

# Member Spotlight



## **Walter Neely, CFA, PhD**

*Emeritus Professor of Finance, Millsaps College*

*Consultant, WPN Consulting*

*Candidate Preparation/Scholarship Chair, CFA Society Mississippi Board*

Walter Neely, of Jackson, serves as Emeritus Professor of Finance at Millsaps College's Else School of Management. In addition to his role in prepping candidates and serving as Scholarship Chair for CFA Society Mississippi, Walter also serves as chair of the Bower Foundation's Finance Committee and serves on the Junior League of Jackson's Keystone Investment Committee. He is a former president of the board of directors for the Mississippi Museum of Art Foundation, Inc., and one of the founding members and past presidents of CFA Society Mississippi. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from Mississippi State University, and his doctorate in

finance from the University of Georgia. Walter has been active in community organizations, serving as Midtown Finance Committee chair, Mississippi Food Network chairman, and treasurer of St. Andrew's Episcopal School. He and his wife, Frances Jean, reside in Jackson, Mississippi, and are the parents to three children and grandparents to seven grandchildren with one on the way.

Read more information about Walter in his answers to our Member Spotlight questions.

### **Who had the most influence on you growing up, and why?**

My parents were always supportive and encouraging me in good times and even in difficult times. My University of Georgia dissertation professor Dr. Ron North showed me how to succeed as a research professor by encouraging me to work hard and get it right no matter how long it takes. He also showed me how to combine and enjoy professorial duties and consulting opportunities.

### **What made you decide to pursue the CFA charter?**

I wanted to become more engaged with both investment professionals and academic professors who were involved as CFAs in North Carolina where I then lived. The CFA Program appealed to me as both a way to know these knowledgeable professionals and to extend my knowledge as a finance professor.

### **What do you enjoy most about your current professional role?**

As Emeritus Professor of Finance at Millsaps I enjoy interacting with the current Wilson Fund students, allowing me to continue knowing students and watching them grow and excel. Leading so many great students was my favorite part of my teaching career. As a consultant I continue to apply CFA and research-based portfolio management principles. Consulting allows me to practice portfolio management and requires me to keep current on best practices and markets.

### **What is the best advice you've ever received?**

Shoot for the stars, Roll with the punches, Tell the truth, and Surround yourself with people of high character.

### **What motivated you to join CFA Society Mississippi?**

When I moved to Mississippi I found a similar group of bright investment professionals like I knew in N.C., some of whom were CFAs. There was no CFA Society in Mississippi, but these few Mississippi CFAs were members of the New Orleans and later Memphis societies. I organized the Mississippi CFAs along with other investment professionals who were eager to be more involved with what is now the CFA Institute. Several years later as our numbers grew, we formed the Mississippi Chapter of the Memphis Society which later applied to become the stand-alone CFA Society Mississippi.

### **What advice would you give to a current or potential candidate?**

CFAs are bright and hard-working, and the CFA Program includes cutting edge, research-based materials. Wherever your life leads, your CFA experience will guide you as a knowledgeable, highly principled professional.