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Kenny '13 Named Wesleyan's Lincoln Laureate

Nov. 28, 2012

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Daniel Kenny, a senior from Wildwood, Mo., has been selected as Illinois Wesleyan University's recipient of the 2012 Lincoln Academy of Illinois Student Laureate Award. The award recognizes outstanding academic achievement and extracurricular activities among college seniors.

Kenny was honored at a ceremony earlier this month in Springfield, Ill. Accompanied by Deborah Halperin, program coordinator of Illinois Wesleyan's Action Research Center, Kenny received a Student Laureate Medallion, along with an honorarium check and certificate of achievement.

Chosen from a pool of qualified Illinois Wesleyan seniors, Kenny is an environmental studies and Hispanic studies double major. In the spring of 2011, he studied in Barcelona, Spain, through IWU's Study Abroad program. As a Weir Fellow, Kenny coordinated campus-wide efforts to establish a new one-acre community garden, named the Peace Garden, near campus. He was also a Facilities Management Intern at State Farm Insurance Company in Bloomington in the summer of 2011, where he developed a contingency plan for operations during emergency drought conditions, and interned at the Ecology Action Center in Bloomington during the same time period.

Kenny is a member of the varsity men's soccer team, currently serving as captain; president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee; and awareness events commissioner of the Student Senate.

He serves as co-chairperson of the GREENetwork, a group of volunteer students, faculty, staff and administrators addressing sustainability on the Wesleyan campus. As a freshman, he began interning with Wesleyan's Action Research Center (ARC), which provides students with the skills necessary for applied research projects in the community and also serves as a clearinghouse and referral service to facilitate student-faculty-community research partnerships. Most recently he served ARC as field coordinator, where he managed other student interns and taught workshops on community development.

"As a student, an athlete, and a community, Danny is leaving an important legacy at Wesleyan," said Halperin. "It has been his ability to connect all three areas that distinguishes Danny among his peers.

"For example, Danny's soccer team ran drills with a new youth league on the west side of Bloomington," Halperin explained. "Danny later used those same community contacts for assistance in founding the Peace Garden. He used his academic training from a grant writing class to secure funding for youth and community gardening. For Danny, it is all connected. He has a mission to serve the greater good and finds ways on the field, in the classroom or out in the community to make important and meaningful contributions."

Kenny is also a member of the following: Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest liberal arts honor society; Phi Kappa Phi, an honor society across all academic disciplines; Phi Beta Delta, an honor society recognizing achievement in international education; and Sigma Delta Pi, the national collegiate Hispanic honors society.

"I am humbled by this award," said Kenny. "I owe a lot to Deborah Halperin and to all the professors and mentors I have had at Wesleyan. I wouldn't have received anything without their help."



*Action Research Center Program Coordinator
Deborah Halperin with 2012 Student Laureate
Daniel Kenny*

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