PROGRAM

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

DINNER

INDUCTION OF 2018 HALL OF DISTINCTION CLASS

HONOREE REFLECTIONS
Claire L. Cagnolatti
Maurice “Skip” J. Robichaux III

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

Claire L. Cagnolatti
Vice President, Chemicals
HSB Solomon Associates LLC

Maurice “Skip” J. Robichaux III
Partner and West Region SALT Leader
KPMG
Claire L. Cagnolatti

A native of DeRidder, Louisiana who grew up in Gonzales, Louisiana, Claire Cagnolatti holds a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering and a master’s of business administration, both from LSU. During her days as a student, Cagnolatti was a Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society member and four-year member of the Tiger Marching Band. As a female engineer who launched her career in the late 1970s, Cagnolatti broke gender barriers and was the first female in nearly every position she held. Through roles at Stauffer Chemical (now Olin Chemical) in St. Gabriel, Louisiana and at Occidental Chemical Company (OxyChem) in Lake Charles, Louisiana and the company’s Dallas headquarters, Cagnolatti gained experience in chemicals manufacturing and economic optimization for ethylene manufacturing. Cagnolatti spent the last 24 years at HSB Solomon Associates LLC, the leading performance improvement company for the global energy industry. She currently serves as vice president for chemicals. Cagnolatti was both the first female consultant hired and the first female vice president at Solomon. Numerous notable accomplishments mark Cagnolatti’s tenure at Solomon. She developed and solicited the first worldwide propane dehydrogenation study. She served as the lead chemicals consultant on a project commissioned by the German government following reunification. Since 2003, she has managed the Solomon Worldwide Olefin Plant Performance Analysis, increasing study participation to over 130 plants representing 75 percent of the global ethylene-producing capacity from all of the world’s major ethylene-producing regions. Cagnolatti is a frequently-requested speaker at conferences. She was the keynote speaker for the Fuels and Petrochemicals Division of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers 2017 Spring Meeting. Cagnolatti has authored and presented technical papers on a wide variety of topics including the impact of shale gas production on the competitiveness of North America’s chemical industry; common elements of top-performing plants; reliability performance of major compressors; trends in energy efficiency and emissions; ranking of reliability-related causes of lost production; and plant turnaround trends. She gives back to her alma mater through volunteer service. Cagnolatti served as the Dallas-area representative on the Campaign Cabinet for the Forever LSU campaign. She was also a member of the Band Hall Task Force for the College of Music and Dramatic Arts, a group that successfully raised funds needed for the construction of the new Band Hall. She is a lifetime member of the national band honor fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi. Cagnolatti lends her enthusiasm and expertise through board service to the College of Music and Dramatic Arts, the College of Engineering Office of Diversity, the Cain Department of Chemical Engineering, and the E. J. Ourso College of Business. At the end of 2018, Cagnolatti will retire and return to her native Louisiana to be near family and friends, and most importantly, to attend as many LSU athletics events as possible. She also plans to contribute to both the Cain Department of Chemical Engineering and to the E. J. Ourso College of Business’ energy and analytics programs, as a resource and guest lecturer. Her hobbies are LSU sports, music, travel, crossword puzzles, and soon, she can add “spending time with family” to the list.
Reflections

My first exposure to the mystique that is LSU was listening to football games with my dad. When you’re the eighth of nine children, you seek out whatever one-on-one time with your parents that you can manage. Saturday night football games were those special times with my dad. We’d listen to John Ferguson’s play-by-play on WWL radio. I could hear Sid Crocker’s PA announcements and the Tiger Band playing in the background. Daddy taught me the words to “Hey Fightin’ Tigers” and taught me about football. I became a passionate Tiger fan at the tender age of five.

I began attending LSU football games at about age 13 with my church youth group. I admired the Italian Renaissance architecture and thought it’d be neat to be an LSU student. I was absolutely bug-eyed with excitement once I saw inside the stadium. Seeing and hearing Tiger Band convinced me that someday I wanted to play in that Golden Band from Tigerland.

When it came time to choose a university, I got offers from many schools, but I turned them all down to attend the university nearest and dearest to my heart — alma mater of my dad — LSU. I auditioned for Tiger Band and was accepted. Not only was I going to LSU, but I was going to be in Tiger Band! A young girl’s dreams were coming true.

I changed majors from computer science to chemical engineering at my dad’s recommendation. I liked “ChemE” and did surprisingly well in the math, ChemE, and chemistry courses. Of course, I was the only female in most of those classes, but that didn’t bother me — I was treated with respect by most of my professors. My favorite ChemE professor had also taught my eldest brother, Bill, who was one of his favorite students. Therefore, I could do no wrong in Dr. Callahan’s thermodynamics classes.

