2014 Hall of Distinction Banquet

PROGRAM

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
Richard D. White Jr.
Dean, LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business

REMARKS BY
Stuart Bell
Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost, LSU

INDUCTION OF 2014 HALL OF DISTINCTION CLASS

HONOREES
Gregory J. Hamer Sr.
Rose J. Hudson
John R. Landon

CLOSING REMARKS
LSU’s E. J. Ourso College of Business has long been at the forefront of producing leaders who make significant contributions to the areas of business, academia, government, and the community at-large. Whether alumni or friends, individuals who have a strong association with the college and have distinguished themselves through their professional and civic achievements are considered annually for the Hall of Distinction.

Well before the formal establishment of the E. J. Ourso College in 1928, students attending the university with aspirations in various endeavors were taught the basic principles of entrepreneurship necessary to be successful. Such successes established the foundation later alumni would utilize to achieve their accomplishments. Continuously the college has recognized these ambassadors of LSU. Since 1996, the E. J. Ourso College has honored such individuals via the Hall of Distinction.

Nominees for the Hall of Distinction may be submitted by anyone and are solicited on behalf of the E. J. Ourso College by the Dean’s Advisory Council, the College Executive Committee, and past inductees.
Honorees

Gregory J. Hamer Sr.

Rose J. Hudson

John R. Landon
Greg Hamer is the chief executive officer of B&G Food Enterprises. Created in 1982 by Hamer and his wife, Brenda, B&G Food Enterprises operates more than 80 YUM! Brands’ Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, and Long John Silver’s fast food restaurants and employs more than 2,000 workers in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. B&G Food Enterprises is Louisiana’s largest Taco Bell franchisee and also operates Taco Bell multi-branded restaurants with Pizza Hut, KFC, and Long John Silver’s.

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Mr. Hamer grew up in south Louisiana and earned his bachelor’s in general business administration from LSU in 1968. That same year, he began his professional career in the family business—oilfield contractor Hamer’s Hammers. Not long after, Mr. Hamer successfully ran for a seat on the St. Mary Parish Police Jury and was subsequently reelected, proving that he could indeed balance his family life with a thriving professional and civic career. He even served as Morgan City Mayor Pro-Temp in 1982. In 1976, Mr. Hamer established Hamer Industries, serving as chief operating officer, and soon followed with the creation of Thunder Bay offshore in 1978, and Valco Electric Contractors in 1985, in addition to B&G Food Enterprises.

Throughout his career, Mr. Hamer’s contemporaries have elected or appointed him to numerous commissions. He is a trustee of the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation, an emeritus member of the National Restaurant Association Board of Directors—the largest food service trade association in the world, and has been a member of the Louisiana Restaurant Association (LRA) Board of Directors since 1994. In 2000, Mr. Hamer served as LRA President and, in 2006, the LRA inducted him into its hall of fame. His influence continues to be recognized. In 2011, Entrepreneur magazine featured Mr. Hamer in its April issue. Additionally, that year, Louisiana Living magazine named him a Louisiana Humanitarian of the Year and the Community Foundation of Acadiana’s St. Mary unit named him Philanthropist of the Year.

A passionate community leader, Mr. Hamer has and continues to volunteer his time to numerous civic organizations. He is a member of the Dean’s Advisory Council for the LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business and a member of both the LSU Tiger Athletic Foundation and the LSU Alumni Association. He is the past president of the Sacred Heart Elementary School Board, the Morgan City High School Boosters, and past president and founder of the Atchafalaya Pop Warner Football League. Mr. Hamer is also a past vice president of the Atchafalaya Chamber of Commerce and is a current member of Knights of Columbus 4 Degree and Legatus International.

Mr. Hamer and his wife, Brenda, have been married for 47 years and have three children and nine grandchildren. The two oldest of those grandchildren are LSU students.
Reflections

On May 26, 1968, the day after my graduation from LSU, my wife and I, along with our three-month old daughter, loaded up and headed back to our hometown of Morgan City. Excited about being out of college, we never gave a thought to ever returning other than to watch the Tigers play. We were incapable of imagining all the trips we would make back to campus. How could we anticipate the three trips to watch our two daughters and son receive their degrees? Nor could we imagine what it would be like to see our two oldest grandchildren as students and the boy being a part of the LSU football team.

A large part of my life has been influenced by my experiences at LSU. My service on the Men’s Judicial Council and on LSU Union Committees was, I suppose, my first public service and was the foundation of my years in elected and appointed offices and my many community activities.

