Illinois Wesleyan University
Digital Commons @ IWU

Founders' Day | Convocations

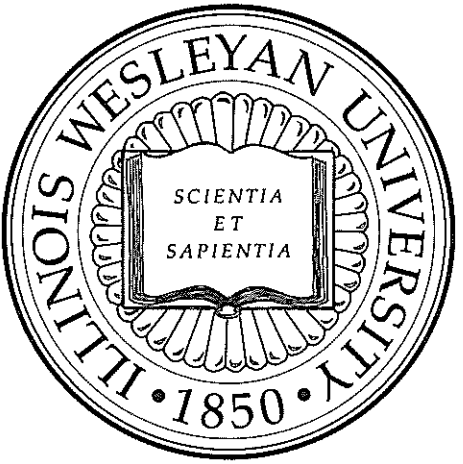
1996

Founders' Day Convocation (1996 Program)

Illinois Wesleyan University

Recommended Citation
Illinois Wesleyan University, "Founders' Day Convocation (1996 Program)" (1996). *Founders' Day.* Paper 56.
http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/founders_day_docs/56

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Convocations at Digital Commons @ IWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Founders' Day by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ IWU. For more information, please contact sdaviska@iwu.edu.
©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.



Founders' Day Convocation

February 14, 1996 · 11 A.M.

Westbrook Auditorium · Presser Hall

Founders' Day Convocation

"Celebrating Community Service"

February 14, 1996 · 11 A.M.

Westbrook Auditorium · Presser Hall

Illinois Wesleyan University

Founders' Day Program

Westbrook Auditorium
Presser Hall
February 14, 1996
11:00 a.m.

President Minor Myers. jr, *Presiding*
Chaplain William L. White, *Mace Bearer*

ORGAN PRELUDE ..... Professor David M. Gehrenbeck, *Organist*
"My Spirit Be Joyful," BWV 146.7 — *Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

Brian Seitz '96, trumpet
Christopher Joyce '96, trumpet

*PROCESSIONAL
"Awake the Trumpets' Lofty Sound" (from the oratorio Samsom) — *George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)*

Professor John Michael Cooper, timpani
Brian Seitz '96, trumpet
Christopher Joyce '96, trumpet

*INVOCATION ..... Chaplain William L. White

WELCOME ..... President Minor Myers, jr

ANNOUNCEMENT ..... Harold R. Wilde
President, North Central College
Naperville, Illinois
Secretary, Board of Trustees
Associated Colleges of Illinois

RESPONSE ..... Linda M. Henry
Senior Advisor for Guidance and Counseling
Chicago Public Schools

PERFORMANCE
"At the Well" ..... *Richard Hageman (1882-1966)*

Shannon Winter '96, soprano
Professor Ririko Hayashi, pianist

AWARDING OF HONORARY DEGREES . . . . . President Minor Myers, jr.
Provost Janet M. McNew

Nancy Stevenson . . . . . *Chief Executive Officer*
Voices for Illinois Children

Silas Purnell . . . . . *Executive Director of Educational Services*
Ada S. McKinley Community Services

Rebie R. Kingston . . . . . *Director, Office of Guidance*
Detroit Public Schools

REMARKS . . . . . Rebie R. Kingston

*ALMA WESLEYANA (NATIONAL HYMN) . . . . . *George W. Warren*
(1828-1902)

From hearts aflame, our love we pledge to thee,
Where'er we wander, over land or sea;
Through time unending, loyal we will be—
True to our Alma Mater, Wesleyan.

When college days are fully past and gone,
While life endures, from twilight gleam til dawn,
Grandly thy soul shall with us linger on—
Star-crowned, our Alma Mater, Wesleyan.

—*William Eben Schultz*

*BENEDICTION . . . . . Chaplain William L. White

RECESSIONAL . . . . . Professor David M. Gehrenbeck, *Organist*
Symphonie V: Toccata *Charles-Marie Widor*
(1844-1937)

Brian Joosten '96, trombone
Timothy Culbertson '96 tuba

*Audience will please stand.

Rebie R. Kingston

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF GUIDANCE
DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rebie R. Kingston is an educator with broad experience in guidance and counseling with special emphasis on "at-risk" students. She is among far-sighted educators who launched the Wade H. McCree Jr. Scholarship Incentive Program in 1986.

The McCree program provides targeted Detroit high school students with mentoring, financial, and other resources designed to enhance their participation and retention rates in colleges. Kingston's office administers the McCree program.

