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Inaugural Robert S. Eckley Lecture in Economics

March 14, 2013

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — MIT economist and best-selling author Daron Acemoglu will be the guest speaker March 27 for the inaugural Robert S. Eckley Lecture in Economics at Illinois Wesleyan University. Acemoglu is a co-author of *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, a *New York Times* best seller in 2012 that economist William Easterly, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, calls "... an eloquent and powerful statement of the long-run success of democratic capitalism at a time when it is under attack."

This annual lecture series was made possible by a gift from Illinois Wesleyan's former President Robert S. Eckley shortly before his death in 2012. The Eckley family will attend the event, which will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Hansen Student Center (300 Beecher St., Bloomington). The lecture is free and open to the public.



Daron Acemoglu

"For the inaugural Eckley Lecture, we have enjoyed the support of the President's Office to bring internationally known Daron Acemoglu, who studies one of the most difficult questions in the discipline of economics: why some nations prosper and some don't," said Diego Mendez-Carbajo, chair and associate professor of economics at IWU. Making connections with political science and drawing from historical examples, Acemoglu is able to engage multiple audiences with rigor and flair," Mendez-Carbajo said.

Acemoglu, the Elizabeth and James Killian Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is the winner of the 2005 John Bates Clark Medal from the American Economic Association. A widely published scholar, Acemoglu is among the 20 most "cited economists in the world," according to RePEc, an electronic repository of research papers in economics. Born in Istanbul, Turkey, his most recent works focus on the role of institutions in economic development and political economy.

He received his doctorate degree in 1992 from the London School of Economics (LSE) and was a lecturer in economics at the LSE from 1992-1993. Acemoglu is a member of the Economic Growth program of the Canadian Institute of Advanced Research, and is affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research, a private, nonpartisan research organization; the Center for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics; and the Center for Economic Policy Research.

"He spans the diversity of political economic issues and moves between disciplines," said Michael Seeborg, the Robert S. Eckley Distinguished Professor of Economics at Illinois Wesleyan. "Acemoglu's topics should be of interest to many observers. It is such an honor to have him here, honoring Dr. Eckley."

Why Nations Fail "...should be required reading for politicians and anyone concerned with economic development," says the *The New York Review of Books*. And Amazon.com calls it: "Brilliant and engagingly written, *Why Nations Fail* answers the question that has stumped the experts for centuries: Why are some nations rich and others poor, divided by wealth and poverty, health and sickness, food and famine? Is it culture, the weather, geography? Perhaps ignorance of what the right policies are? Simply, no. None of these factors is either definitive or destiny."

The Robert S. Eckley Lecture in Economics is one of two gifts to the University totaling \$515,000 from the late President Emeritus Robert S. Eckley, his wife Nell and the Eckley Family Foundation, announced in April of 2012 by IWU President Richard F. Wilson. According to Wilson, this gift will enable economics faculty to bring to campus, a distinguished scholar, yearly, to speak on a topic that will enhance the intellectual experience of students and faculty and broaden the understanding of economic analyses and perspectives among others on campus and in the community.

For additional information, contact Carl Teichman, director of government and community relations at (309) 556-3429 or email at cteich@iwu.edu.

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