I came in contact with some great teachers, my most memorable being John Davidson, who in addition to being a teacher to both my youngest daughter and I, also helped out a struggling student by having my pregnant wife assist him on occasion when financial help was certainly appreciated. Perhaps that helped encouraged my involvement in volunteer work.

After returning home, I worked in oilfield services for two decades. First in my father’s business and later a variety of businesses I founded. Initially everything was oilfield related; a fabrication company, then expansion into operating offshore boats, and then into a labor contracting business. My first attempt at diversification out of the oilfield was a commercial electrical contracting company, followed by a business manufacturing sewage plant equipment. With the collapse of the oilfield in the ‘80s, I was looking around for some additional diversity and decided to build a Taco Bell while I waited for the oilfield to pick back up. Had I had any idea it would become my life’s work, I would have deliberated longer before picking the first name that came to my mind.

B&G Food Enterprises (Brenda & Greg) and its affiliates operate primarily Taco Bell restaurants along with some KFC, Pizza Hut, and Long John Silver’s combination units in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. We are a family-owned company with all members having been involved in some stage of development, and my son, two sons-in-law, and myself are still involved in its management.

Across the way my fellow citizens honored me by electing me to three terms in parish and city government, and I have been fortunate to serve on many local and state government boards, commissions, and various civic organizations where I had an opportunity to give back to my community. I have been privileged to serve as president of the Louisiana Restaurant Association and inducted into its hall of fame. I was honored to represent Louisiana on the board of the National Restaurant Association, where I am now an emeritus member, and I currently serve as a trustee of the NRA Education Foundation. I also served as the U.S. representative to the Canadian Restaurant & Food Association. In this way, I have had an opportunity to give back to the industry that has provided so much to my family.

My years at LSU have provided me with treasured memories. I met lifelong friends in our fraternity; my wife and I started our lives together, and somehow along the way they must have hammered some knowledge into my thick head.

I am thrilled to be selected for induction into the Hall of Distinction of the E. J. Ourso College of Business; it is quite an honor for a taco maker from down the Atchafalaya. I feel deeply humbled by this honor and hope that in some small way I can contribute to the continued success of LSU.
Rose Hudson is the president and chief executive office of the Louisiana Lottery Corporation, which was established in 1991 after the Louisiana legislature proposed a government-run lottery as a way to generate revenue without increasing taxes. The Louisiana Lottery ranks first among U.S. lotteries in percentage of revenue transferred to its government. In 2013, transfers to Louisiana K-12 education surpassed $156 million, exceeding the state’s expectations by more than $23 million and bringing cumulative transfers to more than $2.7 billion.

A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Ms. Hudson earned her bachelor’s in urban studies and public policy from Dillard University in 1986, and her master’s in public administration from LSU in 1989. She joined the Louisiana Lottery Corporation during its formation, serving as a legislative fiscal analyst, and soon achieved a promotion to budget director. Promotions to Executive Resources Director and later Executive Resources Director/Online Game Coordinator quickly followed. Ms. Hudson left the corporation to work as undersecretary at the Louisiana Department of Social Services and as assistant superintendent of the Department of Education, but returned as senior vice president in 2000. In 2006, then Governor of Louisiana Kathleen Babineaux Blanco confirmed her as the fourth president of the Louisiana Lottery Corporation after she had served a short stint as interim president.

Throughout her career, various organizations have recognized Ms. Hudson for her achievements and service. In 2007, Sales and Marketing Executives International’s Baton Rouge Chapter named her Marketer of the Year, the Greater Baton Rouge Business Report named her one of its Influential Women in Business, and the LSU Public Administration Institute honored her as its MPA Alumna of the Year. The National Diversity Council named her one of the Most Powerful and Influential Women in Louisiana in 2011, and, that same year, the Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation named her a Volunteer Activist. Additionally, the Louisiana Women’s Summit honored her with a Pathfinder Award. In 2012, the Nicholls State University Louisiana Center for Women and Government inducted her into its hall of fame.

A supporter of numerous community organizations, Ms. Hudson serves on the boards of Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, Foundation for Excellence in Louisiana Public Broadcasting, and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. She previously served on the boards of the Association of Junior League International, the Louisiana United Negro College Fund, and the Louisiana Art & Science Museum. Additionally, she serves as secretary of the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries (NASPL) and is the vice president of the Multi-State Lottery Association.

