Jeffrey T. Collins began working with Arkansas Capital Corporation in 1997 on the development and start-up of Diamond State Ventures, a venture capital fund providing capital with equity features. He graduated from the College of Business Administration, University of Pennsylvania, with a degree in 1981 with honors. He joined the management-training program of Gulf Oil Corporation and became a financial and systems analyst. In 1986, he completed the MBA program at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Jeffrey T. Collins, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in the Walton College.

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Mary Ann Greenwood received her BSBA in finance and banking in 1962, an MA in economics in 1972 and PhD in economics and finance in 1979 from the College of Business Administration. In 1982, she established M.A. Greenwood & Associates, a fee-only investment advisory firm. She not only serves on the Walton College Dean’s Executive Advisory Board and the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame Selection Committee, but also on the UA Campaign for the Twenty-First Century Steering Committee, the UA National Development Council and as vice chair of the UA Foundation. For seven years, she has played an instrumental role in attracting nationally known economists to the College’s Business Forecast luncheon.

Jesper Koll said the Arkansas economy is somewhat insulated from the national economy because its employment make-up is more from agriculture and manufacturing than service-oriented jobs. He warned that the state is in desperate need of increasing its educated workforce and producing more bachelor degrees. A 2001 Milken Institute New Economy index ranked the state 50th in preparedness for the new economy. Arkansas was 50th in percent of population with bachelor’s or higher degrees. Collins added, “An educated workforce brings in higher salaries, which in turn increases the tax base.”

William T. Floyd joined the nation’s largest nursing home company in April 2000 and was elected a director of the company in July 2000. Previously Floyd held senior management positions with industry leaders, including PepsiCo, Pillsbury and Gillette. Most recently, Floyd was chief executive officer of Choice Hotels International and senior vice president of operations of Taco Bell Corporation. Floyd earned an MBA degree from The Wharton School.

Norma Lea Beasley is a native of Germany, he holds a master’s degree from The Johns Hopkins University, SAIS. Collins 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 Center for Business and Economic Research 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 PhD in economics in 1996 from the University of Tennessee.

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