Honoring Outstanding Alumni

IN ADDITION TO HONORING DISTINCTIVE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF, the Walton College recognized four outstanding alumni at its eleventh annual awards banquet in April:

Lifetime Achievement Award
George W. Edwards Jr., BSBA ‘62
President and CEO (Retired), Kansas City Southern Railroad
From 1985 to 1991, Edwards was chairman of United Illuminating Company where he was instrumental in resolving the two-decade-long controversy over the Seabrook Nuclear Generating Station in New Hampshire and securing an operating license for the plant. Edwards is currently chairman of the board of the El Paso Electric Company.

Entrepreneur of the Year
Jim Williams Jr., BA ‘67
President, LandPlan Development Corp.
Williams has been involved in some of the most prestigious residential, recreational and commercial developments in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. He has also been active in Dallas business and civic circles. He was an All-Southwest Conference defensive tackle for the University of Arkansas Razorbacks in 1964-65.

Outstanding Service Award
David Malone, BSBA ’65, JD ’69, MBA ’84
Executive Director, Arkansas Teachers Retirement System
As executive director of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, Arkansas’ largest pension fund, Malone oversees funds for 76,000 members and 20,000 retirees. He served part-time on the college’s faculty from 1969 to 1974 and full-time from 1974 to 1976. He led the University of Arkansas Foundation from 1990 to 2002.

Special Recognition Award
David A. West, MBA ’56, PhD ’61
Professor of Finance, University of Missouri College of Business
West has been in the department of finance of University of Missouri College of Business since 1966, serving as chair of the department from 1970 to 1982. His interests include real estate finance, investments and health care finance. West’s son Tim West is an associate professor in the Walton College accounting department.

CLASS NOTES

40s
Lillian Lawhon, BSBS ’42, and her husband, Jay, have been active since their retirement in the World Christian Relief Fund, which was started in 1989. They have provided considerable financial support to the hospital in McRory, Ark. as well as for a new system for drinking water in Haiti. Their son, J. Noal Lawhon II, BSBA ’66 is manager of Lawhon Farm Services, and his son is a graduate of the University of Arkansas. The Lawhons had been married 60 years when Jay passed away last fall.

50s
Morris F. Fair, BSBA ’56, passed away in April in Memphis. He founded United Municipal Investment Corporation in 1966, which merged with Union Planters Bank in 1988 where he served as senior vice president. He served as a Shelby County Commissioner. A native of Tyronza, Ark., Fair was a Razorback football season ticket holder and served as president of the Arkansas Alumni Association in 1997-1998. Fair was a charter member of the Walton College Alumni Society.

Lee Bodenhamer, BSBA ’57, MBA ’61, was honored by the University of Arkansas Alumni Association at its 59th Alumni Banquet Awards on Oct. 10. The awards recognize exceptional professional and extraordinary distinction in a chosen field. Bodenhamer, president, Centennial Consulting Company, is a member of the Walton College Dean’s Executive Advisory Board and the College’s Campaign for the Twenty-First Century Committee. The Bodenhamer Foundation, acting through its trustee Lee Bodenhamer, established the Bodenhamer Fellowship at the University of Arkansas in 1998.
David Banks, BSBA ’60, retired chairman of Beverly Enterprises, Inc., was honored by the University of Arkansas Sigma Chi fraternity with the 2004 Fulbright Award.

John Ed Anthony, BSBA ’61, and his wife Isabel donated $1 million to the University of Arkansas’ botanical garden, Garvan Woodland Gardens, in Hot Springs to fund the construction of the new Anthony Chapel. Anthony has been president of Anthony Timberlands, Inc., and subsidiary companies for 42 years. He serves on the UA Board of Trustees.

William G. Underwood, BSBA ’61, founder of Underwood’s Jewelers, was invited to provide special jewelry gifts for nominees at the 55th Annual Emmy Awards ceremony held in September 2003. Only 12 jewelry firms in the United States were asked by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences to participate.


Larry Wilson, BSBA ’70, MBA ’71, chairman, president and CEO of First Arkansas Bank & Trust in Jacksonville, has been elected vice chairman of the Arkansas Bankers Association.

Thomas May, BSBA ’71, MBA ’72, chairman, president and CEO of Simmons First National Corporation, Pine Bluff, has been elected chairman-elect of the Arkansas Bankers Association. May was the 2004 Walton College graduation speaker.

Kenneth Brent McGruder, BSBA ’84, was profiled in October 2003 by the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette because of his success in the franchise business. McGruder is co-owner of the franchise, K-Mac. At the Taco Bell Convention in 1998, K-Mac received the Glen Bell Award as the chain’s No. 1 franchise. The award is the most prestigious given by the franchise. K-Mac now owns a chain of more than 143 Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken stores in Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas.

