CAMBRIDGE MA – The Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government (M-RCBG) at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government is pleased to announce winners of the 2013 John T. Dunlop Prize in Business and Government.


All three are seniors at Harvard College and each is graduating later this month with an A.B. in Economics.

The John T. Dunlop Thesis Prize in Business and Government is awarded to the graduating senior who writes the best thesis on a challenging public policy issue at the interface of business and government. The prize carries a $500 award. This is the first time that M-RCBG has given the award to three students.

This year’s winning thesis by Ms. Laurence examines a theory she has developed using models in political economics surrounding voter and legislator support for universal early childhood education. Mr. Loughlin focuses on the impact of changing electricity prices for Jamaica households and Ms. Pongmanavuth investigates the role of corporate debt in triggering economic and financial crises.

In explaining why the center chose to award the John Dunlop prize to three students this year, John A. Haigh, executive dean of Harvard Kennedy School and co-director of M-RCBG, said that all three theses were “ambitious and well-executed.” He noted that electricity policy, education policy and the debt crisis are all areas of focus for M-RCBG. “These students have made significant analytic contributions to important areas of public policy,” Haigh noted. “We commend them for their outstanding work.”

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John T. Dunlop, the Lamont University Professor Emeritus, was a widely respected labor economist who served as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences from 1969 to 1973. An adviser to many U.S. presidents, beginning with Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dunlop was secretary of labor under Gerald Ford, serving from March 1975 to January 1976.

In addition to serving as secretary of labor, Dunlop held many other government posts, including: director of the Cost of Living Council, (1973-74), chairman of the Construction Industry Stabilization Committee (1993-95), chair of the Massachusetts Joint Labor-Management Committee for Municipal Police and Firefighters (1977-2003) and Chair of the Commission on Migratory Farm Labor (1984-2003).

Dunlop served as the second director of the Center for Business and Government from 1987 to 1991. The Center, renamed in 2005 as the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government, focuses on policy issues at the intersection of business and government. Dunlop died in 2003.