UA WALTON COLLEGE HONORS OUTSTANDING ALUMNI, STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – The Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas, will hold its tenth annual honors banquet tonight at the Holiday Inn in Springdale.

Walton College will honor three distinctive alumni: Joe T. Ford, chairman, ALLTEL Corporation, Little Rock, for the Lifetime Achievement Award; William G. Underwood, president and founder, Underwood’s Jewelers Inc., Fayetteville, as the Entrepreneur of the Year; and Larry T. Wilson, president and CEO, First Arkansas Bank & Trust, Jacksonville, for the Outstanding Service Award.

Walton College Dean Doyle Z. Williams said, “We have chosen these alumni because they exemplify the very essence of what we are trying to teach our students. Their accomplishments provide inspiration to the students as well as to our faculty and staff.”

Ford graduated from the Walton College in 1959 with a BSBA in business administration. He has led ALLTEL Corporation through one of the most intense eras of change in the telecommunications, including deregulation of the telephone industry and the growth of wireless communications. In 2002, ALLTEL’s net income totaled $1 billion on revenue of nearly $8 billion. The company recently received Wireless Week’s 2002 Excellence Award in the carrier category. Today, ALLTEL is the sixth largest U.S. wireless operation with more than 7.6 million customers and a total of 12 million communications customers in 26 states. Ford was inducted into the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame in 2000. Over the past several decades, Ford has executed more than 250 mergers and acquisitions. During his business career, Ford has also been
active in government and civic affairs. From 1967 to 1982, he was a member of the Arkansas State Senate.

Underwood is an internationally known expert in the field of jewelry. He has been a success in the business for over fifty years. He is a registered jeweler, a certified gemologist and a certified gemologist appraiser. He has served as president of the American Gem Society (AGS), founding chairman of the AGS Gemological Laboratory, and director of AGS’s International Board. He was inducted into the National Jeweler Hall of Fame in 1991, and Underwood’s was named “Best Single Jewelry Store in the U.S.” in 1991. He has published many articles jewelry and gems in national publications.

Wilson has led the Walton College’s Campaign for the Twenty-First Century committee since it was officially launched in October 2001. During that time, the College has raised almost $12 million for faculty, scholarships and programs. He has been a member of the College’s Dean’s Executive Advisory Board since 1997. He serves on the University of Arkansas’ 2010 Commission. He is in the Arkansas Alumni House Hall of Honor and in the Razorback Foundation Top 200. Since he joined First Arkansas Bank & Trust in 1971, he not only has helped grow the institution, but also he has been an active member of the community, the Little Rock Air Base and the surrounding area.

OUTSTANDING WALTON COLLEGE STUDENT AWARDS

The Walton College’s outstanding undergraduate senior awards include:

**Accounting** – Jennifer Dinger, Baxter Springs, Kan.; Signa Smith, Morrilton

**Economics** – Emily Hildebrand, Los Alamos, N. M.

**Finance** – Tyler Brown, Johnson; Brooke Greenway, Conway; and Matt Stengel, Ratcliff

**Information Systems** – Arnab Banerjee, Kokata, India; Christina Hall, Fort Smith; and Andrew Long, Neosho, Mo.

**International Business** – Surabhi Varshney, Kanpur, India

**Marketing and Transportation** – Jeffery Allred, Rison; Sarah Barnett, Siloam Springs; Kenneth Bates, Bella Vista; Ashley Niblett, Rogers; and Jennifer Sullivan, Springfield, Mo.

**Robert D. Hay Senior Management Scholars** – Ashley Nichols, Fort Smith; and Barrett Petty, West Helena
Ralph Treat Outstanding Cooperative Student Awards – Sarah Barnett, Siloam Springs.

Graduate student awards include:

- **Master of Business Administration** – Miguel Fertes, Mexico City, Mexico; and Vonelle Vanzant, Greenwood
- **Master of Accountancy** – Brooke Cyphers, Little Rock
- **Master of Arts in Economics** – Adam Cole, Kansas City, Mo.
- **Master of Information Systems** – Erhan Beyaz, Mersin, Turkey
- **Master of Transportation and Logistics** – Mariana Castro, Mexico City, Mexico

The Sam M. Walton Student Leadership award will be given to Stephanie Gosnell, Conway.

University of Arkansas and Walton College student awards, which will also be recognized at the University-wide ceremonies on April 11, include: First-ranked Senior Scholars – Jennifer Dinger, Baxter Springs, Kan.; Christina Hall, Fort Smith; Christina Scherrey, Fort Smith; Signa Smith, Morrilton; Patricia Steel, Bentonville; and Surabhi Varshney, Kanpur, India. These students competed all of their course work at the U of A with a GPA of 4.0. The Senior Scholar is Kenneth Bates, Bella Vista. He has been enrolled at the University for at least four semesters and has a GPA of 4.0. Christina Scherrey will receive the Beta Gamma Sigma award and Vesela Groveza, Pavlikeni, Bulgaria, will receive the Presidential Scholar award.

The Walton College’s Outstanding Graduating Senior is Emily Hildebrand, Los Alamos, N.M.

**OUTSTANDING WALTON COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF**

Williams will recognize the outstanding Walton College faculty and staff for the 2002-2003 academic year. He said, “It takes the combined efforts of all of our faculty and our staff to provide these students with the best business education possible. We are grateful for all of their work this year to produce a top graduating class.”

Jeff Murray, associated professor of marketing, will receive the “Outstanding All Around Faculty” award for excelling in teaching, research and service. The “Excellence in Teaching” award will be given to Charles Leflar, associate clinical professor of accounting, for his personal involvement and direction in the classroom. The “Excellence in Research” award will be
presented to Amy Farmer, associate professor of economics, for her research productivity. Carole Shook, instructor in accounting, will receive the “Excellence in Advising” award for her work in helping students. The “Excellence in Service” award will be presented to Anne O’Leary Kelly, University professor of management, for her service to the University of Arkansas and the Walton College. Janet Mosebach will receive the “Outstanding Graduate Assistant” award for excellence in teaching and research.

Williams will recognize ten faculty members for their length of service to the Walton College and the University of Arkansas: 10 years of service - Scot Burton, professor of marketing and Wal-Mart Chair in Marketing; Gary Ferrier, Lewis E. Epley, Jr. Professorship; Julie Gentry, director of the MBA program and associate professor of transportation and logistics; Bill Hardgrave, Ed and Karley Bradberry Chair and Information Technology Research Center Executive Director; Charles Leflar, clinical associate professor in accounting; and Doyle Z. Williams, dean and Sam M. Walton Leadership Chair. 20 years of service - Mary Beth Caldwell, instructor in accounting; and Deborah Thomas, Nolan E. Williams Lectureship in Accounting and Masters of Accounting program director. 30 years of service - David Gay, professor of economics; and Joe Ziegler, chairman of the economics department and director of International Programs.

The Walton College “Major Contribution” award will go to Will Allred, network administrator in the College’s Technology Center. The “Superior Staff Service” award will go to Pat Edwards, administrative assistant in the marketing and transportation department.

The Walton College “Outstanding Team” award will go to the Center for Retailing Excellence for its successful Fall 2002 Retail Symposium. Members include Managing Director, Claudia Mobley, Pam Styles and Paula Justus. The “High Performance Team” award will go to the Accounting Teaching Team for its work in helping students succeed in introductory accounting. Led by Carole Shook, team members include Mary Beth Caldwell, Willie Gist, Connie McKnight, Charles Leflar, Guy McClain, and Mike Whitemore.

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