

President Saunders: Inefficient and Ineffective Use of Students' and Taxpayers' Money

Part 13 2011

Costs and Uses of King Air N777AQ

Saunderization of Student and Taxpayer Money

usmnews.net's review of soon-to-be-former President Saunders' lease of a multi-million dollar airplane, King Air N777AQ, continues with Southern Miss' cost records for 2011. We began this series detailing President Saunders' decision significantly to undercharge the IHL for use of N777AQ. We continue with a report with President Saunders' charging USM students and Mississippi taxpayers a small fortune to transport her Assistant, Chad Driskell and Chad Newell, President of Area Development Partnership – Greater Hattiesburg, MS, to Atlanta aboard N777AQ *to attend* a meeting of the Southern Economic Development Council:

2011 Meet the Consultants

May 12 2011 11:30am - May 13 2011 2:30pm Local Time
Presented by: **Southern Economic Development Council**

Join us in Atlanta as SEDC hosts the fourth annual "Meet the Consultants" event. This day-and-a-half-long meeting will feature panels of site location consultants addressing trends and issues impacting many business sectors and their location decisions. **Thursday will wrap up with an evening reception at the 755 Club at Turner Field where we will watch the Atlanta Braves take on the Washington Nationals.** This 3+-hour **networking** opportunity will give participants a chance to meet the invited site location consultants in a casual setting. The event will conclude on Friday with a half-day of panels and educational sessions. (Emphasis added.)

<http://calendar.cal.basecampbusiness.com/node/26883>

If the conference doesn't sound like a waste of student and taxpayer money wait till you learn what the trip cost for just the plane ride, let me repeat, just the plane ride.

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The actual cash outflow cost per flight hour is, according to USM's own records, more than **\$5,500** in actual current cash outflow costs per flight hour. If the balloon payment of \$907,053.85 (which is contractually required to be paid at the end of the lease/purchase period) is included, the cost per flight hour is over **\$8,000**. For details, [click here](#). So, the actual cost of using N777AQ to transport Driskell and Newell to Atlanta, GA was

\$24,000 (3 flight hours x \$8,000).

What would it have cost Driskell and Newell to drive to and from Atlanta, GA. \$200?

If Saunders paid her own money to send her assistant and a local to Atlanta, do you think she would have paid \$24,000 for a plane trip? Or paid for \$200 of gasoline?

This is another example of Saunderization of student and taxpayer money.

Who's holding administrators responsible? It certainly is not the IHL – even though that is supposed to be its job.