

**NEW** *Appointments*

## Knight Set to Head MSU Coastal Center

*Patricia R. Knight*

Patricia R. Knight has been named interim head of the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi.

Knight joined the staff of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station in 1997 as an assistant horticulturist at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station in Poplarville.

Prior to assuming her current duties, she served as horticulture research coordinator for the Coastal Research and Extension Center. She replaces David Veal, who retired June 30 after 35 years of service to MSU.

"Patricia has a record of outstanding research and strong leadership of outreach programs that benefit the people of south Mississippi," said Vance Watson, vice president of MSU's Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. "She is particularly active in research and programs that bring economic benefits to the area's commercial nurseries and other horticultural enterprises."

As interim head of the Biloxi-based center, Knight supervises research and Extension professionals working with programs in horticulture, beef cattle, food safety, marine resources and youth education, among others.

Knight is an Alabama native who completed a bachelor's degree in horticulture with an emphasis in landscape design at Auburn University. She also earned a master's degree in horticulture at Auburn and a doctoral degree in horticulture at Virginia Tech.

12

## Watson Named Interim Head of MSU Extension and Outreach

*Vance H. Watson*

Mississippi State University's vice president for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine has assumed additional duties as interim director of University Extension and Outreach.

Vance Watson is providing leadership for an organization that includes the MSU Extension Service, Division of Academic Outreach and Continuing Education and Office of Industrial Outreach Services. The retirement of Joe McGilberry, director of the MSU Extension Service since 2001 and head of University Extension and Outreach since 2003, became effective June 30. MSU President Charles Lee recommended Watson's interim appointment at the July meeting of the Board of Trustees, State Institutions of Higher Learning.

# Alumnus Selected for Forest Leadership Role



*George M. Hopper*

A Mississippi State forestry alumnus is the new dean of the university's College of Forest Resources and director of its Forest and Wildlife Research Center.

Vicksburg native George M. Hopper succeeds interim dean Bob L. Karr, who has retired after 29 years of service.

MSU's College of Forest Resources includes the departments of forestry, forest products, and wildlife and fisheries.

Hopper has served for 11 years as head of the department of forestry, wildlife and fisheries at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He previously was a professor for 11 years in the department.

A specialist in hardwood silviculture and the biology of oaks, Hopper earlier worked for Mississippi State's forestry department and the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Anderson-Tully Lumber Co.

In addition to bachelor's and master's degrees from MSU, he holds a doctorate from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Besides holding the title of Society of American Foresters Fellow, he is president-elect for the Southern region of the National Association of Professional Forestry Schools and Colleges.

Hopper's appointment was announced jointly by Vance Watson and Peter Rabideau. Watson is vice president for agriculture, forestry and veterinary medicine; Rabideau, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Watson said, "Dr. Hopper will lead the departments of forestry, forest products, and wildlife and fisheries toward national prominence in teaching, research and service."

Added Rabideau: "He also will help strengthen the contributions of natural resources to the economic and environmental welfare of the people of Mississippi."

"We have made considerable progress over the past three years in realigning the Mississippi State University Extension Service to accommodate changes in the needs of our constituencies and the budgetary reductions imposed by the Legislature," Lee said.

Mississippi's business and industry community, he added, has responded positively to efforts to better coordinate continuing education and industrial outreach efforts throughout the university.

"We must continue our efforts to better meet the needs of the people of our state if we are to enjoy their trust and financial support," Lee said.

During the interim appointment, Watson will lead strategic planning activities focused on a comprehensive approach to teaching, research and extension programs throughout the MSU Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. He also will work with Provost Peter

Rabideau to further involve academic units of the university in continuing education and outreach activities.

"I am honored by the opportunity to serve the university in this interim role until a permanent director is selected," Watson said. "I look forward to working with the president to ensure that University Extension and Outreach has a vision and goals consistent with those of the broader university."

An advisory committee soon will be established to help find a permanent director for University Extension and Outreach, Lee said. The unit's director reports jointly to the vice president for agriculture, forestry and veterinary medicine, and to the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Watson also is director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station and dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He will continue to perform those duties.