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Students Receiving State Farm Scholarships Celebrated

Feb. 18, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— The annual State Farm Scholars luncheon, which took place on Feb. 18 in the Young Main Lounge, brought company representatives together with many of this year's 100 scholarship recipients supported by grants from the State Farm Companies Foundation. Over the seven years of this program, approximately 250 Illinois Wesleyan students have benefited from this unique scholarship program.



State Farm Scholars

“This spring the 175th State Farm Scholar will graduate from Illinois Wesleyan. I know of no other liberal arts college in the United States that has a corporate scholarship program that is as broadly based and substantial as the one we enjoy through the State Farm Scholars program,” said University President Richard F. Wilson, who proposed the idea to longtime supporter State Farm in 2008. “And, as everyone knows, State Farm’s commitment extends well beyond scholarships to other key areas. Anyone who walks across our quad can see a very big commitment in the State Farm Hall classroom building. Other areas of support include the Action Research Center, Accounting Leaders of Tomorrow, and Athletics.

Speaking on behalf of the current group of scholarship recipients was Rebekah Ehresman (Gridley, Ill.), a first-year student and member of the Titan basketball team. Ehresman said she was “extremely grateful” for the scholarship, without which she would not have been able to attend Illinois Wesleyan, a school she had long admired and dreamed she would one day be a member of the school’s basketball team.

Kevin Callis, vice president of operations and corporate law for State Farm and a 1985 Illinois Wesleyan graduate, spoke on behalf of the company and noted that “we’re proud to make an investment in each of you,” referring to the scholarship recipients. He also said that education is very important to State Farm and that the company is also partnering with K-12 education so every student can get the kind of education they need. He said this is especially important to CEO Ed Rust, who is also a Wesleyan graduate.

In addition to Callis, 12 other State Farm executives were in attendance, including Matt Pankau, a member of the IWU class of 2014, who was a State Farm Scholar and delivered remarks at last year’s luncheon.

To learn more about the State Farm Scholars program, contact Van Miller, director of the Wesleyan Fund, at (309) 556-3127.

By Matt Kurz