

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

Part 12

Costs and Uses of King Air N777AQ

No Interdepartmental Invoice. Personal Use?

usmnews.net reports Martha Saunders' 2011 cost and use of a multi-million dollar airplane, King Air N777AQ. You have a right to know. After all, your money is paying for it.

Our news in this series continues with records recently received from USM via open records requests. The ongoing question is how do extravagant expenditures advance the education of USM students?

This report is entitled **"No Interdepartmental Invoice. Personal Use?"** for good reason.

There was no Interdepartmental Invoice for the flight from "Gulfport, Madison, Hattiesburg". Since there was no Interdepartmental Invoice, we are left to speculate the purpose of the flight.

The pilots' "King Air N777AQ Trip Log" which the law requires for all flights reported one passenger: Martha Saunders. The [Trip Log](#) reported 1.4 flight hours for the flight from "Gulfport, Madison, Hattiesburg." There were more pilots [Allen and Gill] than passengers.

Here's what it cost USM students and Mississippi taxpayers for just the mysterious flight:

\$7,701.54 = (\$5,501.10 cost per flight hour X 1.4 actual flight hours) [For details of measuring cost per flight hour based on USM's cost records, [click here.](#)]

If the contractual obligation President Saunders signed for her airplane with regard to a balloon payment is included, the cost to USM students and Mississippi taxpayers is:

\$11,304.87 = (\$8,074.91 cost per flight hour X 1.4 actual flight hours)

Let me repeat: the cost of this trip flight was **\$11,304.87.**

So, what was the purpose of the flight? We don't know. However, if Saunders can't be trusted to tell the truth about the cost per flight hour (see previous reports), what makes you think you can trust that she wasn't flying the plane for personal use?

Let's give Dr. Saunders the benefit of all doubt. Assume negligent record keeping and that the purpose of the flight really was USM business. Then ask yourself what it would have cost to drive from Gulfport to Madison and to Hattiesburg? A tank of gas?

Why did Saunders squander more than **eleven thousand dollars** of student and taxpayer money when alternative transportation would have cost students and taxpayers less than a hundred?

What choice do you think Saunders would have taken if she were spending her won money? Don't have to guess on the answer to that question. She would have hopped in a car from the USM transportation pool and driven. And there's the rub, bureaucrats are squandering your money.

This is just one more example of a shameful waste of student and taxpayer money.

IHL! What were you thinking letting this happen!?