



The banner features the University of Mississippi logo on the left, the text "THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI" in the center, and "NewsSearch" on the right. Below this, the word "newsdesk" is written in a large, stylized red font, with the tagline "Your source for news at Ole Miss" to its right.

[NewsSearch](#)

newsdesk
Your source
for news
at Ole Miss

[home](#)
[news releases](#)
[campus news](#)
[multimedia](#)
[media services](#)
[calendar](#)
[facts & firsts](#)
[contact us](#)

[E-mail this story](#)

Former Highway Commissioner Named Engineer of Distinction

04/27/2006

OXFORD, Miss. - Former state highway commissioner Sam Waggoner has been named the Engineer of Distinction by the School of Engineering at the University of Mississippi.

The title is bestowed annually on an engineer associated with the school who is truly exceptional. Past winners include Exxon Mobil executives and NASA chiefs. Waggoner is the first Mississippi Department of Transportation official to win the award.

"Sam has been a mover and a shaker in the state's economic progress," said Chancellor Robert Khayat. "He is most deserving of this honor for his many years of outstanding service."

Waggoner was the first engineer to be elected highway commissioner, a position he held for 21 years. During his tenure, he was instrumental in passing the Mississippi Moving AHEAD (Advocating Highways for Economic Advancement and Development) bill. Approved by the Legislature in 1987, the \$1.6 billion project resulted in construction of four-lane roads within 30 miles of all towns statewide.

"This honor means a great deal to me and my family," Waggoner said. "I've always known that for Mississippi to advance economically that good, paved roads were essential."

A native of Carthage, Waggoner graduated from the UM engineering school in 1943. As an engineer for the Mississippi Highway Department for 15 years, he founded Engineers and Surveyors Inc. He is a member of the Cattlemen's Association and a charter member of the Leake County Forestry Association.

His civic involvement has included the American Legion, Ole Miss Engineering Alumni Association, state board of directors for the American Cancer Society and First Baptist Church of Newton.

Waggoner and his wife, the former Mary Elizabeth Smith of Carthage, are the parents of two children, Joe and Mary Jane.

by [Edwin Smith](#)

Newsdesk Story #5184