

# Quotable Doty

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition: Doty on other CoB Centers

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of Quotable Doty we explored Harold and Susan Doty's involvement with the Center for Economic Education at USM and the Mississippi Council for Economic Education. Our investigation revealed an interesting and possibly disturbing development with regard to the MCEE and the CEE and sparked a cursory investigation into other Centers at USM and Doty's level of involvement with those Centers.

When Doty arrived at USM there had been two active Centers in the CoB – the Gulf South Economic Research Center (GSERC) and the Center for Financial Services (CFS) – both fully funded under former dean Bill Gunther. Documents received by the Research Division at usmpride.com indicate that GSERC was being used by Gunther to reward USMGC faculty as a way to funnel more travel and support money to the branch campus. Many of David Sharp's travel documents indicate partial or full funding from GSERC, although Sharp also received the usual faculty travel allotment. GSERC, which was run by Gunther pal Phillip Jeffress, was closed by USM President Shelby Thames prior to Doty's arrival but the majority of the people associated with GSERC, including David Sharp, remained at USM, although Jeffress was fired.

That left the CFS, which was started by Gunther and former assistant professor of finance Michael Melton. The CFS was initiated to develop a bond between the burgeoning financial services industry in Mississippi and USM. Melton, a former stockbroker, had the credentials and experience to get a foot in the door with local, regional, and national financial services companies and to secure donations from those companies. In fact, it was Melton that raised the money to build the only trading floor laboratory in the state. The CFS was staffed by two (.5 FTE each) graduate assistants and supported the newly created Financial Planning major. Melton left USM just prior to Doty's arrival and his replacement, John Clark, was in place when Doty arrived. Clark had credentials that made him a good choice for the position on paper.

Enter Doty and the addition of Economic Development to the College of Business Administration, making it the CBED. As a feeble attempt to start a Center at the USMGC campus, Tony Henthorne was named director of CENTED, the Center for Tourism and Economic Development:

*“The expansion of CENTED's mission will be a huge benefit for not only the Gulf Coast, but the entire state, said CBED dean Dr. Harold Doty. ‘CENTED now better addresses the needs of the economic development community and those of the burgeoning tourism industry on the Gulf Coast. The center will provide a mechanism to help exploit critical areas of the tourism industry to the state's advantage,’ said Doty.”<sup>1</sup>*

Henthorne, whose research focus has included tourism marketing, was relocated from the Hattiesburg campus to the USMGC campus. However, Doty's power play backfired when the Economic Development Department, fueled by Provost Tim Hudson and President Shelby Thames, bucked this foray into their territory. Doty also failed to

appropriately include the Hattiesburg and USMGC Hospitality Management (now Tourism Management) faculty in the CANTED plans. It wasn't long before CANTED was shut down and Henthorne returned to the Hattiesburg campus, although his salary line remains with USMGC. That's one failed Center.

Doty's second attempt at starting a Center was documented in QD2 – the Center for Economic Education (CEE), which operates under the umbrella of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). Just what does the parent group, the BBER, actually do?

*“The work of the bureau will be consistent with the university's vision of creating and applying knowledge to improve the quality of life for the citizens of South Mississippi and the entire state,” said Dr. Harold Doty, dean of the College of Business. “The BBER will be able to highlight some of our ongoing applied business research and at the same time, further educate the citizens of Mississippi about pertinent economic issues.”*<sup>2</sup>

So, the BBER was created to “[create] and [apply] knowledge to improve the quality of life for the citizens of South Mississippi and the entire state.” Now that's a lofty goal. Just what has the BBER in its seventeen month existence? The CoB's website shows no concrete information regarding the BBER's non-Economic Education mission, and a Google search reveals no other pertinent hits regarding the BBER. To the best of our ability, the Odds & Ends Department here at usmpride.com cannot find evidence of a single white paper (research paper) produced by the USM BBER. Seventeen months and no progress made toward “[improving] the quality of life for the citizens of South Mississippi and the entire state.” Even sadder is the fact that the BBER's sole publications consist of charts downloaded from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics' website and thumbtacked to the Economics department bulletin board with the handwritten scrawl, “Compliments of the USM Bureau of Business and Economic Research.” Now that's quality research. Of course, QD2 hypothesized on the BBER's real *raison d'être* – as the cover for the CEE and the Doty money machine.

There is some suggestion by usmpride.com informants that Doty wishes to start another Center – a Center for Entrepreneurship to bolster his floundering Entrepreneurship major – but has been cut off at the knees by Thames, whose support goes to the Economic Development department and the Trent Lott National Center for Excellence in Economic Development and Entrepreneurship. However, with Doty's recently mandated Economics department hire, Doty appears to be attempting an end-run around Thames' chosen people. Only time will tell if Doty can pull off another Center that is as productive as the BBER.

And still the CFS sits idle, unfunded and unsupported by the Dean's office. Under Gunther, Melton kept the CFS up and running, but Doty has clipped Clark's fundraising wings in favor of CoB Development Officer Emile Dieth, whose job it is to raise funds for the CoB. The CFS, the oldest of the CoB's Centers, has fallen into disrepair and is rumored to be in rotation as a classroom this fall. Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand is rumored to harbor hostile feelings for the CFS, because Melton's money was not under

his control – see other documents at [usmpride.com](http://usmpride.com) for examples of how Niroomand serves as steward of soft money.

Why is the CFS underfunded if the CoB has a full-time fundraiser on staff? That's the topic for QD4.

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<sup>1</sup> “Center for Tourism and Economic Development Research Fills Critical Need, Becoming Unique Resource,” USM PR Release, January 29, 2004. Available online at <http://www.usm.edu/pr/prnews/jan04/cented1.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> “New Southern Miss Center to Focus on Regional Economic Research,” USM PR Release, March 11, 2005. Available online at <http://www.usm.edu/pr/prnews/mar05/bber.htm>.