

Special Report

WHEN DID PROVOST WIESENBERG START TO WORRY ABOUT THE VALUE OF NOETIC?

The *Hattiesburg American's* [June 9, 2012 report](#), "USM eyeing contracts Noetic, beverage, team doctor agreements raise concerns" begins, "When Denis Wiesenburg took over as University of Southern Mississippi vice president for research in June 2010, President Martha Saunders told him to run a 'squeaky clean research operation.'" According to the same *THA* report, "[y]et from the time Wiesenburg walked in the door in 2010, he questioned the need for a hefty research contract [with Noetic Industries] that had cost the university millions since it was signed."

However, revisiting a January 17, 2011 [Special Report](#), *Award-Winning Thamesians? USM's Controversial Past not Fading Away*, we find a picture of Denis Wiesenburg smiling proudly as he accepts the John I. Rucker Community Innovation Leadership Award for USM. According to a January 13, 2011 USM [presser](#) by Van Arnold, the award was shared by the University of Southern Mississippi and Noetic Technologies.



Dennis Wiesenburg (pictured above, right), then vice president for research and Kelli Booth (pictured above, left), vice president of marketing at Noetic Technologies

According to Mr. Arnold, reporter, Office of University Communications, "Noetic and Southern Miss were honored based upon the unique model of a private company/academic institution technology transfer process." Nothing in Mr. Arnold's report suggests anything but the University's and Dr. Weisenburg's unfettered delight with Noetic or that the association with Noetic had been anything but a benefit to the

University and its mission. In fact, Mr. Arnold's report makes no mention of Noetic's \$750,000 per year cost or its annual revenues of less than \$100,000.

If Dr. Weisenburg questioned, as *THA* report suggests, the Noetic contract from day one, why did it take him two years to bring it to the attention of the public? Did he take any steps to terminate the contract other than simply waiting for the contract to expire? Instead, a year and a half ago the University, with Dr. Weisenburg's apparent support, were touting the relationship between Southern Miss and Noetic as a "unique model of a private company/academic institution technology transfer process."

Since the University contract with Noetic is hidden behind a carefully structured "business" arrangement through which the University claims confidentiality, we cannot determine if there were/are grounds for terminating the contract two years earlier at a cost savings of a million and a half dollars.

Be sure to stay tuned to USMNEWS.net for more on this story as it develops.