I knew my early experience as a ChemE would be in a chemical plant, like my dad and brothers, but thought it might be nice to lose the hard hat and steel-toed shoes. I remember reading about combining an engineering degree with an MBA. This sounded great, and I began working business classes into my schedule. I thought I’d work in an office someday, helping to run the business of the chemical industry. I took a job at a plant in St. Gabriel and went to classes at LSU two nights per week for nine semesters to get my MBA. My favorite recollections are Dr. Timmons’ business psychology classes (where I learned a lot about human interaction on the job) and economics studied under Dr. Loren Scott.

The economic crash of 1985 took my job. Unemployed for nine months, I waited tables to pay my bills. But if I’d never lost that job, I’d never have found the job in petrochemicals that was a turning point in my career. At the time, I had no idea how far, literally, the MBA would take me.

After seven years in petrochemicals manufacturing, I worked at OxyChem’s Dallas corporate office doing business analysis for multiple plants, using knowledge from my favorite MBA classes in quantitative business analysis. After two years, I found an ad in a journal for a consultant at Solomon Associates. The list of qualifications looked exactly like my résumé, so I had to check it out. I was hired by company founder Mr. Lee Solomon — becoming the first female consultant on his staff. My expertise in the technical and business aspects of petrochemicals was the perfect fit for the job. Over a 24-year career at Solomon, I progressed from consultant to senior consultant to senior manager to vice president. I now travel the world to advise petrochemical companies on optimizing profit from their operations. I’m truly thankful that God put me in the right place at the right time for my career.

I am both humbled and honored to be chosen for the Hall of Distinction in the E. J. Ourso College of Business. My LSU MBA was a key factor in my career success at Solomon. Being able to combine business acumen and a deep understanding of petrochemicals economics with technical skills and experience as a plant engineer defined my career success. It has been a more exciting and illustrious career than this girl from Gonzales could ever have imagined. Upon retirement at the end of this year, I plan to pay it forward. I plan to continue to give back to today’s and tomorrow’s LSU students. I plan to be guest lecturer and perhaps even part-time instructor in both the E. J. Ourso College of Business and in the Cain Department of Chemical Engineering.

One of my favorite activities is attending LSU sporting events, and I think of my dad each time I cheer for my Tigers. I’ll soon be seeing many such events when I retire and move back to South Louisiana this December. LSU is much more than a university to me. It’s a tradition, a family legacy, and the key to this girl’s dreams coming true in ways she never imagined, leading to a career that exceeded all my expectations, thanks to my education at LSU.

Thank you, Dean White and the E. J. Ourso College of Business, for this incredible honor.
Maurice “Skip” J. Robichaux III graduated from LSU with a bachelor’s degree in accounting in 1983. Robichaux, a New Orleans native, returned home to launch his career with KPMG, one of the world’s leading professional service firms. A CPA, Robichaux specialized in federal tax for the first decade of his career before turning his focus to the State and Local Tax (SALT) area. In 1997, he was admitted to the partnership and transferred to the KPMG Houston office to lead the Southwest Region SALT practice. In 2005, he moved into KPMG’s Risk Management Tax group.

In 2009, Robichaux was promoted to his current role as SALT West Region leader. Robichaux leads the SALT tax practice in KPMG’s west region which includes nine business units, 25 partners, and 500 professionals. He is also responsible for the firm’s indirect tax compliance centers.

Robichaux also served as people leader — tax from 2013-2015. In this role, he focused on the development and execution of KPMG’s tax talent strategy. His responsibilities included differentiating KPMG’s recruiting efforts, transforming how KPMG’s professionals are trained, developing innovative career management programs, ensuring a diverse and inclusive environment, and driving a proactive coaching culture for roughly 6,000 partners and professionals across all tax service lines. These programs focused on networking training, leadership development, employee feedback, and improving efficiencies through the use of technology.

With more than 30 years in the industry, Robichaux has experience in federal, state, and local income and franchise taxes as well as sales and transaction taxes. He has experience in consulting with clients on corporate restructuring projects, controversy matters, tax planning, and tax credits.

He was involved in updating and revising the firm’s tax risk management policies and procedures. Furthermore, he was involved in many diverse risk management matters, assisting engagement teams in implementing effective risk management procedures to help foster the consistent delivery of high-quality tax services to clients, and maintain compliance with firm and professional standards.

Robichaux was awarded the SALT 2016 Stewardship Award, for professionals that exemplify leading and developing others. He is a member of the 2007 Class of the Chairman’s 25, a leadership development program, and served on the firm’s Partnership Council. He was a Partner Champion for KPMG’s Houston Disabilities Council. He was awarded the 2003 Houston Mentor of the Year Award. He has served as a board member for Special Olympics - Texas and has volunteered his time with Boys Hope. He serves on the E. J. Ourso College of Business Dean’s Advisory Council and chairs the group’s Corporate Partnerships Committee.

