Hall of Distinction
E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration

Program

Welcome and Introductions
Dean Thomas D. Clark, Jr.
E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration

Music Provided by the LSU School of Music
“LSU Alma Mater”

Invocation

Remarks

Dinner

Induction Ceremonies

Inductees
Sidney N. and Julian R. Carruth
Jake Lee Netterville
E. Robert Theriot III

Junior Member
Kerry Dell Brandon

Closing Remarks
In 1996, Louisiana native Kerry Dell Brandon did what all true entrepreneurs do: he took a big chance. He left a stellar career with IBM to cofound a software company for which neither he nor his partner, Peter Heffring, had a specific product in mind.

At first, they settled on serving clients as software consultants, but knew they wanted to create a software product company. The consulting generated the capital they needed to launch a new venture and hire the talented developers to attract the business of Fortune 500 companies. “We didn’t want to give away 50 percent of our company to venture capitalists, so we funded all of our efforts with sweat equity,” Brandon said.

Through a great deal of hard work, perseverance, and long hours in front of a computer screen, Brandon and his partner managed to build an extremely successful marketing and customer relationship management software company, Ceres Integrated Solutions. Ceres’ client list has grown to include such blue-chip companies as Neiman Marcus, Eddie Bauer, Wal-Mart, Kmart, Blockbuster Video, J. C. Penny, and Federated Department Stores. Ceres had truly found a niche.

Brandon’s main responsibility was technology product development, but he remained deeply involved in all aspects of the company’s strategic growth and corporate positioning. In 1999, the company generated $5 million in sales. “Prudent, conservative financial management . . . allowed our growth to be sustained,” Brandon said. Ceres’ ability to offer features desired by retailers that could not be found anywhere else attracted the attention of the National Cash Register (NCR) Corporation—a world provider of relationship technology solutions. NCR liked what it saw so much that it bought the company. In April 2000, NCR acquired Ceres in cash and stock valued at $90 million. Brandon’s shares are valued at more than $22.5 million. He now serves as chief technology officer of NCR’s new division, Teradata CRM Solutions.

Brandon’s professional success began long before his career with Ceres or IBM. A 1989 cum laude graduate of LSU’s College of Business Administration, he was the first student from the LSU Center for Internal Audit (LSU-CIA) program to receive the William S. Smith Student Highest Achievement Award. The Institute of Internal Auditors, which serves approximately 70,000 members in more than 100 countries, grants the international award to the student with the best score on the Certified Internal Auditor’s (CIA) examination. The CIA is the only internationally accepted designation for internal auditors. Since Brandon made his mark, LSU-CIA students have won the William S. Smith award for 11 of the past 14 years, more often than students from any other university.
Despite the accolades and achievement, Brandon has never forgotten that his success started with his family. The oldest of three children, he remains very close to his parents and siblings. Now as a father of four (with one on the way), Brandon has been happily married to his college sweetheart for 10 years. He proclaims proudly that his wife, Melissa, has been his tower of strength throughout all his endeavors. “She has been very supportive with the long hours and the sacrifices that I had to make to get Ceres started,” Brandon said. “When everyone else thought I was crazy for leaving a great job at IBM, she was very supportive. I could not have done this without her.”

Kerry Dell Brandon—Reflections

I did not apply for, nor even consider attending, any college other than Louisiana State University. Having been around LSU all of my life, I could not imagine life at any other university.

I was born in Baton Rouge and raised just down the road in Gonzales. I couldn’t wait to get to LSU. I was so excited to get here that I enrolled in classes in the summer of 1986, just a few weeks after graduating from East Ascension High. Looking back now, I realize the three years I spent at LSU flew by. But there were many great experiences that shaped my professional career.