Ms. Hudson is the proud mother of two children—Theresa, a freshman at Xavier University, and Hampton, a high school sophomore.
When I reflect on my time at LSU, I marvel at the lessons learned—particularly those still a part of my professional life. I started at the graduate school as a very unsure but determined student. I received my undergraduate degree from a small university and I really only knew LSU as THAT big school across town from my home. Sure, my dad had received an advanced degree from LSU, but that did not make it any easier to push myself to consider applying to LSU.

The decision to pursue my Master of Public Administration was purposeful, a very intentional move. The decision to do so at LSU was no less so. The fact that the program was housed in the college of business was THE draw. I saw potential in having exposure to all that the environment could offer. The coursework was rigorous but exciting and the professors were engaging. I knew I had made the right choice and the rewards would be great, IF I could stick it out. Not only did I stay the course, but in the process I was exposed to the foreshadowing of a career replete with fulfilling experiences, challenges, but surefooted preparation. The budget and financial dissection as guided by Dr. Bart Hildreth was preparation like no other!

The one GIFT that I received as a part of my LSU education was the mentorship and guidance of Dr. James Richardson. He was an ever-present figure, teaching and preparing us for the world of public service. The real value in THAT gift is that I continue to receive that same guidance and mentorship from Dr. Richardson today. The opportunity to call on my graduate school professor for advice, assistance, or to commiserate was surely NOT in the course catalog, but it has been a true value to me over the years.

I am a blessed and fortunate individual because I am doing what I planned to do. I always saw public service as my place in this world. I was able to go directly into very interesting and challenging positions early in my career and I have no doubt that my LSU preparation was key in my being considered and selected for those roles. My current position, while challenging, often seems to require me to call on ALL that I learned. What a comfort to have an LSU toolkit to dig into!

It is a sincere honor to be inducted into the LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business Hall of Distinction. I pledge to continue to be deserving of this honor and to support the first class efforts of the college of business and the Public Administration Institute.
John R. Landon

John Landon is the founder and chief executive officer of Landon Development and Landon Homes, which develop residential communities and build single-family homes in the Dallas area. Since its inception in 2006, Landon Homes has become one of the largest homebuilders in the Dallas area, and last year the “Dallas 100 Awards” recognized it as the 12th fastest growing company in the DFW Metroplex. LSU named Landon Homes to the 2012 LSU 100 Fastest Growing Tiger Businesses’ Top 10.

A native of Peoria, Illinois, Mr. Landon earned his bachelor’s in accounting from LSU in 1980. That same year, he began his career as a public accountant with Ernst and Whinney in Dallas. After entering the real estate industry focused on sales and land development for the Trammell Crow Company, Mr. Landon founded Legacy Homes in 1987. Ten years later, Legacy Homes merged with Monterey Homes, and Landon took the company public to create Meritage Homes (NYSE-MTH), which he grew to become the 13th largest homebuilder in the U.S.

Mr. Landon served as co-chairman and CEO of Meritage until 2006. Under his leadership, Meritage Homes built more than 40,000 homes and achieved $3 billion in annual revenue at its peak in 2005. Meritage Homes was named to the Fortune 1000 and was ranked as one of Fortune’s fastest growing companies in America. Additionally, Meritage Homes was named to the Forbes Platinum 400 list of America’s best large companies for the third consecutive year in 2005, and ranked as the number one performing stock in America for five-year total return in 2004.

Within his industry, Mr. Landon has served as a member of the NAHB High Production Builders Council and has been a featured speaker for numerous homebuilding panels, including the Big Builder Conference in 2009. He spoke as part of the LSU Flores MBA Distinguished Speaker Series in 2006.

Active in his community, Mr. Landon is a member of the Dallas Catholic Foundation Board of Trustees and the Bishop’s Leadership Council for the Dallas Diocese Our Faith, Our Future capital campaign. He previously served as a board member for the Ursuline Academy Facing the Future building campaign and received the Ursuline President’s Award in 2011. Additionally, during the past 20 years he has been a mentor to many school children in his role as coach for various soccer, basketball, and football teams.

Mr. Landon and his wife, Ellie, have been married for 30 years and have three daughters and a son.
As I reflect upon my years at LSU, I understand now the power of the Tiger traditions, the unmatched school spirit, and loyalty that existed so naturally there. It was a swim team opportunity that led me to LSU, but it was the enthusiasm, friendships, and values that kept me there. When not attending class, my days at LSU primarily revolved around the social life, being in the Kappa Sigma fraternity, and the many friends that I made during my four wonderful years at LSU. I still stay in touch with many of the guys that I met. We are lifelong friends, and our friendships were made through all of the many “interesting” things that we did during those days.