Robichaux has presented on a number of topics including diversity, retention, and career development. He has also spoken at numerous seminars on topics ranging from risk management issues to multistate tax issues.

Robichaux currently resides in Denver with his wife Victoria, a registered dietitian and owner of My Core Nutrition. He has two children — Trevor, a junior at the University of Colorado-Denver, and Hannah, a freshman at LSU.
Like many people who have attended and fallen in love with LSU, my very first memories center around my parents. In particular, I can remember as a very young boy, being in awe of the excitement my father exhibited when it came to LSU sports. I remember watching him listen to LSU games on the radio, yes I watched him. It was very entertaining whether it be his reaction as the announcer described Pistol Pete’s amazing shots and assists or hearing him yell “Go to Hell Ole Miss” or “Archie Who” during the Ole Miss football game. The enthusiasm my father had for LSU sports was rivaled only by the passion and deep-seeded belief that he and my mother had about the importance of education.

My parents truly valued education and believed in compassion, hard work, keeping an open mind, and believing in yourself. The values they taught me and my siblings, from a very young age, were only reinforced and strengthened when I arrived at college. They stressed the importance of taking advantage of every opportunity possible when it came to education and exploring all that may be possible. I remember a picture my mother created that hung in the room my brother and I shared that said, “Don’t wait for your ship to come in, swim out after it.” So, in the summer of 1979, I swam up Interstate 10 from New Orleans and arrived at LSU.

Starting out, I was a bit shy and insecure, wondering what I had gotten myself into. The campus was so large and sprawling. Although I was bit intimidated, I was also excited about what the future held. I remember moving into the unair-conditioned Pentagon dormitory and thinking how can it be possible that I am in the same building my father lived in during college. I joined a fraternity and quickly began to enjoy the social scene, perhaps a little too much! Parties, football games, after-game parties, quarter beer night, exchanges, etc. Needless to say, my grades reflected a little too much of my commitment to “expanding my horizons.”

I wound up majoring in accounting, not because I really knew anything about accounting, but because of the advice of a friend. I knew I wanted to do something in the business school, but I wasn’t sure which specialization. So I asked an upperclassman, who was a friend of mine, what he would major in. He responded with a question, asking me, “Do you want to get a job when you graduate?” My answer of course, was “yep.” After all, I was pretty sure my parents didn’t expect me to graduate and immediately come home and retire. The friend then told me to major in accounting, so I did, and I never looked back. And I have to say, that advice was some of the best I ever got, because I did get a job and have had a great career.

After graduation I moved back to New Orleans in 1983 and started working for a local firm. After a year and a half, I decided I would like to work for a larger firm and focus on tax to expand my knowledge and experience. So I moved to KPMG. KPMG provides audit, tax and advisory services, has 34,000 partners and employees in the United States, 189,000 employees worldwide, and revenues exceeding $25 billion. One of the benefits of working at KPMG is that we had a large LSU alumni base and I have been fortunate to work and learn from some of the very best professionals in the profession, including Jerry Jolly. I was promoted to partner in 1997 and have worked in New Orleans, Houston, and Denver. KPMG has given me an opportunity to do so many different things. I have served clients, led practice groups, worked in risk management, and human resources. Helping clients solve business problems is at the core of what we do at KPMG. That part of the job is a lot of fun but the most rewarding is recruiting young people off campus, mentoring, coaching, and helping them develop to reach their own personal goals.

I am convinced that my success at KPMG is due to the uniqueness of the LSU experience, the quality education provided by the business school, the university’s culture of “community”, and the passion to succeed that was instilled by the university, and of course my parents. I am honored to join my fellow Tigers in the E.J. Ourso College Hall of Distinction.
PAST INDUCTEES OF THE E. J. OURSO COLLEGE OF BUSINESS HALL OF DISTINCTION

2017
Sarah R. Borders
James C. Parr
David B. Songy

2016
Deke G. Carbo
Fernando M. Guerrero
James O. Harp Jr.
Steven C. Walker

2015
G. Matthew McCarroll
Dale E. Redman
Richard M. Sturleson

2014
Gregory J. Hamer Sr.
Rose J. Hudson
John R. Landon

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. Gaucci
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 L. Nettiville
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

* Denotes Inductee is Deceased
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 officers, chairs of the component committees of the council, the dean, and other selected individuals to oversee the administrative functions of the council as a whole.

The DAC is currently led by President Bill Balhoff, Vice President Jim Harp, and Immediate Past President Jerry Jolly.