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## President's Convocation (1993 Program and video)

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Illinois Wesleyan University

# PRESIDENT'S CONVOCATION



Westbrook Auditorium  
Presser Hall  
September 22, 1993  
11:00 a.m.

# PROGRAM

President Minor Myers, jr, *Presiding*

Organ Prelude .....Professor David Gehrenbeck, *Organist*  
Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, BWV 542 .....*Johann Sebastian Bach*  
(1685-1750)

Invocation.....Sister Helen Carey  
*Acting University Chaplain*

Welcome.....President Minor Myers, jr

Address.....Mr. Adam Keys'94  
*President, Student Senate*

Announcement of Presidential Scholars and .....Dr. Roger Schnaitter  
The Anderson Physics Scholar *Associate Academic Dean*

Special Music  
Concerto in E minor, Op. 64 .....*Felix Mendelssohn*  
(1729-1786)

III. Allegro molto vivace

Edith Yokley'97, soprano  
Todd Tucker, piano  
*Associate Professor of Music*

Awarding of Honorary Degrees.....President Minor Myers, jr.  
Dr. Janet McNew  
*Provost and Dean of the Faculty*

Mr. Lester Smith'36  
Retired President and Chief Executive Officer  
Home Comfort Products

Dr. Walter Alvarez  
Professor of Geology  
University of California, Berkeley

Remarks .....Dr. Walter Alvarez

\*Alma Wesleyana

NATIONAL HYMN  
*George William 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.

—*Professor W. E. Schultz*

Organ Postlude .....Professor David Gehrenbeck, *Organist*  
Fantasy on *Wareham* .....*Searle Wright*  
(b. 1918)

\*Audience will please stand



## Walter Alvarez

Professor of Geology  
Department of Geology  
and Geophysics  
University of California, Berkeley

Walter Alvarez is a scientist-detective.

Since the 1970's, he has tracked down clues, trying to solve one of our planet's great mysteries. What happened to the dinosaurs, creatures large and small that roamed the Earth for more than 100 million years—creatures that have captured our imagination and most recently fascinated us in the Hollywood smash hit, "Jurassic Park"?

Years of persistent research, stretching from a crater in Mexico's Yucatan peninsula to high-tech laboratories where mineral samples from deep below the Earth's surface were rigorously analyzed, have led Alvarez to a striking conclusion.

An asteroid or a comet—some kind of huge meteorite—plunged into the Earth's atmosphere at tremendous speed about 65 million years ago, shocking the planet in a violent collision. The result: debris darkened the skies, sunlight was blotted out, the Earth cooled, vegetation stopped growing, and the atmosphere was filled with noxious carbon dioxide, creating a "greenhouse" effect and making life for the dinosaurs and other organisms impossible.

Alvarez and his late father, Luis, winner of the 1966 Nobel Prize in physics and a University of California, Berkeley, physicist, first proposed the "impact theory" of the dinosaurs' demise in 1979.

Born in 1940, Alvarez earned a bachelor of arts degree at Carleton College in 1962 and a doctorate from Princeton University in 1967. He served as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) fellow at the Accademia Britannica in Rome in 1970-71. Alvarez was a geologist and geophysicist for American Overseas Petroleum, Ltd., in 1967-68, serving in subsequent years as a senior geologist, research scientist, research associate, and senior research associate.

Alvarez has been a visiting senior research associate at the Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory at Columbia University, as well as an assistant and associate professor from 1977-81. He joined the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1981 as a professor.

Alvarez received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1983-84. He received the G.K. Gilbert Award from the Geological Society of America in 1985. He is a fellow of the American Geophysical Union, California Academy of Sciences, and in 1986 became an honorary fellow of the European Union of Geosciences. In 1986-87, he served as a Miller research professor at the University of California, Berkeley.



## **Lester Smith '36**

**Retired President,  
Chief Executive Officer  
Home Comfort Products**

At the beginning of the 1990s, a federal study estimated that 27 million Americans annually used illegal drugs. Some decry the problem, others see it as an opportunity for solutions. For Lester Smith '36, it was such a challenge. "I always felt," he says, "that drugs were a bigger problem for the United States than the Russians."

A retired industrialist now living in Arizona, Smith was appalled at stories he heard about local schools in Tucson. Vowing to make a difference, he explored a variety of options until he found the right partner in the School of Education at the University of Arizona. Smith is convinced his program is making a difference for Tucson area schools.

The Smith project, launched through a gift by Smith and his wife, Roberta, is an ambitious teacher-centered program of substance abuse education and prevention for children. While its primary responsibility within the University of Arizona's College of Education is to provide specialized training for teachers, the project also serves as a source of drug-abuse prevention in the wider community.

Smith's program is preventive—not treatment driven. It relies largely on using teachers' classroom skills to get children to reject tobacco, alcohol, and drugs before drug treatment becomes necessary.

The program, launched in 1986, also employs college athletes—frequently role models for youngsters—who visit third and fourth graders and other students at their schools.

The effort is geared to reaching youngsters like "Jim", whose experimentation with drugs in the eighth grade grew to an addiction—involving marijuana, alcohol, and LSD—by his second year of high school. His story was recounted in the newsletter of The Smith Project for Substance Abuse Education. "Jim" recognized the importance of teachers in combating drug abuse—a key goal of the Smith program—when he said, "If teachers were more interested in me as a person and were able to recognize signs better, it would have helped. I was not attentive in class and was very quiet. Teachers need to be more involved so they can pick up on these signs."

Smith has won many honors for his campaign against drug abuse, including receipt of Phi Beta Kappa's "Friend of Education" Award.

Smith established Home Comfort in the early 1940s, a firm that manufactured ventilation equipment and steel and aluminum shelving. Among his firm's most successful products was aluminum shutters produced for Sears, Roebuck, the retailing giant. The company became part of ALCOA in 1972.

## Presidential Scholars

### *Class of 1997*

The Presidential Scholars program recognizes a group of entering freshman who are distinguished both in terms of prior achievement and future promise. They are students who have taken on many challenges, both within the classroom and outside it. The selections are made on the basis of personal interviews and application materials.

The Presidential Scholars program was established by President Robert S. Eckley in 1978. In its early years, five entering students per year were recognized as Presidential Scholars. In more recent years, the number has grown to twelve. This year's twelve Presidential Scholars are the sixteenth group to be so recognized. The students selected as Presidential Scholars typically rank in the top 5% of their high school class. Although no specific score is required, this year's Scholars average 1374 on the SAT.