Tom Gean, BSBA ’85 was named chief of a new legal compliance office in Wal-Mart’s legal department. He was a presidential appointee to the position of United States Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas before joining Wal-Mart.

Robert Swerdlow, PhD ’76, died in October 2003. He was associate dean, coordinator of Graduate Studies and a professor of marketing in the College of Business at Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas. He has a BBA in marketing and an MBA from Lamar University. He also taught at Stephen F. Austin University, Drake University and the University of Arkansas.

Robert Winborn, BSBA ’82, is the business manager for a research lab with a $9 million annual budget at Rockefeller Center in New York City. He recently released a CD of cabaret music, called “Second Chance.” He performed in a revue show with Broadway and cabaret performers at the Lucille Lortel theater in Greenwich Village, singing back-up for Kristy Cates from the Broadway production of WICKED.

Gary Head, BSBS ’82, former president and CEO of Arvest Bank in Fayetteville, started a new bank to serve Washington and Benton Counties by joining forces with the CEO of Community First Bancshares in Harrison. Head, a native of Eureka Springs, began his career with McIlroy Bank and Trust in 1983. He serves on the UA Campaign for the Twenty-First Century steering committee.

Jeff Gearhart, BSBA ’86, has been named vice president and corporate general counsel of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. He was previously an attorney with Kutak Rock LLP in Little Rock.
David Hayes, BSBA ’87, C.P.A. (inactive), received his PhD from the University of South Florida and joined the faculty. Hayes’ teaching interests include the principles of accounting information systems.

Kevin Wilcox, BSBS ’88, has been promoted to executive vice president and head of investment banking by Stephens Inc. of Little Rock. Wilcox will oversee 58 investment bankers who specialize in mergers and acquisitions and capital-raising for client companies nationwide. He has been employed by Stephens Inc. since 1992.

90s
Scott B. Keller, BSBA ’98, and Daniel F. Lynch, BSBA ’98, both from Michigan State University, have received the 2003 Bernard J. La Londe Best Paper Award from the Council of Logistics Management. Their paper, “A Summary of Analysis of Multi-Item Scales Used in Logistics Research” was termed the “Best of the Best” by Patricia Daugherty, editor of Journal of Business Logistics. Co-authors included Alexander E. Ellinger, University of Alabama; Katrina P. Saviskie, University of Memphis; and Theordore P. Stank, University of Tennessee.

00s
Melissa Lyons, MBA ’00, was featured in CFO.com in an article titled, “Career Changers Consider a B-School Injection.” Lyons, a category development manager with Del Laboratories, described how a Walton College MBA helped her succeed. “The MBA gave me an overall view of how a business should be run and how women function in that world,” she said. “The professors made it easy for me. It was one of the most inspiring experiences I ever had.”

Judith A. Garretson, BSBA ’00, assistant professor in the marketing department of Louisiana State University, was recognized for having recently received the Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award.

Mary Logan, PhD ’00, was awarded tenure this year at the London School of Economics. Logan also won the teaching prize there this year.

Will Helton, BSBA ’02, has been promoted to store manager of Bridgestone/Firestone’s Allen, Texas, store. Helton was previously an intern with the company in college and started working at the Dallas store when he graduated.

Mary Alice Mixon, BSBA ’03, worked on her bachelor’s degree for almost ten years. She worked full-time for the Walton College as administrative assistant to Bill Curington, associate dean of academic affairs. Previously she worked for the associate dean in Fulbright College. Last year she completed her BSBA in general business. In the graduation clearance process she discovered she was only a few classes short of a second degree, so in May 2004 she completed a BSBA in management. She left the Walton College to become the assistant director of the University of Arkansas Center for Mathematics and Science Education.

TRIBUTE

SHERIDAN GARRISON, BSBA ’55, passed away on May 20. He was founder of American Freightways in Harrison, Ark. Garrison built American Freightways into the nation’s fourth largest LTL trucking company. In 2000, the publicly traded company had revenues of $1.4 billion and employed 17,000 people. The company merged with FedEx to become FedEx Freight East. Garrison was inducted into the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame in 2002. In 2002, Garrison made a $1 million gift to Walton College to establish the Garrison Chair in Supply Chain Management and this gift was matched with another $1 million from endowed Walton College funds. Long-time friend Mike Masterson said in an Arkansas Democrat-Gazette eulogy, “Many will miss Sheridan Garrison and what he represented. He came into this world and overcame one setback after another to achieve the American dream. In the process, he created and now bequeaths a legacy that celebrates courage, humor, sacrifice and 1,000 jobs in my hometown. Yep, he definitely made a difference.”

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