Like many new college students with big dreams, I narrowed my career down to being a doctor or lawyer. When I realized I didn’t like blood, I settled on law school. I didn’t need much: a degree in anything, good grades, and a good score on the LSAT. Simple enough, I thought. My pre-law major was accounting, since I was leaning toward corporate law and I liked the sound of Kerry Brandon, CPA. Well, a funny thing happened on the way to law school. I learned about this special program in internal audit currently called the LSU-CIA (LSU Center for Internal Audit) headed by Dr. Glenn Sumners. Dr. Sumners offered two internal audit elective courses, an internship, and the chance to add CIA behind my name. Kerry Brandon, CPA, CIA. Wow!

I took the CIA exam my last semester and would never have guessed that I would be honored by being the first student from LSU to receive the Student Highest Achievement Award. After receiving this award, Dr. Sumners called me in his office and said, “You can go back to law school anytime, but this award will open doors today.” That made a lot of sense. He set up an interview with IBM. I accepted the offer, and was off to Big Blue’s New York offices the day after graduation.

Without a doubt, Dr. Sumners and the internal audit program was the key LSU experience that influenced my business career. The IBM internal audit experience, LSU business education, and a great partner, Peter Heffring, gave me the tools, confidence, and experience that I needed to cofound Ceres and quickly create a great software company. It was extremely rewarding to have a major company like NCR recognize us as the leader in the industry and purchase our company last April.

Saving the best for last, without question, the most valuable experience was meeting my wife, Melissa (Blum). I was a student teacher in a computer lab and Melissa needed to spend lots of time in the lab. When she struggled through her lab assignments she found me more than willing to help. We were married on campus and she and our five children, Kendell (9), Kayley (5), Kolleen (3), Kyle (2), and our baby boy due March 15, have always supported my crazy ideas and put up with the sacrifices I had to make to get Ceres off the ground.

I am greatly honored to be inducted in the E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration’s Hall of Distinction. LSU provided a tremendous foundation in top-level academics, my rich experiences, and great friends. Perhaps the best way I can say thank you is, I hope, to return one day to join the LSU faculty and help guide and influence future leaders as Dr. Sumners and others did for me.
Sidney N. Carruth is a native of Covington, Louisiana, and a graduate of Lyon High School. Julian R. Carruth was born in Kentwood and at the age of two moved with his family to Ponchatoula where he grew up and graduated from Ponchatoula High School. Sidney and Julian met at a Covington High dance and had only one date before Sidney’s senior year at LSU (1939), where she was president of Alpha Delta Pi sorority as well as a member of Delta Gamma Delta and the Women’s Panhellenic Council. Upon graduation Sidney joined the LSU Auditor’s Office, where she was employed for eight years.

In the meantime, Julian received his B.S. in business education from LSU (1940). Having successfully completed four years of training in the ROTC, he was eligible to be commissioned as second lieutenant, field artillery, Officer’s Reserve Corps, but at age 20 was not old enough to be commissioned. A few months later (September 20, 1940) he turned 21 and received his commission shortly thereafter. On July 1, 1941, the army called him to active duty where he served almost five years, including duty overseas in Hawaii, New Guinea, Netherlands East Indies, Philippine (Louzon) Islands, and Japan. He was honorably discharged with the rank of major, field artillery.

After the war, Julian returned to the LSU campus in February 1946 and looked up Sidney who was working in the Auditor’s Office. On June 8, 1947, they were married at the First Methodist Church in Baton Rouge and began their life together in Shreveport where Julian was employed with a mortgage-banking firm. He later was employed with other mortgage-banking firms in Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

After working in the mortgage business for 12 years (1946–58), Julian had the desire to own and operate his own mortgage-banking firm. At that time he was president and chief executive officer of Washington Mortgage Company, an affiliate of Shelby Construction Company of New Orleans.

Julian arranged the sale of Washington’s operations in the cities of Columbus, Dayton, and Youngstown, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Louisville, Kentucky. He then purchased Washington’s Louisiana assets to start Carruth Mortgage Corporation (CMC) in New Orleans on May 30, 1958. Sidney served as secretary, treasurer, accountant, and servicing manager for the corporation in addition to her responsibilities to their family of three children, then ages three, seven, and nine. A few years into the operation of CMC, Sidney and Julian started the Republic Insurance Agency.

