

Mississippi State UNIVERSITY

Cato CEO to speak at Institute for Market Studies launch

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STARKVILLE, Miss.—Businessman and author John Allison will help Mississippi State University formally launch its Institute for Market Studies Tuesday [Sept. 22].

Allison, former Branch Bank and Trust Company CEO who is currently serving in the same capacity with Cato, will talk about his new book, “The Leadership Crisis and the Free Market Cure” at 5 p.m. in Lee Hall’s Betterworth Auditorium. A reception will follow in the McCool Hall atrium where a number of copies of Allison’s book will be available for free. The events are open to the public.

Funded by private donations through the MSU Foundation’s ongoing Infinite Impact campaign, the Institute for Market Studies will support research on markets and how they can create prosperity. Led by co-directors Brandon Cline, an associate professor of finance, and Claudia Williamson, an assistant professor of economics, the institute specifically will use its resources to support faculty research initiatives, as well as programs for undergraduate and graduate students. The institute will use some of its funds to hire a research and policy analyst, Cline said.

MSU projects a \$2.5 million budget for IMS spread over six years.

“We are proud to see these faculty launching a new effort in researching the drivers behind development of free markets,” said David Shaw, MSU’s vice president for research and economic development. “MSU has expertise in a wide variety of disciplines that can lend expertise to this important area of study, and is well known for developing innovative, multi-disciplinary approaches to address the most important issues we face today in a way that no single discipline can solve.”

Through IMS, Williamson said the university could support a broad range of market research, including finance and economics, political science, history and philosophy.

“Market research applies to any type of exchange that takes place, including informal markets such as how culture affects economic development, for example,” Williamson said. “It’s really a broad area. We want to find out what kind of things the faculty are interested in studying.”

The institute will streamline the process for these research initiatives, Cline said, because IMS will have funds already available for approved projects, rather than having to find an outside funding source for each project individually.

Requests for research proposals will go out later this semester, Cline said.

He added IMS also plans to fund a speaker series, and Allison, named among the Harvard Business Review’s top 100 CEOs of the last decade, sets a strong tone for the series. Forbes political economy editor John Tamny will speak at MSU on Oct. 22.