Walton, Conant highlight Shewmaker Series at NWACC  
Leaders will participate in community business forums organized through SIFE program


Walton and Don Bacigalupi, the museum’s executive director, will discuss leadership during a forum at 2 p.m. Feb. 27 on the Bentonville campus. Conant will be speaking at 6 p.m. on March 15. Both events will take place in the Walmart Auditorium of the Shewmaker Center for Workforce Technologies.

“We are pleased to have some of the most intuitive business minds in the world as a part of the Shewmaker Lecture Series on campus,” NWACC President Dr. Becky Paneitz said. “Alice Walton is a Bentonville native and has been so instrumental in the development of our region and our college, and it will be an outstanding opportunity for our students to hear directly from her. She is a true visionary and a world-class leader. We are thrilled to have her on our campus. All three of these speakers are outstanding and the top business leaders in their fields.”

NWACC’s Students In Free Enterprise team established the Business Leaders Lecture Series when Jack Shewmaker suggested a platform designed to bring in business professionals and entrepreneurs to the college campus so that students and the community at large would have the opportunity to learn from them. Shewmaker, a retired Walmart officer and a strong supporter of NWACC, was the inaugural speaker for the event first held in 2004. Shewmaker ultimately agreed to allow the college’s SIFE program to name the series in honor of him in 2006. Shewmaker died in 2010.

This spring’s lineup continues the tradition of bringing prominent business leaders to the NWACC campus.

Alice Walton, the daughter of Walmart founder Sam Walton and Helen Walton, spearheaded the Walton Family Foundation’s involvement in developing the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, a premier venue located in Bentonville dedicated to American art and artists. She graduated from
Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Finance, and later served as Vice Chairman and head of all investment-related activities at the Arvest Bank Group and ultimately founded the Llama Company. Alice Walton was the first chairperson and driving force behind the Northwest Arkansas Council and played a major role in developing the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport. She was inducted in the Arkansas Aviation Hall of Fame in 2001.

Bacigalupi, who earned a doctorate in Art History from the University of Texas-Austin, became the executive director of Crystal Bridges in October 2009, successfully overseeing the museum’s opening in November 2011. He previously served as the Chief Executive Officer and Director at the Toledo Museum of Art and the Director of the San Diego Museum of Art following his work as director and chief curator at the Blaffer Gallery, the art museum of the University of Houston. He was a 1996 fellow at the Museum Management Institute of the J. Paul Getty Trust and the American Federation of Arts at the University of California, Berkeley. Bacigalupi began his career teaching art history at the University of Texas-Austin before moving into museum management.

Conant, a New York Times bestselling author, was appointed President and CEO of the Campbell Soup Company in 2001. He was the 11th leader in the company’s 141-year history and dramatically improved the company’s financial profile by delivering quality sales growth. During the decade of Conant’s leadership, employee engagement went from being among the worst in the Fortune 500 to being consistently among the best. He began his career in 1976 in marketing at General Mills, and ultimately moved to Kraft where he held top management positions in marketing and strategy. Immediately prior to arriving at Campbell, he was President of the $3.5 billion Nabisco Foods Company where he led his unit to improved marketplace performance and five consecutive years of double-digit earnings growth.

Students, faculty and members of the community are welcome to attend the programs.

**Photos of the speakers and a biography of Douglas Conant are attached.**

**NorthWest Arkansas Community College is a comprehensive, public two-year college that serves and strengthens the community through learning for living.** NWACC's service area is defined by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education as Benton and Washington counties in extreme northwest Arkansas. The commitment of NWACC to life-long learning can be seen in the quality of instruction it offers, and the variety of programs it has designed to move students into the job market in a minimum amount of time, enrich people's lives, and prepare them to further their education. For more information, visit [www.nwacc.edu](http://www.nwacc.edu).