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THIRD GROUP OF OUTSTANDING BUSINESS LEADERS NAMED TO
ARKANSAS BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – The Sam M. Walton College of Business Administration of the
University of Arkansas announced today its third annual class of distinguished business leaders
elected to the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame:

- the late Col. Thomas H. Barton, principal architect of the Lion Oil Company;
- the late William E. Darby, past president and chairman of the board, National Old Line
  Insurance Company;
- J. B. and Johnelle Hunt, senior chairman of the board and corporate secretary,
  respectively, of J.B. Hunt Transport Services Inc.; and

The distinguished group will be inducted at the third annual Arkansas Business Hall of Fame
dinner on Friday evening, Feb. 9, 2001, at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock.

Walton College Dean Doyle Z. Williams said, “Two years ago we created the Hall of Fame
to honor, preserve and perpetuate the names and accomplishments of outstanding Arkansas
business leaders. These people have made a significant and lasting impact on the well being of
the state, the region and the nation.
“It is our wish that the Hall of Fame contribute to Arkansas’ economic development by showcasing its healthy business climate and the opportunities for achievement that it offers,” he added.

The Arkansas Business Hall of Fame is housed in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for Enterprise Development at the Walton College in Fayetteville.

The selection process was chaired by Reynie Rutledge, chairman of First Security Bancorp in Searcy. A nominating committee of 10 business leaders encouraged people throughout the state and beyond to make nominations. The selection committee of nine business people reviewed the nominations and chose the inductees. Criteria for selection included the significance of the impact made as a business leader, the concern demonstrated for improving the community and the display of ethics in all business dealings.

Rutledge said, “We are very excited about this year’s inductees. They join eight other Arkansas business leaders in a place of prominence. The one thread that runs through all of their careers is that they were innovators and entrepreneurs — ahead of their time in the world of business.”

Col. Thomas H. Barton was a colorful businessman and philanthropist who acquired the insignificant Lion Oil Company in El Dorado in the 1920s and built it into a major oil company. He was instrumental in establishing the Arkansas State Fair, and Barton Coliseum at the state fair grounds was named after him. Monsanto Chemical Company acquired Lion Oil in 1956, and he joined the Monsanto’s board of directors. Col. Barton’s generosity extended to the Barton Library in El Dorado and the Barton wing of the University of Arkansas Medical Center. He died in 1960.

William E. Darby joined National Old Line Insurance, Little Rock, in 1929. In 1945, he became president and, in 1959, chairman of the board. He oversaw the merger of the company with National Equity Life Insurance Company. When he retired in 1972, National Old Line had grown to a billion-dollar business, was active in more than 30 states and was among the top 10 percent of all insurance companies in the U.S. measured by life insurance in force. He died in 1979.

J. B. and Johnelle Hunt founded and built the transportation services and logistics company, J. B. Hunt Transport Services Inc., Lowell, which currently has revenues exceeding $2 billion. The company operates over 10,000 trucks and 40,000 trailers and containers, providing service
to the 48 contiguous U.S., Canada and Mexico. They employ approximately 14,500 people. In 1998, J. B. Hunt Transport Services was ranked in the top ten of America’s most admired trucking companies by *Fortune* magazine. It is the largest publicly-held truckload carrier in the nation in terms of revenue.

John H. Johnson is the founder, publisher, chairman and CEO of the Johnson Publishing Company Inc., Chicago, Ill., the largest Black-owned publishing company in the world and the publisher of *Ebony*. For 55 years, the magazine has been the nation’s number one African-American oriented magazine. Johnson was born in Arkansas City. The company, founded in 1942, also publishes *Jet* magazine and has a book division. It owns Fashion Fair Cosmetics, the number one makeup and skin care company for women of color around the world and Supreme Beauty products, hair care for men and women. The company is involved in television production and produces the Ebony Fashion Fair, the world’s largest traveling fashion show, which has donated over $47 million to charity. The show visits more than 200 cities in the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean.

Last year, the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame honored and inducted Joe T. Ford, Chairman and chief executive officer of ALLTEL Corporation; the late Harvey Jones, founder of Jones Truck Lines; Donald W. Reynolds, founder of the Donrey Media Group; and Don Tyson, senior chairman of the board of Tyson Foods, Inc. The inaugural year inductees included: William T. Dillard of Dillard's Inc.; Charles H. Murphy of Murphy Oil Company; Jackson T. Stephens of Stephens Inc.; and the late Sam M. Walton of Wal-Mart Stores Inc.

Tickets to the third annual Arkansas Business Hall of Fame dinner (black-tie optional) on Friday, Feb. 9, 2001, are $125 per person. The Sam M. Walton College of Business Administration is also seeking Hall of Fame sponsors. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact the Office of External Affairs, Walton College of Business Administration, University of Arkansas at (501) 575-6146, e-mail: abhf@walton.uark.edu, or write the Office of External Relations, 343 BADM, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

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