

To Tyler, and Back

A Guest Editorial by **Victoria Tyler**

Faculty and staff over at the University of Texas at Tyler are getting an eyeful in reading the old **The Doty Sidestep** series [available](#) at USMNEWS.net. From digital MBAs, to secret degrees . . . from letters of agreement to a mismanaged academic suspension process, former CoB dean Harold Doty did a real number on USM's College of Business from 2003-07. If Tyler visitors find this series interesting, they should also spend some time in the USMNEWS.net [Archives](#), examining reports and editorials about the former CoB dean. There they will find a veritable smorgasbord of reports and editorials describing how destructive the current business school dean at UT at Tyler can be when he sets his mind to the task. Of course, each new USMNEWS.net reader from East Texas shouldn't depart USMNEWS.net without glancing at the [CoB Faculty Turnover](#) report, which lists the faculty departures from USM's business college since 2003, the year Doty took the reins. This report, last updated on 16-Feb-2011, shows that about 80 faculty have fled the CoB since 2003, with the vast majority leaving during Doty's tenure at USM. Perhaps all of these reading suggestions apply best to Rod Mabry, the UT at Tyler president who seems timid when it comes to addressing the chaos Doty seems to be creating in Tyler.

Closer to home for USM faculty and staff is the situation involving Russ Willis, the recently promoted human resources director whose salary will have risen, by 1-July-2011, almost 100% since 31-Aug-2010. With Willis' meteoric launch to vice president for administrative affairs, it's difficult to convince Mississippi taxpayers that the state's public employees are facing the same economic realities that they, the taxpayers, are dealing with on a daily basis. Yes, if you are a [USM coach](#) (e.g., head football coach Larry Fedora), a [USM administrator](#) (e.g., Willis), or a [propective USM administrator](#) (e.g., Elizabeth Payne, at least on or around 30-Nov-2010), things are rosy. For these individuals, the USM coffers must seem bottomless. Things might get rosier, at least for Willis, if reports of USM provost Robert Lyman's imminent departure are accurate. Such an event could mean a new title, and much more authority, for Willis, who might also see his salary eclipse \$225,000.

Between UT at Tyler and USM, it's sometimes difficult to tell which is the proverbial frying pan, and which is its accompanying fire. That said, Mabry's cleanup task looks much less difficult than that at USM. Doty is new to UT at Tyler, and at least some of the other former USM trouble makers have, or will soon have, departed that institution. USM, however, appears to be a cradle of troublemakers, making the job of turning things around a near-Herculean one.