UA WALTON COLLEGE’S ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT TO HONOR ALUMNI AND STUDENTS IN 30TH ANNUAL EVENT

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. - The Sam M. Walton College of Business Accounting Department at the University of Arkansas will honor its outstanding alumni and students at its 30th annual Accounting Recognition Banquet tonight at the Clarion Inn.

The event also represents the 52nd anniversary of the founding of the Alpha Iota chapter of Beta Alpha Psi, the accounting honorary society, on the University of Arkansas campus.

The Accounting Department will recognize its 2003 outstanding alumni in the areas of Industry and Government – Thomas C. Gean, United States Attorney, Western District of Arkansas; Education – Margaret Little, instructor in accounting and assistant Accounting Department chair, Walton College; and Public Accounting - Neal D. Spencer, CPA, FHFMA, partner-in-charge, Kentucky/Southern Indiana Practice Unit, BKD, LLP.

Karen V. Pincus, S. Robson Walton Chair in Accounting and chair of the Accounting Department, said, “The things taught in college are not the end of learning, but the preparation for a lifetime of learning. Since 1977, the department annually recognizes the accomplishments of some of our outstanding alumni who, after completing their UA education, have continued to grow and learn. These alumni provide excellent role models and exemplify the very essence of what we are trying to teach our students.”

In addition, the department will honor scholarship donors and recipients for the coming year, including scholarships from Beta Alpha Psi and National Association of Black Accountants.
ACCOUNTING ALUMNI AWARDS

Little received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accounting in 1970 and 1986 respectively. She became a CPA in 1988. She has taught in the College’s Department of Accounting since 1986 and will retire in June 2003. She has served as the assistant department chair since 1995 where she has advised students with double majors, transfer students, non-accounting majors preparing for admittance to the masters of accounting program, and students preparing to sit for the CPA exam. Little received the Walton College’s Faculty Excellence in Advising Award for the year 2000. She has served on numerous department, college and university committees during her years at the University. A member of American Institute of CPAs, she received the 2003 Award for Distinguished Achievement in Accounting Education from the Arkansas Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Spencer graduated in 1985 with a BSBA in accounting. He joined BKD in Little Rock upon graduation and became a partner in 1995. He transferred to Bowling Green, Ky., in 1996 to become partner-in-charge of that office. In June 2001, after the merger of Olive, LLP, he became the partner-in-charge of the Kentucky/Southern Indiana region, which included offices in Bowling Green, Evansville and Bloomington. In June 2002, he relocated to Louisville, and, using his entrepreneur spirit, opened a new BKD office, as well as continued as partner-in-charge of the realigned Kentucky/Southern Indiana practice unit that includes offices in Bowling Green, Louisville and Evansville. The opening of a new market (Louisville), without a merger, was a first for BKD in the firm's 80 plus year history. Spencer was recently re-elected to his second term on the Management Committee, the policymaking arm of BKD, consisting of the managing partner and eight partners elected by the BKD partners.

Gean received a BSBA in accounting in 1985 and a JD degree from Vanderbilt University in 1988. He served in the law offices for Alston & Bird in Atlanta from 1988-1991. From 1992 to 1996, he was an attorney for Gean, Gean, and Gean in Fort Smith. He was prosecuting attorney in the Sebastian County District Attorney’s office from 1997 to 2001. He received a presidential appointment to his present position as United States Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas.
OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTING STUDENT AWARDS

Pincus will recognize Jennifer Dinger and Signa Smith as the 2003 outstanding accounting students. Dinger is the daughter of Mary and Bob Dinger of Baxter Springs, Kan. She is in the Walton College Honor’s Program. She has received Department of Accounting Scholarships; served as president of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars; is a Walton Ambassador, Emerging Leaders Mentor, vice-president of Beta Gamma Sigma; and serves on the Dean’s Student Advisory Board. She received the Mario William Fields, Jr. Award. She is also a member of Gamma Beta Phi. Upon graduation, she plans to enter a graduate program.

Smith is the daughter of Sheila and Michael Smith of Morrilton. She is in the Walton College Honors program. She is a member of Beta Gamma Sigma and Beta Alpha Psi for which she served as vice president of membership. She also served as vice president of Programs. Upon graduation, she plans upon attending the MAcc Program at the University of Arkansas next year.

The Outstanding Master of Accountancy student is Brooke Cyphers. She is the daughter of Pam Cyphers and the late Mark Cyphers of Little Rock. She holds a Walton College assistantship recipient. She is a member of Beta Alpha Psi, Pi Beta Phi, and Golden Key Honor Society. Upon graduation, she plans to begin work as a staff accountant in the Audit Department of Deloitte & Touche LLP.

The Master of Accountancy High Achievement Award will go to Tannika Holloway of Morrilton, Ark. Holloway first came to the Walton College as a high school student in the summer of 1997 as a participant in the Accounting Careers Awareness Program. She has won numerous awards and scholarships, including the 2002 Glezen Award. She is a member of Beta Alpha Psi, National Association of Black Accountants, and Golden Key Honor Society. She served as vice president and audit committee chair for Delta Sigma Theta sorority. After graduation, she will work for PricewaterhouseCoopers in Dallas.

Pincus said, “This awards ceremony also provides recent graduates and friends of the department an opportunity to visit with our faculty and students and learn of some of our accomplishments for the past year. As well, we have a chance to express our appreciation to the individuals and firms providing financial support to the department and its students.”

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