

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
Democrat  **Gazette**
McMillon headlines benefit luncheon
Groups laud local women

By [Carin Schoppmeyer](#)

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Credit: NWA Democrat-Gazette

At a Glance

Corporate Luncheon

Who: Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Benton County

What: Doug McMillon, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. president and chief executive officer, headlined the annual benefit that brought in more than \$60,000.

When: Wednesday

Where: Embassy Suites in Rogers

Information: (479) 254-8550 or spsfbc.org

Jack Eaton, Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Benton County executive director (from left); Sarah Beers; Doug McMillon, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. president and chief executive officer; Brian Wood; and Hank Schepers gather at a VIP reception before the scholarship fund's annual Corporate Luncheon on Wednesday.

Doug McMillon, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. president and chief executive officer, headlined the Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Benton County annual Corporate Luncheon on Wednesday at the Embassy Suites in Rogers. McMillon spoke of the necessity of change in business, saying, "If you don't change, you endanger your future."

While change is inevitable, he said the retailer will hold to its core values. "We have to keep doing what we do well. We have to bring some new capabilities to save (customers) time and money to make life easier." As an example, he pointed to Walmart Pickup available at some stores that allows customers to do their grocery shopping online and then pick up their purchases at the store without having to go in. He said, "You know who loves Pickup? Moms." He said moms have approached him to exclaim, "It's changed my life!"

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The scholarship fund organization was founded in 1984 to help provide low-income single parents access to opportunities for success. In its first year, the nonprofit awarded seven \$150 scholarships. To date, the group has awarded some 8,000 scholarships totaling more than \$6 million. Approximately 85 percent of scholarship recipients get a job paying above poverty level within six months of college graduation.

Sarah Beers, former scholarship recipient and newly minted dentist, shared her experience with the scholarship organization and the support provided to her while attending college and dental school. "Single Parent Scholarship Fund is not just a scholarship, it's an entire community of people who want to see you succeed," she said.

Along with financial aid for tuition and books, scholarship recipients are offered emotional support, career development resources, school supplies, assistance with household and vehicle expenses, mentoring, life skills workshops and referral to other community services. The luncheon benefit helped raise more than \$60,000 that will go toward scholarships.

Among those attending the luncheon were Pete Metzger, Judy Hammond, Brock Gearhart, Betsy Reithemeyer, Mary Ann and Reed Greenwood, Hank Schepers, Brian Wood, Jack Eaton, Matt Chambers, Rich Feitler, John Meyer, Eleanora Lawson, Melissa Berryhill, Jason Hescott, Butch Jones, Alexis Underwood, Bryan Perry, Neile Jones, Gregg Parsons, Emma Grant, Stacie Furlano, Carlos Barragan, Phil Whitehead, Chris Weiser, Nick Kennett, Heather Rutherford, Jacob Hudson and Jett Cato.

For more event photos -- nwadg.com/photos/society.

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