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## New Students Urged to Engage, Listen, Learn

Kim Hill

*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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## New Students Urged to Engage, Listen, Learn

Aug. 24, 2012

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — On their first day as Illinois Wesleyan students, 499 new students and 33 transfer students gathered Tuesday, Aug. 21, in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall for the annual New Student Convocation.

"You are the most diverse class Illinois Wesleyan has ever celebrated," said Karla Carney-Hall, vice president for student affairs and dean of students. She noted preliminary numbers indicate 130 MALANA students comprise nearly 25 percent of the incoming class of 2016. MALANA is an acronym for IWU's racially underrepresented student population. Carney-Hall said the students sitting in Westbrook had come to IWU from 18 states and 12 different countries.

Welcoming the new class, President Richard F. Wilson promised that Wesleyan's faculty and staff would strive to make each student's experience "just as special for you as it was for every student who has ever enrolled here." He noted, however, that the incoming class held responsibility as well. "You have to engage in the opportunities both inside and outside the classroom," Wilson said. "Your time on this campus is not well used if you are simply a spectator."

The president led the students in their first recitation of the campus motto, "Scientia et Sapientia" (which translates to "knowledge and wisdom"). "You should accumulate the former and convey the latter," Wilson said. "Do more with your time here than just accumulate facts and information."



*Professor of Physics Narendra Jaggi spoke at the New Student Convocation.*

dissent than in passive agreement, for, if you value intelligence as you should, the former implies a deeper agreement than the latter."



*Music at the New Student Convocation featured class member Elena Denny '16 on cello.*

▶ [See more photos](#) from orientation activities

Keynote speaker Narendra Jaggi, professor of physics, noted the irony that he — a product of "the most illiberal education system in the world" in his native India — would be asked to deliver a message on the importance of a liberal arts education. "I realized when I came here as a professor that I was not liberally educated and so I have the passion of a convert," Jaggi said, noting that he read required textbooks for sociology, philosophy and biochemistry courses after joining IWU's faculty in 1991. People newly converted to a religion "are often a little too passionate," he added, "and that is me about the liberal arts."

Jaggi outlined six principles for students to consider as they launch their college careers, including "Talk to everyone." As for the style of discourse, Jaggi recommended a quote from British philosopher Bertrand Russell: "Find more pleasure in intelligent

Jaggi also advised members of the first-year class to "listen, and not just with your ears," but with their hearts. "Listening is the essence of learning," Jaggi said, explaining that, in his classroom, students earn the right to speak by first listening to their classmates' arguments.

"My message for you is I hope you will learn a whole damn lot in the next four years and while you do that, I hope you have a whole lot of fun," concluded Jaggi, who was named the 2013 winner of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, the University's highest teaching honor.

Other speakers included Rachel Paturi '13, president of the Student Senate. "IWU has a way of taking past experiences and building on them even if you don't realize it," Paturi stated. "No one is going to tell you what your college experience is going to look like. It is up to you to decide what experiences you want."

The convocation was part of Turning Titan: New Student Orientation, a busy week that gives students a chance to meet their first-year advisors, sign up for classes and become acquainted with the campus. The orientation also includes a "mission day" where students perform volunteer work in the Bloomington-Normal community. The first day of classes for all students is Monday, Aug. 27

Contact: **Kim Hill**, (309) 556-3960