Sidney N. Carruth—Reflections

Louisiana State University was very good to me. Coming from a small town, I had very little exposure to social organizations or travel. My graduating class from high school was rather small, and what I learned from LSU was much more than the academics. Most importantly, I had to learn to get along with people and cope with being around lots of strangers. I lived in Smith Hall for two years and in Highland Hall for the other two years and loved every minute of it. As president of my sorority I had the opportunity to travel to Canada for their national convention—all of this from someone who had barely been out of Louisiana.

It was such a wonderful four years that I applied for a job on the campus. My first job was with the Auditor’s Office at LSU. I, who had dropped second year accounting because the professor scared me to death, found that a few weeks after I started that same professor came in as my boss. That was Dr. Daniel Borth, and over the years that he was in that position, we became good friends. He patiently taught me accounting as I muddled along. What I learned from Dr. Borth became the basis for the accounting I did for Carruth Mortgage Corporation, as well as for various volunteer activities later.

Another professor who had a profound influence in my life was Dr. Howard Norton, who taught both Julian and me business correspondence. We remember him often in the course of our business and social correspondence and still use some of the things he taught.

My hobbies include quilting and participation in the New Orleans Garden Society, Orleans Club, and Le Petit Salon. However, most of my volunteer time is spent as a volunteer for City Park. I served on the Park’s Board of Commissioners for the eight years permitted, and held various offices in the Friends of City Park, including president. I am presently treasurer of the New Orleans Botanical Garden Foundation.

Julian R. Carruth—Reflections

My first visit to the Louisiana State University campus was in the fall of 1935 (my senior year at Ponchatoula High School) when I sustained an injury to my knee playing football. Will Ed “Billy” Butler, a former LSU running back, was my coach, so he took me to the LSU Athletic Department trainer, “Mike” Chambers, who put a “hot patch” on my knee.

I returned to LSU the next September to begin my freshman year. As with all freshmen my head was shaved and I was assigned a room in the Pentagon Barracks with other members of Company C of the ROTC. At that time, all male students were required to take two years of ROTC training, and those who qualified and wished to could opt for advanced military training. Upon graduation those students the age of 21 received a commission as second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve.

This was the first year for the organization of the field artillery branch of the ROTC—the infantry and engineer branches were already established. Freshmen who requested assignment to the artillery were put in one platoon in each of the Infantry companies and were housed in the barracks with their respective companies. The following year (1937–38) the Field Artillery Regiment was formed and the members of its units (staff and batteries) were housed in North Stadium’s second, third, fourth, and fifth floors with stairs as the only means of access.

The accommodations in North Stadium were not as nice as the Pentagon Barracks. Except for seniors, there were four students in a room in which the floor, walls, and ceiling were plain concrete, but that was not a matter of concern to us. There was a large bathroom to serve several rooms. This was my sophomore year and my roommates were from New Orleans, Evansville, Indiana, and Brooklyn, New York. This geographic diversity in the student body contributed greatly to our development into adulthood—particularly to a 17-year-old Ponchatoula boy who had only been out of Louisiana twice—to east Texas and southern Mississippi.

When it became time (the beginning of my sophomore year) to select a college, I choose agriculture to pursue my degree in forestry. It took just a week of exposure to dendrology (the scientific study of trees), surveying, and the forthcoming courses in advanced mathematics and solid mensuration to cause me to go see Dean James B. Trant to request admittance to the College of Commerce. Fortunately for me, the dean approved my transfer.

Some of the courses I had in accounting, economics, money and banking, statistics, business law, business correspondence, and corporate finance together with four years of ROTC training instilled knowledge, self-confidence, and the ability to get along with others in a timid, not-too-bright, small-town boy, giving me the ability to go out into the world and make it.
Jake Lee Netterville was managing director of Postlethwaite & Netterville (P&N) for 22 years and now serves as chairman of the board, a position he has held for the last two years. Under his leadership, the firm has grown to one of the top 80 firms in the country and is the largest Louisiana-based public accounting firm with offices located in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Donaldsonville, and St. Francisville.