Some of my fondest memories definitely revolved around the football games—the walk over to Tiger Stadium, the almost-frenzy of game time, and of course the late night after-game parties.

We also discovered the LSU basketball games. They were very exciting, and a large group of us would go to all the games. LSU was quite good back then; we won the SEC! Beating Kentucky was a big deal as it still is today and we beat them.

The road trips to New Orleans, Ft. Walton Beach, Destin, and Bagos to Bama are also some of the highlights of my LSU years. And then the big spring parties—Bahama Mama where we would boil more than 1,000 pounds of crawfish all day, resulting in a large party that night, and South Sea Island, where we even had Hank Williams Jr. play one year.

In the interest of fair and balanced representation, however, I must say it wasn’t all about the social life. I was an accounting major so I spent a lot of time at CEBA. The classes were very interesting and made me want to continue on and learn as much as I could about accounting after I left LSU. Although I started out in construction management, I received some great advice from my first accounting professor who suggested that I major in accounting if I planned on being in the business side of real estate. In hindsight, that decision was crucial to my career. My accounting background has been very important as I have built my own businesses over the years, and I have to give much of the credit to the professors who taught us the basics to start that career.

LSU, for me, was an environment of “work hard, play hard” – and that’s a concept that I have carried through to my business career. I am a believer in rewards for hard work and success achieved, and some of my recent best times and memories come from the employee achievement trips that have always been a part of my business model.

I also met my lovely wife at LSU. We met in a finance class and had our first date at an LSU football game my senior year. We will be married 30 years this June and have been blessed with four great children—three daughters and a son. As expected, our son is a big LSU football fan and could be the one to continue a Tiger tradition in the Landon family.

As I look back upon the years spent at LSU, they were, if not “the four best years of my life,” definitely the four years that had the greatest impact on my life. My LSU experience gave me my wife, lifelong friends, the foundation for my career, and great memories that will last throughout my lifetime.
PAST INDUCTEES OF THE E. J. OURSO COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Hall of Distinction

2013
William E. Balhoff
Toni E. Stephenson
Robert M. Stuart Jr.

2012
Rolfe H. McCollister Jr.
Anthony B. Ravani
Sue Wilbert Turner
Joseph C. Winkler

2011
David J. Bondy Jr.
Garret H. Danos
Teri G. Fontenot
Shaquille O’Neal
David P. Steiner

2010
Thomas J. Adamek
Donald J. Gauci
David L. Laxton III
Jerry E. Shea Jr.
Christel C. Slaughter

2009
Roy O. Martin III
Jonathan E. Martin
Richard E. Matheny
Maurice J. Coleman
William F. Borne

2008
Edward A. Landry
Peggy B. Scott
James D. Shelton

2007
Ross J. Centanni
Laura Alexander Leach
Doyle Z. Williams

2006
James M. Bernhard Jr.
James E. Maurin
Jeffrey N. Springmeyer

2005
Joseph L. Herring
Patricia Hewlett Bodin
Bartholomew F. Palmisano

2004
Eduardo Aguirre Jr.
William S. Slaughter III
John C. Hamilton

2003
John Q. Barnidge
J. Gerard Jolly
Eddie J. Jones
Roger H. Ogden
Kathryn M. Sullivan

2002
Richard F. Gill
Harry T. Hawks
D. Martin Phillips
Kay G. Priestly
Frederick E. Wolfert

2001
Kerry D. Brandon
Jake Lee Netterville
Julian & Sidney Carruth
E. Robert Theriot III

2000
Herman J. Lowe
Norman V. Kinsey
Joseph H. Campbell

1999
E.R. Campbell
Senator Randy L. Ewing
Ronald A. Laborde

1998
Carol A. Calkins
Ulyesses J. LeGrange
A. Emmet Stephenson Jr.

1997
Aaron J. Beam Jr.
J. Terrell Brown
Robert F. Kelley
Bernard F. Sligar
William W. Rucks IV

1996
James C. Flores
Robert S. Greer Sr.
Susan M. Phillips
G. Lee Griffin
DEAN’S ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Dean’s Advisory Council exists to promote and improve the E. J. Ourso College of Business. These accomplished professionals donate their time, talents, and resources to support the dean’s efforts to enhance the college’s substance and image.

The Executive Committee of the Dean’s Advisory Council is comprised of the chairs of the five component committees of the council, the dean, and other selected individuals to oversee the administrative functions of the council as a whole.

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William E. Balhoff
John Q. Barnidge
Patricia Hewlett Bodin
David J. Bondy
Sarah Robinson Borders
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* Denotes Executive Committee Member