"The students in the McCree program can compete with any in the nation," Kingston said. "They take honors classes, they study math, science, and foreign languages—every semester. They are excellent students."

Twenty-eight Detroit high schools and 1,000 students participate in the Wade McCree Program, as well as 11 Michigan universities—all public institutions—and Illinois Wesleyan University, the only private and non-Michigan campus.

Kingston has served as an educator in Pine Bluff, Ark.; Flint, Mich.; and Detroit. She has taught French and English and has served as a guidance counselor and in several administrative posts involving guidance.

She has traveled extensively in Europe and as a French teacher has taken students to Europe for summer study.

Kingston has been affiliated with several civic and other organizations over the years, including: the Student Motivational Program, NAACP, Conflict Resolution for Schools for the State of Michigan, Professional Women's Network, and the National Association for Counseling and Development.

Kingston, a member of the IWU Board of Trustees, earned a bachelor's degree in French from the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, a master of education degree in educational sociology from Wayne State University, and a doctorate in counseling from the University of Michigan.

Silas Purnell

Executive Director of Educational Services
Ada S. McKinley Community Services

Operating out of a basement office in Chicago's Dearborn Homes housing project, Silas Purnell has helped more than 40,000 African-American men and women to enroll in about 200 colleges and universities nationwide.

Asked why he works in a poverty-stricken neighborhood just blocks from where he was born in 1923, Purnell says it's because "that's where the people are."

Over the years, Purnell has established working relationships with hundreds of educational institutions to assist black and other minority students, as well as non-minority students, to gain admission to public and private, historically black and predominantly white, large and small colleges and universities.

Purnell was honored by Illinois Wesleyan University's Minority Alumni Network at Homecoming '92 for his lifetime contributions to helping extend educational opportunity to youth. He was introduced at the ceremony by Dr. Ansel Johnson '81, an optometrist, whose first acquaintance with IWU was on a bus trip to the campus organized by Purnell.

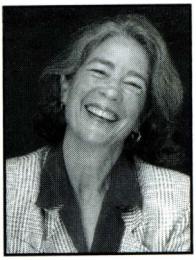
In an interview prior to receiving his IWU award, Purnell said: "Our students are doing some of everything—medicine, dentistry, engineering, and law—and many of them came right out of the projects."

Purnell has a strong faith in education. "Education," he said in a 1992 interview, "gets the kids off the street. Education is the key to all our problems. It helps solve problems like housing, unemployment, teen pregnancy, and crime. But kids need money to stay in school—and many young people who want to go to school don't think it's possible since they don't have money."

Purnell resigned in 1967 from the Coca-Cola Company, where he had been a marketing manager for a dozen years, and spent a year as a volunteer with Ada S. McKinley Community Services. This experience fueled his determination to get minority youth off the streets, encourage them to finish high school and, if qualified, counsel and support their efforts to attend college.

Purnell has logged more than 100,000 air miles in some years visiting colleges, giving lectures and fundraising.

He is known for his "no nonsense" approach to education, counseling students based on what they need and not necessarily what they believe they want. However, Purnell has his "soft" side and a reputation of going beyond the call of duty, helping less advantaged students with anything from bus fare to eyeglasses.



Nancy Stevenson

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
VOICES FOR ILLINOIS CHILDREN

Voices for Illinois Children, a Chicago-based organization headed by Nancy Stevenson, champions the full development of every Illinois youngster.

Mrs. Stevenson, wife of former U.S. Sen. Adlai Stevenson III (D-Ill.), became chief executive officer of "Voices" in 1991 after serving as a member of the group's board of directors from 1987-91.

"Voices" is particularly concerned with children who live in poverty or are vulnerable because of discrimination, ill health, or family stress. It analyzes strategies for improving the lives of Illinois' children and engages in public education and coalition building to achieve its goals.

Mrs. Stevenson is a longtime children's advocate. President John F. Kennedy appointed her to the Joint Youth Development Committee and she has served on the Advisory Board of Headstart, the widely respected, federally supported pre-school education program. Mrs. Stevenson also was a member of the Illinois Board for the 1970 White House Conference on Children. As a Washington, D.C., resident, she served on the Scholarship Committee for Sidwell Friends, a private school, and as a board member of the Black Student Fund and the Capitol Historic Society.