A highly respected authority in his field, Netterville has testified before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Securities on behalf of the accounting profession, and has been quoted in The Wall Street Journal as well as The New York Times. A 1960 accounting graduate of the College of Business Administration, Netterville credits part of his success to LSU and the quality of education it provided. “I recall many of my professors taking a personal interest in my career and giving me personal counsel on not just business issues, but issues concerning my life . . . for this I am most grateful,” Netterville said.

Throughout his career Netterville has been a strong supporter of LSU and the College of Business Administration. Netterville’s firm provides an annual scholarship for accounting students at LSU and also funded the Lonnie Beary Scholarship—an endowed scholarship for accounting students established in memory of Lonnie Beary, a P&N partner. Committed to helping develop the future leaders of LSU, Netterville has served as a guest speaker in business classes and is a member of the LSU Accounting Advisory Board as well as the E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration Partnership for Excellence Board. In honor of his tireless efforts, he was presented with a special award from the LSU Department of Accounting for outstanding service to the department.

An extremely active member of the Baton Rouge community, Netterville has held the position of president of the City Club of Baton Rouge and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. He was also chairman of the Council for a Better Louisiana, the Greater Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, and the East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority. Netterville currently serves as a member of the Pennington Medical Foundation Board, the Citizens Task Force on Education Improvements, the Rotary Club of Baton Rouge, and as treasurer for Bonne Fête. He has also been a member of the First United Methodist Church for more than 50 years.

Among his business and professional affiliations, Netterville is a member of the board of Source Capital Corporation, Catalyst Vidalia Corporation, Wall Street Deli, Inc., and Amedisys, Inc. He also serves on the advisory boards for the Tiger Athletic Foundation and Acadian Life Insurance, Inc.

Netterville is a man of true dedication, and his efforts have not gone unrecognized. He is the recipient of numerous accolades including the National Beta Alpha Psi Accountant of the Year Award, the Volunteer Activist Award, the Louisiana CPA Distinguished Service Award, and the AICPA Gold Medal for Distinguished Service.

Netterville is the proud father of four children—Craig, Adele, Leigh Anne, and Burke—and four grandchildren. He and his wife, Mary Nell, have been married for 39 years.
I believe my love for Louisiana State University probably began with a roar from Mike the Tiger when I was five years old. At first, it was just sports. My first football game was Y. A. Tittle vs. Shorty McWilliams of Mississippi State, then Bob Pettit and Joe Dean with the Tigers basketball team, and then a national championship boxing team led by PeeWee Moss and Tadd Thrash.

As an eighth grader playing American Legion Baseball, I got to play for the city championship in Alex Box Stadium. It was as big as Yankee Stadium to me at the time. Of all the football games I have seen in Tiger Stadium, at only one was I actually on the field, as I was a member of the Homecoming Court. It was Halloween night, 1959 . . . the night of Billy Cannon’s run for the Heisman.

There was never any doubt where I would go to college. My LSU education was financed by my working first at Louisiana National Bank, and then at the LSU Purchasing Department. My room and board were paid by my service as fraternity treasurer, and by serving as a member of the ROTC my junior and senior years. I actually made my best grades the first semester. Perhaps I enjoyed college life too much after that year.

Fraternity life was great. Sports, parties, and the camaraderie of living in the fraternity house all added greatly to my college experience. The business school was headed by my friend, then dean, Bill Ross, and included wonderful teachers such as Clarence Dunn, Bill Swyers, Jim Owen, George Fair, John Davidson, and Bernie Sliger. These gentlemen were interested in our learning, not simply in going through the motions. Often their advice outside the classroom was more beneficial than inside. I was especially fortunate to know President Troy Middleton, who was a fraternity brother and whom I worked with as a member of the Student Government Association when I served as president of the College of Business Administration.

