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UA WALTON COLLEGE’S BUSINESS FORECAST 2002 LUNCHEON TO FEATURE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ECONOMISTS

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. - The Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas has announced the nationally recognized economists who will participate in its eighth annual Business Forecast luncheon on Friday, February 1, 2002. The event will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Northwest Arkansas Convention Center, Springdale, Arkansas.

William T. Floyd, president, CEO and chief operating officer, Beverly Enterprises Inc., will moderate the Business Forecast 2001 panel of economists, which includes:

- Harvey Rosenblum, senior vice president and director of research of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas;
- Jesper Koll, chief economist of Merrill Lynch & Co. in Tokyo, Japan; and
- Jeffery T. Collins, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in the Walton College at the University of Arkansas.

Walton College Dean Doyle Z. Williams said, "We were delighted that this panel of outstanding economists accepted our invitation to join us. This is an opportunity for businesses in Northwest Arkansas and the region to hear first hand what the experts think about the business climate in the coming year."
Williams added, "This event is an outreach of the Walton College, and we are grateful for the support of our many fine sponsors, who have made this event possible. Last year, we had 640 in attendance, and we expect that many this year, given the uncertainties in the economy that businesses face."

Sponsors for Business Forecast to date include AEP Southwestern Electric Power; Arvest Banks; Bank of America Private Bank; Dan and Jodi Grubb; Greenwood & Associates, Inc.; Merrill Lynch & Company, Inc. and Regions Bank.

Floyd joined the nation’s largest nursing home company in April 2000 and was elected a director of the company in July 2000. Prior to joining Beverly Enterprises, Floyd held senior management positions with industry leaders, including PepsiCo, Pillsbury and Gillette. Most recently, Floyd was chief executive officer of Choice Hotels International, the second-largest hotel franchiser in the world, and senior vice president of Operations of Taco Bell Corporation. Floyd earned B.A. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and its Wharton School of Business. He is a member of the Board of Trustees for Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, Pa.

Rosenblum will cover the national economy. He is senior vice president and director of research of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, serving as economic policy advisor to the Bank's president and as associate economist for the Federal Open Market Committee. A recognized expert on the national economy, he has had articles in *The Journal of Finance*, *New York Times*, *The Southwest Economy* and *The Handbook of Banking Strategy*. He is visiting professor of finance and economics at SMU and the incoming president of the National Association for Business Economics. He received a B.A. in economics from the University of Connecticut in 1965 and a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara, in 1972.

Koll will cover the international economy. He is chief economist of Merrill Lynch & Co. in Tokyo, Japan, where he became a resident in 1986. Previously, he was a managing director of Tiger Management L.L.C. and the chief economist for J.P. Morgan in Tokyo. Koll has been serving on several Japanese government advisory councils, including the MITI committee on "Big Bang 2001 - Japan's financial system reform". This summer, he was selected as a member of the Koizumi administrations' project team of private sector analysts. He is the author of many articles and the Japanese language *Towards a New*
Japanese Golden Age. A native of Germany, he graduated from the Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific in 1980 and holds a Master's degree from The Johns Hopkins University, SAIS.

Collins will cover the local and state forecast. He is director of the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and an assistant professor of economics at the University of Arkansas. He oversees applied economic research as part of the Walton College's outreach mission. Recent studies have been conducted for Mercury Energy Inc., Beverly Enterprises Inc. and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the CBER is presently working with the cities of Harrison and Lowell, and in conjunction with the University of Arkansas Community Design Center in the cities of El Dorado, Highfill, Bentonville, and in Sebastian County. Collins earned a Ph.D. in economics in 1996 from the University of Tennessee.

The Walton College's Center for Business and Economic Research is a public service/outreach organization whose mission is to serve its constituents with research support; basic and applied business and economic analysis; timely, relevant business, economic and related public policy information; and other outreach activities. In addition to supporting research within the College, the CBER supports economic development by providing economic and demographic data and analysis to business, government, and individuals. The Center also serves as a focal point in providing assistance to faculty and students in experimentation with their ideas and techniques in both theoretical and applied research.

For more information on sponsorships or reservations for Business Forecast 2002, contact the Center for Business and Economic Research, Sam M. Walton College of Business, Donald W. Reynolds Center for Enterprise Development, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, (501) 575-4151, fax (501) 575-7687 or e-mail cberinfo@caverm.uark.edu.

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