Mrs. Stevenson's civic activities have included membership on the Illinois Humanities Council from 1980-90, serving as council chair from 1983-85. She also was a member of the Federation of State Humanities Councils from 1985-90, chairing the federation from 1988-90. Mrs. Stevenson has been a member of the women's boards of the Chicago Urban League, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago.

Mrs. Stevenson is a trustee of the University of Chicago and is a director of Bank One.

The former Nancy Anderson, born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, is a 1955 graduate of Smith College. She received a master of arts degree in history from American University in Washington, D.C., in 1985. She married Adlai Stevenson III in 1955. Nancy and Adlai have four children: Adlai, Lucy, Katherine, and Warwick.

The Founding of Illinois Wesleyan University

Illinois Wesleyan University was founded in 1850, an event-filled year.

- President Zachary Taylor died after 16 months in office. Vice President Millard Fillmore became the 13th President of the United States.
- The Compromise of 1850, federal legislation largely crafted by Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky, postponed the inevitable national showdown over slavery.
- Congress enacted the Fugitive Slave Act, requiring return of escaped slaves to their owners.
- California was admitted to the union as the 31st state and the gold rush was in full swing.
- The first national women's rights convention was convened in Worcester, Massachusetts, with delegates from nine states.
- *The Scarlet Letter,* Nathaniel Hawthorne's classic novel, was a best seller.

These were some of the headlines of 1850--events shaping the United States as 30 men gathered in a Methodist church in Bloomington on September 23, 1850 to found Illinois Wesleyan. The goal of these 12 Methodist ministers and 18 businessmen, lawyers, doctors, tradesmen, and farmers was to establish "an Institution of learning of Collegiate Grade . . . which shall be known in law and equity or otherwise by the name and style of Illinois Wesleyan University."

Among this group were notable citizens like the Rev. Peter Cartwright, a famed clergyman who had headed the Committee on Education as a member of the lower house of the Illinois legislature. Cartwright was defeated in an 1846 race for the U.S. House of Representatives by a lanky lawyer from Springfield—Abraham Lincoln.

James Allin, another IWU founder, was Bloomington's first merchant and real estate dealer. He also helped found the community's first library and newspaper, played a pivotal role in establishing McLean County, and served in the Illinois Senate. Allin's son, William, served as circuit court clerk and in that capacity certified establishment of IWU on December 3, 1850.

Kersey H. Fell, a Pennsylvania Quaker and an IWU founder, was "the first man who thought seriously of making Abraham Lincoln a candidate for President," according to a centennial history of Illinois Wesleyan published in 1950. Kersey discussed the notion with his brother, Jesse, who subsequently brought it up with Lincoln in Kersey's Bloomington law office.

Two other IWU founders were friends of Lincoln when the future president was a country lawyer: Linus Graves and William H. Holmes. Lincoln appointed Holmes a federal land commissioner after he became president.

Isaac Funk, another IWU founder, was a member of a famous family whose business was closely associated with agricultural growth and development. Funk, who served in the Illinois legislature, was IWU's first

great patron. A $10,000 bequest to IWU, following his death in 1865, established the Issac Funk Professorship, the university's first endowed chair.

Another IWU founder was Lewis Bunn, a plow manufacturer, who made Bloomington a focus of the farm machinery industry.

Three IWU founders also served as mayor of Bloomington: journalist Charles P. Merriman, businessman-farmer William Wallace, and merchant John W. Ewing.

Founders' Day commemorates the vision, hard work, and commitment of the men who launched IWU.

Over the years, Founders' Day has provided a prestigious forum for prominent guest speakers: Peter Kann, chairman and chief executive officer of Dow Jones & Company, Inc., publisher of the *Wall Street Journal* (1995); Helen Thomas, United Press International's veteran White House bureau chief (1994); Reinhold Weege '71, creator of the top-rated TV sitcom, "Night Court" (1993); Roger Roloff '69, operatic baritone, and Betty Vetter, executive director of the Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology (1992); Gov. Jim Edgar (1991); Thomas E. Everhart, president of the California Institute of Technology, (1990); and Ariel Dorfman, Latin American playwright and human-rights activist (1989).

Founders' Day also reminds us of the hopes and aspirations of those who established the university.

The Rev. John S. Barger, an IWU founder, wrote of his hopes for the university's success seven months after it was established: "May her endowments and facilities, and buildings and apparatuses and libraries, . . ., all, under the blessing of a kind of munificent Providence be speedily and abundantly enriched with every means" and may her graduates, "the best and the brightest . . . bless the world in all the relations of man to his fellow man."