I came to LSU to get a good education, but I got so much more—lifetime friends, the experience of college life, skills to cope on a tight budget, but most importantly, a wife of 39 years, Mary Nell. Both of our children graduated from University High School and my son graduated from LSU. My daughter left Louisiana to pursue her education at Washington and Lee University. She now lives in Baton Rouge and her daughter is in first grade at University High—carrying on a tradition there.

When I graduated from LSU, I entered the army as a second lieutenant infantry officer. It was there I learned that the preparation, knowledge, and leadership skills that I had received at LSU were as good as any received at the best-known universities of higher learning. As I became active in the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA), our national organization of 330,000 members, I also discovered that LSU graduates could hold their own among the graduates from the best business schools in the country. It was gratifying to know when I received the AICPA Gold Medal for lifetime service that of the last nine award winners over the past seven years, three were LSU accounting graduates.

Since my entire business career has been spent in Baton Rouge, I have observed LSU from another perspective as well. Across the country, the biggest problem CPA firms face is attracting personnel. We in Baton Rouge have never had that problem, because LSU turns out a superior product and, in many cases, graduates would rather stay here and work for a large regional firm than to go with one of the “big five” where much travel is required. I am proud to say that our firm has 57 LSU graduates, and that, in large measure, is one reason for our success and growth.

LSU has been responsible for some very interesting work for our firm. We have for years been the auditors of both the LSU Alumni Association and the LSU Foundation. Recently our firm performed cost audits for the Tiger Athletic Foundation in its building of the addition to the stadium and the Tiger Suites.

It is especially pleasing to receive this award from the E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration, since E. J. himself has been a client of mine since 1967. His generous contributions have meant a great deal to the betterment of this fine college. It has also been rewarding to work with our outstanding dean, Tom Clark. I had the pleasure of visiting with Tom before his hiring, and shared my views with the chancellor as to how highly qualified he was for the position. The evidence is in!

Through Tom Clark’s effort, I have seen the business school reach out to the Baton Rouge community and partner with many of its endeavors. Tom shares that vision with our outstanding leaders President Bill Jenkins and Chancellor Mark Emmert, who have committed themselves to the Baton Rouge community in terms of economic development, community involvement, and visibility in so many circles.

To be included in the E. J. Ourso College of Business Administration Hall of Distinction along with those who have preceded me is indeed an honor that I will always cherish. It is very humbling to see my name included among outstanding graduates who have been honored in the past, and I accept this honor with great gratitude.
An only child, E. Robert Theriot III was raised in a strong family environment in the heart of Cajun country. He attended Lafayette High School, playing football and basketball and running track while maintaining his status as an honor student. During summers he played American Legion baseball. Upon graduation in May 1959, Theriot enrolled in LSU on a combined baseball and academic scholarship. A member of the 1961 SEC championship team, he lettered three times in baseball. Theriot was also chosen in his senior year (1963) as the Outstanding Student in the College of Business Administration and served as the corps commander of the combined Army-Air Force ROTC units. As a distinguished military graduate, he received a regular commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.

After going through undergraduate pilot training at Laredo Air Force Base in Texas, Theriot received his wings in December 1964. Ranked second in his class, he went directly to pilot instructor training and became an instructor pilot at Craig Air Force Base, Alabama. For two years he trained student pilots and was selected as Instructor of the Year by his squadron in his second year. Theriot then joined the Standardized/Evaluation Board as a flight examiner and served in this capacity until December 1968. While in the U.S. Air Force he accumulated more than 1,900 hours of jet flying time with his final rank being captain.

