

By: Senator(s) Blackwell, Parker, McLendon,
Jackson (11th), Simmons (12th), Jordan,
Whaley, Boyd, Simmons (13th)

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 563

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CAREER
2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF TOM PITTMAN, PRESIDENT
3 AND CEO OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NORTHWEST MISSISSIPPI, ON
4 THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AND EXTENDING THE BEST WISHES OF
5 THE LEGISLATURE.

6 WHEREAS, we join the business and civic community of
7 Mississippi in honoring the career and many contributions of Tom
8 Pittman, President and CEO of Community Foundation of Northwest
9 Mississippi (2004-present), Chairman of the Board (2002-2004) and
10 co-incorporator of the Foundation in 2002; and

11 WHEREAS, Tom's enormous civic energy is indicated in the
12 following career accomplishments:

13 • Prior to joining the Community Foundation of Northwest
14 Mississippi, he had a 25-year career with leading newspapers in
15 Tupelo and DeSoto County; recipient of journalism awards from The
16 University of Southern Mississippi and Mississippi University for
17 Women; President of Mississippi Press Association; award for Best
18 Editorial Writing; and served on Leadership Council of National
19 Association of Newspapers.



20 • Co-incorporated the Community Foundation of Northwest
21 Mississippi in 2002 and served as its first volunteer Chairman.

22 • Served as first full-time President of the Community
23 Foundation since 2004 and led expansion of its primary service
24 area to 11 Delta counties.

25 • Implemented mission of the Community Foundation as
26 impacting communities by "connecting people who care with causes
27 that matter" with priorities as education and health, especially
28 for children and youth.

29 • Presided over the Foundation's granting of more than \$27
30 Million to assist over 800 charitable organizations.

31 • Helped the Foundation grow its permanent charitable assets
32 from \$0 to almost \$20 Million.

33 • Partnered with national foundations such as Ford
34 Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and W.K. Kellogg
35 Foundation to assist residents of Northwest Mississippi.

36 • Co-founded the annual Crystal Ball that has supported the
37 work of the Community Foundation for 20 years and has been honored
38 as the state's best fundraising event by the Mississippi
39 Association of Fundraising Professionals.

40 • Developed the Community Digital Scholars Program that
41 engages 24% of Grade 4-12 public school students in the Delta in
42 online courses for personal finance, Black History, STEM and other
43 critical subjects at no cost to the schools or students.



44 • Worked with the co-founder of *Wikipedia*, Dr. Larry Sanger,
45 to create Google top-rated websites for educational videos
46 (WatchKnowLearn.org) and for learning to read (ReadingBear.org)
47 that are free to use for schools and for students at home.

48 • Established the DeSoto County Superintendent's Youth
49 Leadership Council involving students from all the county's public
50 high schools and provided them experiences such as trips to New
51 York and Washington to meet with Senators, top business executives
52 and other national leaders.

53 • Developed the Regional Health Council that created and
54 implemented local strategies to reduce childhood obesity and
55 improve wellness throughout the Delta.

56 • Spoke about the Community Foundation's innovative work to
57 reduce childhood obesity at the invitation of state and national
58 groups, including the National Governors Association.

59 • Worked with the First Regional Library System to create a
60 Family Resource Center and establish Words on Wheels bus to take
61 resources and mentoring to child care centers throughout the
62 Library's five-county region.

63 • Established "Baby University" for the Delta to help
64 mothers improve their parenting skills and provide better
65 environment for young children.

66 • Staged Shoot For the Heart Sporting Clays events in Tunica
67 for eight years that has attracted participants from around the



nation and beyond and has raised almost \$400,000.00 for the nursing program at Northwest Mississippi Community College.

- Helped launch numerous nonprofits such as Lower Mississippi River Foundation, Emmett Till Commission, Unknown Child Memorial, and the Marks Project.

- Honored by NASDAQ and EverFi at NASDAQ headquarters in New York City for leadership in online youth personal finance education programs.

- Honored by Governor Ronnie Musgrove for Superior Leadership in the statewide Computers in the Classrooms Initiative.

- Honored with creation of Tom Pittman Endowment for Delta Directions by a \$200,000.00 matching grant from a Connecticut couple to sustain the consortium of the Community Foundation, Harvard University, Mississippi State University, and the University of Mississippi to improve the public health and economic development of the Delta.

- Served as President of the Mississippi Association of Grantmakers and co-chaired its merger with the Mississippi Center for Nonprofits to create the nationally recognized Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy; and

WHEREAS, Tom's civic contributions and honors include the following:

- Owner of *DeSoto Times* (1997-present) and Editor and Publisher of *DeSoto Times* (1997-2004).



93 • Board member of CREATE Community Foundation in Tupelo
94 (1994-1997).

95 • Managing Editor, Editor and then General Manager of the
96 *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* in Tupelo and Vice President
97 of *Journal Publishing Company*, overseeing five weekly newspapers
98 (1979-1997).

99 • Initiator of pilot project to place an online computer in
100 every public school classroom, and member of State Technology Task
101 Force that completed \$25 Million mission of placing an online
102 computer in every Mississippi public school classroom (2000-2003).

103 • Board member of the Mississippi Economic Council
104 (1998-2016).

105 • Board member of the Public Education Forum of Mississippi
106 (2004-2016).

107 • Charter board member of Mississippi International Cultural
108 Series and past board member of WONDERS: The Memphis International
109 Cultural Series (1993-2004).

110 • Charter board member of the DeSoto Health & Wellness
111 Center, a primary health center for the uninsured (2002-2008).

112 • Board member of Mississippi News and Information, Inc.
113 (2017-present).

114 • Advisory board member of Entergy Mississippi
115 (2015-present).

116 • Board member of Southern Bancorp Community Partners
117 (2018-present).



118 • President of Mississippi Grantmakers Association
119 (2017-2019) and co-chair of committee to merge organization with
120 Mississippi Center for Nonprofits (2018-2019).

121 • President of Mississippi Press Association (1994).

122 • Recipient of Mississippi Press Association J. Oliver
123 Emmerich Award for Editorial Excellence (2001), University of
124 Southern Mississippi Statewide Medalist Award for excellence in
125 journalism (1990), Mississippi University for Women Silver Inky
126 for outstanding contributions to American journalism (1992); and

127 WHEREAS, Tom is an Elder in the United Methodist Church
128 (retired), is a Brookhaven High School graduate where he earned a
129 Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of
130 Mississippi and Masters of Divinity degree from Emory University.
131 He is married to Cyndi Pittman and they have four children:
132 Jonathan, David, Rob and Alexandra; and

133 WHEREAS, we pay tribute to a record of achievement and legacy
134 of leadership and dedication by a most public-spirited citizen of
135 Mississippi:

136 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
137 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
138 we do hereby recognize the career accomplishments and civic
139 contributions of Tom Pittman, President and CEO of the Community
140 Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, on the occasion of his
141 retirement and extend the best wishes of the Legislature to Tom
142 and his family on this auspicious occasion.



143 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
144 Tom Pittman, forwarded to the Board of Directors of the Community
145 Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, the Mississippi Development
146 Authority, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

