	



300 east intendencia
 historic seville
 pensacola, florida 32502
 (850) 438-7823
 www.idgroup.us

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
10/14/2009	2744

BILL TO:

The University of Southern Mississippi
 Office of the President
 118 College Drive #5001
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

SHIP TO:

Reg # 45083

P.O. NUMBER	TERMS	REP	SHIP	VIA	F.O.B.	PROJECT
USM1509	Net 15					

QUANTITY	ITEM CODE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE EACH	AMOUNT
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		2-day shoot plus 1/2 day on-site preproduction Location: Hattiesburg Mississippi Scope: to include all creative development, preproduction, production and editing of :30 commercial with original music		14,934.50
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Dates:
 Preproduction: October 19th.
 Shooting Dates: October 20th and 21st

Estimate: \$29,869.00-31,500.00
 Plus travel, food and lodging for the crew based on approved allowances and requirements of The University of Southern Mississippi
 Approximate number of crewmembers: 6

idgroup and Southern Miss:
 idgroup will coordinate with the Office of University Communications and the Admissions Department to coordinate the student talent and other props needed for the shoot.

Office of University Communications will coordinate all logistics involving students.

Payment Due:
 50% of estimate: 14,934.50

Several months later Amodeo's Idgroup was commissioned by Saunders to produce a commencement ceremony video. This process entailed creation, management, production and editing, all of which cost USM students and Mississippi taxpayers **\$8,800**, as the 16-Aug-2010 purchase order inserted at the top of the next page indicates. This project also involved the burning of the commencement video onto 15 separate DVDs, a process for which Idgroup charged USM another **\$306**. After Odom marked the associated invoices "ok to pay," a check for **\$9,106** was sent from USM to Idgroup.

PRICE EACH	AMOUNT
	8,800.00
<i>OK to pay</i>	
<i>Rally Odom</i>	
<i>8/16/10</i>	

PRICE EACH	AMOUNT
	306.00
<i>OK to pay</i>	
<i>Rally Odom</i>	
<i>8/16/10</i>	



USM Purchasing
 2609 WEST 4TH STREET
 HATTIESBURG MS 39401
 United States

Purchase Order

DUPLICATE		Dispatch via Print	
Purchase Order	Date	Revision	Page
1068088	09/16/2010		1
Payment Terms	Freight Terms	Ship Via	
Net 30	FOB:Destin, frt prepd/chrq back	BESTWAY	
Buyer	Requisition #	Requestor	
Bolder, Becky	000048973	Odom, Polly	

Vendor:0000034757 FAX : 850/934-3155
 IDGROUP
 300 EAST INTENDENCIA
 PENSACOLA FL 32502

Ship To: 2609 WEST 4TH STREET
 HATTIESBURG MS 39401
 United States

Bill To: 118 COLLEGE DRIVE #5104
 HATTIESBURG MS 39406-0001
 United States

Tax Exempt? Y	Tax Exempt ID: 64-740188K	Dept: Office Of President	Dept Id:100001	Proj/Grnt:	
Line	Quantity	UOM	Item/Description	Unit Price	Extended Amt

1	1.00	EA	Create, manage, produce & edit 2010 Commencement Video/Invoice No: 2883	8,800.00	8,800.00
2	1.00	EA	Authoring 2010 Commencement Video and Duplicating 15 DVDs/Invoice No: 2914	306.00	306.00

Invoices are attached for payment: Invoice 2883 and 2914.

Confirmation of services rendered

To summarize, this reports uncovers another **\$39,100** in student and taxpayer funds that Saunders was able to direct to Amodeo's *Idgroup*. In combination with the revolving consulting contract and production of the centennial video, which total **\$398,400** and **\$76,650**, respectively, USMNEWS.net has so far uncovered **\$514,150** in payments from USM to *Idgroup*.

It's obvious, to sources at least, that it was Saunders who informed *The Hattiesburg American* and other media, during the spring of 2012, about the so-called "sweetheart contract deals" that were effected during the Shelby Thames administration (2002-07) of USM. Now it is perhaps time to reassess Saunders' own responsibility in this situation. There is, of course, the matter of the USM plane that Saunders acquired the use of during her administration. Now comes all of this evidence surrounding USM and *Idgroup*. Do you believe all of this work by *Idgroup* was necessary? Do you believe *Idgroup* won these contracts as a result of competitive bidding? These are the relevant questions now.