Theriot then joined Merrill Lynch in Baton Rouge, beginning what has been a distinguished career in the financial services industry spanning more than 32 years. A financial consultant for seven years, he was accepted in 1976 into management training and started his management career as the sales manager of the New Orleans office. In March 1979, Theriot became manager of the Dallas-Campbell Center office. He went on to manage an office in Columbia, South Carolina, where he also helped organize and served on the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Security Dealers Association. Theriot presently oversees Merrill Lynch’s Houston office—its third largest domestic office generating more than $1.3 billion in revenue with assets in excess of $22 billion. In October 2001 he will celebrate his 25th year in management as the third most senior office manager in the firm.

While at Merrill Lynch, Theriot has been active in developing professional training programs, assisting in the design of the firm’s first formal training program covering the first two years of a new financial consultant’s career. He currently serves as an assessor at the Merrill Lynch Management Selection Center and helps assess financial consultants for High Net Worth accreditation. Theriot is also active in the firm’s Wealth Management Training Program and in training new office managers. He is on task forces responsible for defining the firm’s asset-based pricing strategy and for revising the Financial Consultant Compensation
Program. Additionally, he is on the Board of Directors of Merrill Lynch Trust Company of Texas and in September 2000 was appointed a managing director of Merrill Lynch Private Client Group.

Although he has moved numerous times, Theriot has played an active role in several civic and charitable organizations. While in Baton Rouge and Dallas he worked with the Boy Scouts and was a member of the Rotary Club in Baton Rouge and Columbia. Theriot currently serves on the Board of Governors of the Houston Center Club, the Advisory Board of the American Heart Association, and the underwriting committee of the Ronald McDonald House Ball. He is cochair of the American Heart Association Bear Bryant Coach of the Year Award and is also a member of the Downtown Houston Association, the Tiger Athletic Foundation, and the LSU Foundation.

Theriot and his wife, Janet, have been married for nine years. He has two children—Ashley, living in Dallas, and Bradley, living in Columbia, South Carolina.

E. Robert Theriot III—Reflections

My first memories of Louisiana State University are as a child excitedly listening to radio broadcasts of the Tigers playing football and basketball. It was a thrill for me when my parents took me to Baton Rouge to visit friends and attend football games. Tiger Stadium has always been a great venue for sports, and I vividly remember attending my first game. In 1952 we sat in the field level boxes and saw LSU lose to Tennessee 22–3. The beauty of the campus with its magnificent oaks and Spanish architecture awed me. When I graduated from high school, it never occurred to me to consider other colleges. LSU was my first and only choice.

It has only been in my later years that I have fully appreciated my time at LSU. Unquestionably they were the formative years of my life, both academically and socially. Early in my freshman year, I developed an interest in business and the financial markets. When I separated from the U.S. Air Force, I joined Merrill Lynch to pursue my dream of a career in the financial services industry.

I will always be indebted to the many outstanding professors who provided me with the educational background that I still use daily in my profession. More importantly, and greatly appreciated, is the dedication and support they showed me through the rough times of growing up in an environment away from the comfort of my home and parents. They are truly the unsung heroes of my college life.

Playing baseball at LSU provided the highlight of my college career. I will always remember being a member of the 1961 SEC championship team. It was predominately a sophomore team that was too naive to believe that they couldn’t win. We played hard, made a few mistakes, and never gave up. I learned that desire and a strong will often compensate for lack of outstanding talent. Attitude truly is everything.

Being in a social fraternity and taking advantage of the many campus activities rounded out my education and created lifelong relationships. Most of my closest friends today are the result of acquaintances made at LSU.

As LSU was a land-grant college that required two years of ROTC, I joined the air force over the army. My reasoning was that in the air force I wouldn’t have to march with a rifle. Little did I realize that through ROTC I would have one of my great life experiences. After finishing my compulsory two years, I entered the Air Force Advanced ROTC Program so that I could attend pilot training after graduation. Flying high performance air force jets for five years was exciting, confidence building, and very satisfying.

I am still thrilled whenever I return to visit the campus. It brings back fond memories of one of the happiest times in my life. To receive this honor from the University that I love is very humbling, I am extremely grateful to LSU for my education and providing the foundation for my adult life.