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Dr. Gregory A. Poland to Address Illinois Wesleyan Commencement

April 1, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Dr. Gregory Poland, an international expert in the field of vaccine development and a 1977 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, will deliver the University's commencement address, "Courage in a Wild World," as 483 seniors receive baccalaureate degrees on Sunday, May 1.

The University's graduation ceremony in its 155th year will take place at 1 p.m. on the Eckley Quadrangle. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held at the Shirk Center (302 Emerson St., Bloomington).

Poland is the founder and director of the Mayo Clinic's Vaccine Research Group. He has been highly visible in the national media on topics of vaccine research and biodefense, giving interviews to major news networks and print media including NBC and ABC "Nightly News," "The Jim Lehrer Report," *The Wall Street Journal* and *Newsweek*.

The Vaccine Research Group's mission is to improve the health of individuals across the world through research addressing the threats of infectious diseases and bioterrorism. The group conducts National Institutes of Health-funded research investigating the immunogenetics of vaccine response and conducts clinical studies of novel vaccines in adults and children. Poland is often asked to advise government and military officials regarding vaccination policies and infectious disease prevention.

A professor at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, in February 2004 Poland received the highest academic distinction for a faculty member when he was appointed as the Mary Lowell Leary Professor in Medicine by the clinic's Board of Trustees. He was awarded the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service for his work on the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board, and he received a joint award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Care Financing Administration for his contribution to increasing adult immunization rates in the United States.

Poland is president of the International Society for Vaccines and is the American editor for the journal "Vaccine." He peer-reviews journal articles for more than 26 publications including "Annals of Internal Medicine" and "New England Journal of Medicine," and has published more than 200 peer-reviewed scientific articles and chapters.

Poland received a bachelor's degree in biology from Illinois Wesleyan. He earned his medical degree from the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield, Ill., and completed his residency and advanced post-doctorate work at the University of Minnesota/Abbott-Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.

Complete details about Commencement 2005 are available on the [Commencement Web site](#).