

University of Arkansas

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Nationally Recognized Economists to Be Featured at Walton College 2011 Business Forecast Luncheon

Panel will cover international, national and state forecasts

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FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – The Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas will host a panel of nationally recognized economic forecasters for its 17th annual Business Forecast luncheon on Friday, Feb. 4, 2011. The event, coordinated by the Walton College Center for Business and Economic Research, will be held from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the John Q. Hammons Convention Center in the World Trade Center District in Rogers, Ark.



Ed Drilling and Maria Haley

The panelists include:

- Moderator: Ed Drilling, president, AT&T Arkansas
- International Forecaster: Maria Haley, executive director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Domestic Forecaster: Kevin Stephenson, managing director, Cambridge Associates
- State and Local Forecaster: Kathy Deck, director, Center for Business and Economic Research

“This year brings to the Walton College another extraordinary panel of experts who agree to share their forecasts for the coming year,” said Walton College Dean Dan Worrell. “We believe the opportunity to hear the cutting-edge information and perspectives offered by these accomplished individuals provides tremendous value to business and civic leaders from northwest Arkansas, the region and the state.”

Worrell added, “This event is part of the outreach activities of the Walton College

through the Center for Business and Economic Research. We especially want to acknowledge the strong support of our sponsors who made this event possible. Their generosity will also enable more than 60 students to attend this year's program. Last year, more than 1,000 business and community representatives attended the lunch."

"The Business Forecast luncheon is the best opportunity for the state's leaders to get the most current economic information and timely relevant projections and analysis," said Deck. "Our attendees, some of whom have come to all 16 previous events, know that the forecasters' presentations are not to be missed. Their insights about the current economic recovery and its breadth and duration will help our leaders make good decisions. We are so fortunate to be able to bring economic experts of this caliber to northwest Arkansas."

The sponsors to date for the 2011 Business Forecast luncheon include:

- Walton Academic Partners – Center for Retailing Excellence; Greenwood Gearhart
- Walton Corporate Partners – AEP/SWEPCO; Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/AIA; city of West Memphis
- Walton Business Partners – AT&T; city of Fort Smith; Embassy Suites Northwest Arkansas Hotel, Spa & Convention Center; Hogan Taylor LLP; Simmons First National Corp.; Tyson Foods Inc.; Wright, Lindsey, & Jennings, LLP
- Media Partners – *Celebrate Arkansas Magazine*

Ed Drilling joined Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. in 1979 and served in various positions including customer service and marketing, the external affairs organization and is currently president of the Arkansas Division. He is involved with and serves on several boards, including: Arkansas Children's Hospital Board of Trustees, UAMS Foundation Fund Board, University of Arkansas Board of Advisors, Chairman of Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, former president of Little Rock Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, former president of Fifty for the Future, Sam M. Walton College of Business Dean's Executive Advisory Board, UAMS Arkansas BioVentures Advisory Board, UALR College of Business Administration Advisory Council, Arkansas State University Chancellor's Cabinet, and Simmons First National Corp. board director. He received the Pinnacle Award in 2003 from the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce and served as the 2005 chairman. He holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from the Walton College and is a graduate of Emory's Advanced Management Program. Drilling and his wife, Cinde, are owners of Landscape Architecture Inc.

Maria Haley is the executive director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission. From 2001 to 2007, Haley was senior director for Asia with Kissinger McLarty Associates. She served on the board of the Export Import Bank of the United States from 1994 to 1999, helping manage a \$55 billion portfolio aimed at promoting U.S.

exports, business development and international investments. From January 1993 to October 1994, Haley served as special assistant to the president and associate director of Presidential Personal Office and participated in the development of personnel systems and hiring processes of the Clinton/Gore administration. Haley represented the White House as a point of contact for the selection and approval of Commerce, Transportation and HUD and 12 independent executive agencies. From 1999 to 2001, she returned to the White House as deputy assistant to the president and deputy director of the Presidential Personal Office. In 2001 and 2002, Haley served as an adviser to President Arroyo and the Philippine government and is a past member of the Board of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta where she served as a member of the Executive Committee, the Audit Committee and chair of the Personnel Committee.



Kevin Stephenson is a managing director at Cambridge Associations. He joined the firm in 1997. He works with foundation and colleges on general investment issues including asset allocation strategy, manager selection and investment program evaluation. Stephenson is the author of several published articles on investing and finance and has spoken at numerous industry conferences. In 2008 and 2010, he was nominated for “Consultant of the Year”

by Institutional Investor. For over five years, Stephenson has served as an outsourced chief information officer and currently serves two clients in this capacity. He serves on the board of directors for the World Wide Web Foundation and has previously taught as a professor at Middlebury College, Cornell University and Marymount University. He received a master’s degree and doctoral degree in economics from Cornell University. He also holds the Chartered Financial Analyst designation.



Kathy Deck is director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in the Walton College at the University of Arkansas. 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, Deck has managed studies for a wide variety of business, non-profit, and governmental organizations in the state of Arkansas. Deck 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’s degree 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 will be mailed the first week of January. For more information on sponsorships or reservations for Business Forecast 2011, 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>). To register online, visit the [Business Forecast Web site \(http://cber.uark.edu/383.asp\)](http://cber.uark.edu/383.asp).

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