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ACAP STUDENTS EXPLORE A FUTURE IN ACCOUNTING
DFW NABA Chapter Creates a Pipeline for Potential Business Professionals

Dallas, TX (SMU) Wednesday, June 24, 2015—SMU Cox School of Business is the site this week of the 15th annual Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP), sponsored by the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. (NABA). Fifty-six high school students and their counselors are attending classes in the Cox School on the campus of Southern Methodist University all week to gain exposure to career options in accounting, finance, and other business-related disciplines. Through the program, ACAP seeks to serve as a student pipeline to college, the accounting profession, and ultimately the business community. Since the program's founding fifteen years ago, 664 students—including this year's participants—have taken part in the ACAP experience in Dallas. The NABA motto, "Lifting as We Climb," guides the ACAP organizers in this annual effort.

"'Lifting as We Climb,' has special meaning for ACAP," said Nora O'Garro, who founded Dallas ACAP and serves as the program director. "It is what I believe we should have a desire to do. Dallas ACAP has allowed me to fulfill my desire to expand opportunities to underrepresented minority high school students to the accounting and other related business fields. It has been such a rewarding endeavor when I witness the results of the students we have impacted. This is reflected when we get invitations and/or announcements of their graduation from college with their undergraduate degrees, master's and become CPA's in one of the best career fields available."

The tradition of career coaching and mentoring will be celebrated at the event's closing banquet on Friday night, which will feature keynote speaker Frank Ross, one of the founders of the National Association of Black Accountants. "I am truly honored to participate in the Dallas 2015 Accounting Career Awareness Program," said Ross. "Dallas ACAP has touched, in a positive way, so many high school students over the past 15 years. It truly is the type of Program that was envisioned when the first ACAP was started in Seattle, Washington."

This year's ACAP class consists of 31 young women and 25 young men from about four dozen high schools across Texas, Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, and Oklahoma. These students average about a 3.5 Grade Point Average (GPA). According to Dallas ACAP

Executive Director Odell Brown, of the more than 600 students who have participated in ACAP over the past fifteen years, “approximately 80 percent have gone on to college to major in accounting or other business-related disciplines. The other 20 percent were undecided or majored in other disciplines.”

Dallas ACAP provides hands-on learning experiences, including an executive roundtable dinner, where students are matched with professionals who can give career insights; a group capstone project wherein students create their own businesses and have the opportunity to win cash prizes; and tours of major corporations (this year, students will tour the offices of PwC and Thomson Reuters). Students will also hear from SMU professors about classes in accounting, finance, marketing, and management. Students who are selected to take part in ACAP do so tuition free, with financial support from Dallas ACAP.

About SMU Cox

The Cox School of Business (cox.smu.edu), originally established in Dallas in 1920 on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and was named in honor of benefactor Edwin L. Cox in 1978. SMU Cox offers a full range of highly-ranked undergraduate and graduate business education programs: BBA, Full-Time MBA, Fast Track MBA, Professional MBA (PMBA), Executive MBA (EMBA), JD/MBA, MA/MBA, Master of Science (MS) in Accounting, MS in Business Analytics, MS in Finance, MS in Management, MS in Sport Management, as well as Executive Education and multiple certificate programs. The school also offers a number of unique resources and activities for students, including the Business Leadership Center (BLC); the Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship; the Folsom Institute for Real Estate; the Maguire Energy Institute; the Global Leadership Program; and the Associate Board Executive Mentoring Program, as well as an international alumni network with chapters in more than 20 countries.

About Dallas ACAP

The Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP) is one of the national programs for high school students under the umbrella of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. (NABA) and supported by the local Dallas/Ft. Worth Professional Chapter of NABA. Dallas ACAP is one of about 20 ACAP chapters located throughout the United States. For more on Dallas ACAP, review its website at www.dallasacap.com.

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