

Louisiana College honors 3 for distinguished service



Louisiana College President Joe Aguillard (left) shakes hands with Joe Ricketts after presenting him with the school's Distinguished Service Award on Thursday. At right is Ricketts' wife, Marlene.

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PINEVILLE — What do the owner of the Chicago Cubs, the CEO of a teaching foundation and an expert on ADHD have in common?

All three were honored with the Louisiana College Trustees' Distinguished Service Award at the private Baptist school's annual Founder's Day chapel on Thursday.

But brothers Joe and Jim Ricketts and Dr. Amnon Gimpel are much more.

Joe Ricketts, billionaire founder of the company now known as TD Ameritrade and owner of the Chicago Cubs, became involved with Louisiana College through the Opportunity Education Foundation.

Ricketts founded Opportunity Education, and his brother, Jim, serves as president and CEO. The foundation provides resources and training for teachers and students in developing nations.

LC Dean of Education Randall Esters and others in the education department worked with the Ricketts' foundation to train East and West African teachers in 2011.

“The little help that we give is really absorbed and used a great deal,” Joe Ricketts said. “Let me thank you, Louisiana College, for having such an impact on the educational system in the Third World.”



LC President Joe Aguillard (left) talks with Joe Ricketts before the Founders' Day program on Thursday. Ricketts was presented with the Distinguished Service Award during the program.

Jim Ricketts, former vice president of TD Ameritrade, spent his career in manufacturing, brokerage and now education.

“My wagon is hitched to my brother, Joe,” Jim Ricketts said. “We’re serving the poor in ways that have never been done before.

... Randy Esters and his crew helped us hold nine seminars hosting several thousands of teachers in East and West Africa.”

Gimpel, a psychiatrist, authored the best-seller “Brain Exercises to Cure ADHD.” Now living in Jerusalem, Gimpel recounted tales from his Louisiana College days in the 1960s by video on Thursday.

He wore his football letter jacket while describing his time as a kicker at LC. He said a professor’s encouraging advice gave him the push he needed to pursue medical school and become a psychiatrist.

“I owe a lot of my success to the spirit I got at Louisiana College,” Gimpel said.