NATCHITOCHES – Five Northwestern State University alumni have been named to the NSU Alumni Hall of Distinction, the Long Purple Line, for 2012. This year’s inductees are Philip Barbaree of Shreveport, Robert Lee Kirchoff Sr. of Baton Rouge, the late Mary Rives Gallaspy of Pelican, H. Wayne McCullen of Natchitoches and the late George Thomas Walker of Monroe.

The inductees will be honored at a dinner and induction ceremony on Friday, Oct. 26 and at the Homecoming football game against Nicholls State on Saturday, Oct. 27. Out of more than 75,000 Northwestern alumni, only 109 people have been chosen for this honor.

Barbaree and Kirchoff opened their first Superior Grill Restaurant in Shreveport in 1983. After nearly 30 years in the restaurant business, they own and operate seven restaurants, five in Louisiana and two in Alabama

Barbaree graduated from NSU in 1976 earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. While at Northwestern State, he was a member of numerous organizations including Kappa Sigma fraternity where he served as chapter president and held other offices.

Upon graduation, he returned to Shreveport to work with his father in the construction industry before opening Superior Grill. Barbaree was inducted into the Northwestern State School of Business Hall of Distinction earlier this year.

Gallaspy, known for her generosity and involvement in her community, passed away in 2010. She was born in Pelican in 1925 and graduated from Northwestern State College, now NSU, in 1946. She did post-graduate study at the University of Colorado and the University of Arkansas, where she received her master’s degree.

Gallaspy taught business and Louisiana history at Pelican High School from 1945-1971, serving as sponsor of the Future Business Leaders of America and giving of her time to take students to musical events, conventions and other activities. Gallaspy was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, serving as MU chapter president from 1958-60 and 1968-70. She was Epsilon state secretary from 1959-61. For many years she was active in the DeSoto Parish Retired Teachers Association.

Gallaspy was a lifelong member of the Pelican Baptist Church. She served as chairman of the fundraising committee for the new Fellowship Hall, which was totally paid for when completed. She donated a piano and an organ to the church in honor of her parents, John
Baker and Lillian McMullen Gallaspy, a 1913 graduate of Normal, and her aunt and uncle, Hettie and Earl Fincher. In addition, she donated property for the expansion of the Pelican Cemetery, and donated several Pelican town lots to the Pelican Baptist and Pelican United Methodist Churches.

A gift from Gallaspy, which includes property in DeSoto Parish as well as a monetary bequest, created the Mary Rives Gallaspy Charitable Trust, which is administered by the board of directors of the NSU Foundation.

Income from the trust will fund two scholarships: the Hettie McMullen Fincher Scholarship in Mathematics and the Mary Rives Gallaspy Scholarship for Business and Education. The Fincher scholarship honors Gallaspy’s aunt, who graduated from State Normal School, now Northwestern State, in 1908.

Kirchoff is a 1977 graduate of Northwestern State earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. While at Northwestern State, Kirchoff was a defensive lineman on the Demon football team. He was also a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and was named Man of the Year by Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority. After graduating, he moved to Houston and was employed by Oil Base Incorporated.

In 1989, Kirchoff and his family moved to Baton Rouge to open the second Superior Grill. Kirchoff and Barbaree also opened a Superior Grill and Cocina Superior in Birmingham, Ala., and a Superior Grill and Superior Seafood in New Orleans. Kirchoff was inducted into the Northwestern State School of Business Hall of Distinction earlier this year.

McCullen was a three-term mayor of Natchitoches, leading the city from 2000-2012. He was a member of the Natchitoches City Council from 1980 – 2000.

A 1969 graduate of Northwestern State in nursing, McCullen earned a bachelor’s in anesthesia at the University of South Alabama. He served as director of anesthesia at Natchitoches Regional Medical Center from 1974 until 2000.

He was named the Outstanding Young Man of Natchitoches Parish and one of the Top 10 Outstanding Young Men of Louisiana in 1977. In 1980, McCullen was chosen as the Outstanding Man of Natchitoches. Northwestern State honored him with an Nth Degree for his meritorious service.

Walker, a native of Wyatt, graduated from Louisiana State Normal College in 1935, then earned a master’s at Louisiana State University. He taught at Northeast Junior College, Southeastern Louisiana College and Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette) before becoming personnel director for the Port of Embarkation in New Orleans during World War II.

After the war, he earned his doctorate at LSU and later returned to Northwestern State as dean of applied arts and sciences and dean of administration.

In 1958, he became president of Northeast Louisiana State College, now the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and served until 1976. Under his leadership, Northeast grew in enrollment and academic stature and increased its physical plant. In Walker’s 18-year presidency, Northeast
became the largest university in North Louisiana in terms of enrollment and state appropriations. Enrollment increased from 2,100 to 9,700 and the institution achieved university status.

Walker was the author of numerous academic and professional journal articles, and authored several books on accounting and business education. Following his retirement he wrote *The Building of a University* (1991) and *Emy-Lou Biedenharn: Her Life and Legacy* (1999). Walker passed away in 2011.