

# University of Arkansas

## Arkansas Newswire

### Nationally Recognized Economists to Speak at 2013 Business Forecast Luncheon

#### Panel will cover international, national and state forecasts

Wednesday, January 09, 2013

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – A panel of nationally recognized experts will address the economic outlook for Arkansas, the nation and the world at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Business Forecast luncheon on Friday, Feb. 8. The event, coordinated by the Center for Business and Economic Research at the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas, will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the John Q. Hammons Convention Center in the World Trade Center District in Rogers, Ark.

The panelists are:

- International Forecaster: Adolfo Laurenti, deputy chief economist and managing director of Mesirow Financial
- Domestic Forecaster: Christopher Waller, research director and senior vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
- State and Local Forecaster: Kathy Deck, director, Center for Business and Economic Research

John Roberts III, president and chief executive officer of J.B. Hunt Transport Services Inc., will serve as the moderator.

“Again this year, we have assembled a distinguished panel of experts to share their knowledge and expertise about the trends in the regional, national and global economies for the coming year,” said Walton College Dean Eli Jones. “The chance to listen to these top economists talk about the conditions and outlook facing us over the next 12 months will provide tremendous value to business and civic leaders from Northwest Arkansas, the state and the region.

“We especially want to acknowledge the strong support of our sponsors who make this event possible. Their generosity enables students to hear the program who would not otherwise be able to attend,” Jones added.

“For 19 years, Arkansas business and community leaders have gathered at the Business Forecast luncheon to hear well-regarded economists and forecasters present their insights about the economy in the coming year,” Deck said. “We are so pleased to be able to bring speakers to Northwest Arkansas who can provide our communities with top level data and

analysis and know that so many of our attendees rely on this annual event for making their organizations more effective.”

The sponsors to date for the 2013 Business Forecast luncheon include:

- Walton College Academic Partners – Center for Retailing Excellence, Greenwood Gearhart Inc., Walmart/Sam’s Club
- Walton College Corporate Partners – Frost PLLC, McKee Foods
- Walton College Business Partners – AEP Southwestern Electric Power Co.; Arvest Bank; Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/AIA; city of Fort Smith; Embassy Suites Hotel, Spa and Convention Center; Hogan Taylor LLP; J.B. Hunt Transport Services Inc.; Jodi and Dan Grubb; Northwest Arkansas Naturals; Regions Bank; Smith Hurst PLC and Wright, Lindsey & Jennings LLP.



John Roberts III is the president and chief executive officer of J.B. Hunt Transport Services Inc. and also serves as a director on the board. Before this appointment at the beginning of 2011, Roberts served the company as executive vice president and president of its Dedicated Contract Services Division. After graduating in 1988 from the Walton College with a degree in business administration (marketing), he began his career with J. B. Hunt as a manager trainee. His work at the company included business development for all services and prior to the appointment as president of the Dedicated Contract Services Division, he served as vice president of marketing strategy for the corporation.



Adolfo Laurenti is deputy chief economist and managing director of Mesirow Financial. Laurenti also lectures at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism. Prior to joining Mesirow Financial in 2007, he served as associate economist at LaSalle Bank/ABN AMRO. He was selected as an emerging leader by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and was also

an Earhart Foundation Fellow. He serves on the board of the National Association for Business Economics, the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago, the American Economic Association and the Chicago Association for Business Economics. He was a visiting scholar at

the Center for Industrial Economics in Copenhagen, Denmark, and concentrated in financial economics at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Laurenti is a graduate of Bocconi University Business School in Milan, Italy, and earned his master of arts degree in economics from George Mason University



Christopher Waller is research director and senior vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, where he advises the bank president on monetary policy. Prior to joining the Federal Reserve, Waller held the Gilbert Schaefer Chair of Economics at the University of Notre Dame, the C.M. Gatton Chair of Monetary Economics at the University of Kentucky and was a professor at Indiana University-Bloomington. Waller served as a research fellow of the Center for European Integration Studies at the University of Bonn and as a visiting professor at Washington University, the University of Paris II-Pantheon, the University of Mannheim, the University of Bonn, the University of Canterbury and the National University of Ukraine-Kiev. He has been a visiting scholar at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, the

Federal Reserve Banks of St. Louis, Cleveland and Minneapolis as well as the Central Intelligence Agency and the Economics Education and Research Consortium. Waller holds a doctoral degree in economics from Washington State University, a master of arts degree in economics from Washington State University and a bachelor of science degree in economics from Bemidji State University.



Kathy Deck is director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in the Walton College. Her research interests include local economic development, industry market structure, and education and health care economics. In providing applied economic research as part of the outreach mission of the center, Deck has managed studies for a wide variety of business, non-profit and governmental organizations in the state of Arkansas. She also acts as a media resource for economic analysis of current events and trends. Deck earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the College of William and Mary and a master of science in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Before joining the Center for Business and Economic Research, Deck was the antitrust economist for the Arizona attorney general.

The Walton College Center for Business and Economic Research is a public service/outreach organization whose mission is to serve its constituents with the highest quality 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 center supports economic development by providing economic and demographic data and analysis to business, government and individuals. The center also actively works with the economic development community of the state to build Arkansas' capacity to create high-wage, high-skill employment.

Registration forms for the Business Forecast Luncheon were mailed this week. For more information on sponsorships or reservations for Business Forecast 2012, contact the Center for Business and Economic Research, Sam M. Walton College of Business, Willard J. Walker Hall 538, 1 University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, 479-575-4151, fax 479-575-7687, or e-mail: [cber@walton.uark.edu](mailto:cber@walton.uark.edu) (<mailto:cber@walton.uark.edu>). To register online, visit the [Business Forecast website \(http://cber.uark.edu/383.asp\)](http://cber.uark.edu/383.asp).

Keywords: [Business & Economics \(TopicsList.aspx?keyword=7\)](#) [Outreach \(TopicsList.aspx?keyword=33\)](#) [Research & Innovation \(TopicsList.aspx?keyword=25\)](#)

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