

Grant program offers free graduate degree to aspiring educators

Special to Pelahatchie News

Applications are now open for new candidates to the Mississippi Department of Education's Mississippi Teacher Residency (MTR) program, where up to two hundred aspiring educators can receive a graduate degree in elementary and secondary education and professional mentorship at no cost.

The priority deadline to submit applications is Feb. 15, 2023. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and either meet the minimum required passing score on the Praxis Core, have a 21 or higher on the ACT/SAT equivalent or have a 3.0 GPA (last 60 hours of coursework).

Last year, the MDE used \$9.8 million of its American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to award grants to five universities – Delta State Uni-

versity, Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, University of Southern Mississippi and William Carey University – in the MTR program over a two-year period. A total of 103 candidates were admitted with several MTR partner universities currently initiating a midyear application process.

In this next round, those universities will once again enroll diverse participants into their educator preparation programs to work toward their graduate degree and Mississippi teacher certification. Individuals accepted into the MTR program will receive full scholarships, testing

fees, books and mentor stipends. MTR will include training alongside a mentor teacher, testing support, professional development, ongoing assessment and a commitment to teach in a geographical critical shortage district serving

low-income children, racial/ethnic minorities and children with disabilities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Candidates admitted in the latest round of the MTR program should graduate by summer 2024.

When applying, applicants will indicate what university program they want to join and select up to two school dis-

trict options to work in. Confirmed participating school districts are included in the application and will be updated as needed on the MTR website based on each university's established process for selecting district partners in geographical critical shortage areas.

All complete applications will be provided to MTR universities to determine candidate eligibility. Eligible applications will then be provided to each candidate's top-choice MTR partner school districts, which may then opt to interview applicants either in-person or virtually. After interviews are complete, the MDE will conduct a matching process based on information from MTR applicants, universities and school districts. Applicants will be notified of their possible acceptance into the MTR program by May 2023.

For more information on the MTR program, visit mdek12.org/OTL/MTR.



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UMMC, BCBSMS reach agreement



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The University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi (Blue Cross) have reached an agreement.

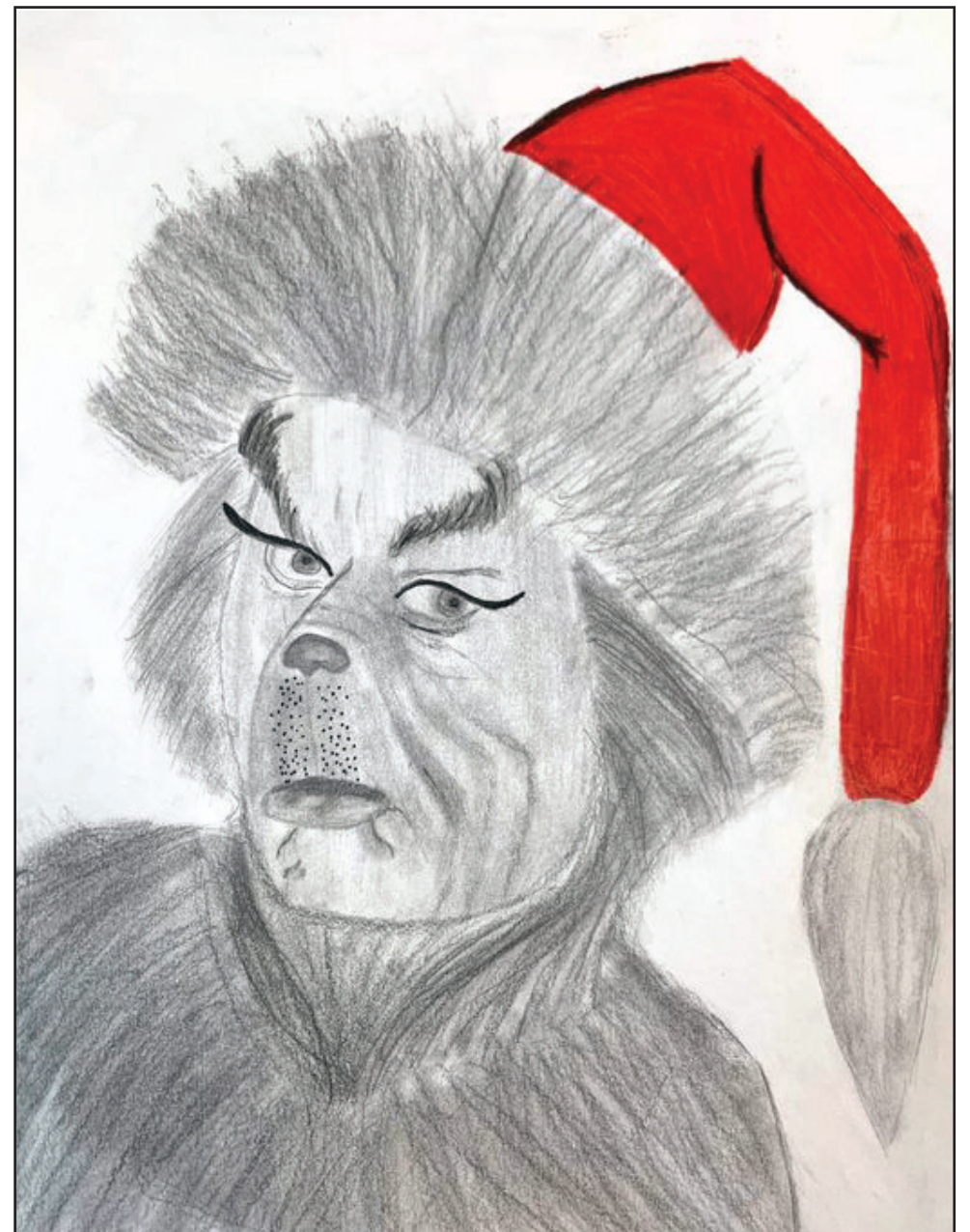
Effective Dec. 15, 2022, all UMMC facilities, physicians and other individual Professional Providers are fully participat-

ing Network Providers for all Blue Cross commercial health plans, including the Federal Employee Plan and Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans from other states.

Blue Cross and UMMC remain focused on their missions of serving Mississippians' health care needs.

The terms of the contracts are confidential.

Whiddon's art featured in Rankin magazine



Art by Savannah Whiddon

Pelahatchie High School Savannah Whiddon's art of The Grinch was featured in the Hometown Rankin Magazine's December Art Cover Contest. Whiddon is in the 9th-grade. Hometown Rankin stated, "We want to encourage the artistic ability in the county's brightest young artists."

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\$37 Attorneys fees \$313 Court fee
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\$400 to file

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