



Summer 8-21-2015

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Recommended Citation

Hill, Kim, "Gordon Wins Starkey Award" (2015). *News and Events*. 2890.
<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/2890>

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Gordon Wins Starkey Award

Aug. 21, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Eric Gordon is the 2015 winner of the Max L. Starkey Service Award at Illinois Wesleyan University. President Richard F. Wilson announced Gordon as the winner Aug. 21 at the annual Faculty-Staff Breakfast.

The Starkey Award, established in 2001, is given to a staff member whose loyalty, enthusiasm and outstanding contributions have provided an invaluable service to the Illinois Wesleyan community. The award is named in honor of the late Max Starkey, an IWU member of the Class of 1957, who was the University's controller for more than 39 years until his retirement in 1996. The award is made possible through a gift of the Max Starkey family.

A 20-year employee of IWU, Gordon is mailroom coordinator in Publications, Printing and Mailing Services (PPMS). Gordon volunteered to take on daily mail delivery in spring 2014 in addition to his other responsibilities, which include working with the United States Postal Service, coordinating UPS and FedEx package delivery services, and assisting students, faculty and staff with mailing questions. Several nominators mentioned Gordon's cheerfulness, enthusiasm, 'can-do' attitude, and sense of humor while delivering mail to their offices. "You can hear his laughter coming down the hall when he's on his mail route, and you know you'll experience a few brief minutes of fun in your stressful day," one nominator wrote. Another wrote that Gordon "always tries to make people feel good through humor. He's a great ambassador for the school."

Other nominators spoke of Gordon's dedication to the job as his duties have changed over the years in PPMS. "He's punctual on his route, or will tell you why he's delayed. He'll find the best postal rate for mailing packages, work related or personal, he's understanding when we have big mailings, he takes things in stride, and is very helpful when we're a little delayed meeting the last pickup of the day," a nominator wrote.

Several nominators mentioned Gordon's memorable co-hosting duties at the annual holiday luncheon for faculty and staff, including writing and performing original humorous songs for the event. "He's a perfect emcee," one nominator wrote. "Without really trying, he can make everyone laugh and feel good."

A committee of former Illinois Wesleyan staff and faculty and members of the Starkey family selects the Starkey Award winner from nominations from the faculty and staff. This year's committee included: Todd Tucker, associate professor emeritus of music theory; Agnes Huonker, former office coordinator in Admissions; Chris Prendergast, professor emeritus of sociology; Lynn Nichelson, former assistant dean, Enrollment Management; Emmalyn Dickinson, former office coordinator, Alumni Relations; and Norma Criley, professor emerita of biology. Dana Starkey '94 and Tina Starkey Swingler '97, two of Max Starkey's children, were also involved in the committee's determination of the winner.



President Richard F. Wilson presented the Starkey Award to Eric Gordon.