



Winter 12-26-2001

IWU Receives Grant from the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation

Kate Weber
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news>

Recommended Citation

Weber, Kate, "IWU Receives Grant from the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation" (2001). *News and Events*. 1245.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/1245>

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

December 26, 2001

Contact: Kate Weber, 309/556-3181

IWU Receives Grant from the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. --Illinois Wesleyan University has received a grant from the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation to complete the 75-seat lecture hall/auditorium of The Ames Library, which is scheduled to open Jan. 6. The university is planning a celebration dedication for the new auditorium next semester.

Named after Wilma Beckman, class of 1926 and sister of Arnold O. Beckman, Ph.D., the world renown scientist, inventor, educator, philanthropist and business leader, the auditorium will include full multimedia capabilities and anchor the ground level of the library. The Ames Library totals 103,000 square feet and features a 400,000 plus volume collection of books, journals, documents and films with over 100 computer-equipped workstations for research and fully networked study rooms on all levels.

Wilma Beckman graduated from IWU with a Bachelor of Science degree, a forerunner and role model for many women majoring in the sciences today. While at IWU Beckman was involved with the Alpha Gamma Delta social sorority, the Woman's Athletic Association, the Y.W.C.A., the Home Economics Club, and the Phi Kappa Phi collegiate scholarship fraternity.

The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation is an independent non-profit foundation established for the purpose of supporting leading-edge research, primarily in the fields of chemistry and the life sciences, broadly interpreted, and particularly to foster the invention of methods, instruments and materials that will open up new avenues of research in science.

The foundation initiated the Beckman Scholars Program in 1997 to recognize outstanding undergraduate students in chemistry and biological sciences research at select universities throughout the United States. To date, 282 students at 68 universities have received the award.

In 1999, IWU conferred 111 science degrees of which 50.4 percent were to female students and 14.2 percent of all degrees granted that year. The number of female science majors increased from 226 (41.1 percent) in the fall of 1995 to 332 (50.9 percent) in the year 2000, a growth of nearly 46.9 percent.

The Beckman Foundation has granted money to IWU in the past with the dedication of the Frederick Beckman Auditorium in the Center for Natural Sciences. Frederick is the brother of Arnold and Wilma.

"We are very proud of the family connection and the support we have received," said IWU President Minor Myers.

Arnold and Mabel Beckman

Arnold Beckman, the founder-chairman emeritus of Beckman Instruments, Inc., scientist, inventor, educator, philanthropist and business and civic leader, was born in Cullom, Illinois, on April 10, 1900. He received his bachelor's degree in chemical engineering in 1922 and master's degree in physical chemistry a year later from the University of Illinois. He then received his doctorate degree in photochemistry in 1928 from the California Institute of Technology. He served on the faculty at Caltech until 1940.

In 1940, Beckman introduced the Beckman DU Spectrophotometer, revolutionizing chemical analysis by improving the time and accuracy of biological assays to minutes with 99.9 percent precision. Previously it had taken weeks with only 25 percent accuracy to complete the same task.

Beckman Instruments is now one of the world's leading suppliers of instruments and related products to the health care and life sciences markets.

Beckman received the 1989 National Medal of Science from President Bush for his leadership in the development of analytical instrumentation and for his great concern for the vitality of the nation's scientific enterprise. Also in 1989, from President Reagan, Beckman received the Presidential Citizens Medal and in 1988, the National Medal of Technology for outstanding contributions to the U.S. through technology. Most recently, in 1999, he was the recipient of the Public Welfare Medal from the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C.

Born on December 20, 1900, in Brooklyn, N.Y., Mabel Beckman met her future husband at the U.S.O. while serving Thanksgiving dinner at the Red Cross just as the first World War was ending. Arnold Beckman was a Marine stationed at the Brooklyn navy shipyard. The two married in 1925 in Bayside, Long Island, N.Y. Mabel Beckman belonged to the Caltech Woman's Club, after her husband joined the faculty at Caltech, and the Beckman Instruments Women's Club.