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## This Month at Illinois Wesleyan

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# This Month at Illinois Wesleyan

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In her invocation opening the President’s Convocation, University Chaplain Elyse Nelson Winger called for the campus community to “stand together...amid a world full of beauty, but broken, too. May we grow this new year in wisdom and courage.” Nelson Winger also quoted Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai: “Let us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism, let us pick up our books and our pens, they are our most powerful weapons.”

Books, wisdom and courage: what better tools to call upon in the quest for knowledge and understanding? Here we present a pictorial record of September at Illinois Wesleyan.



Investigative reporter and President’s Convocation speaker Jenny Nordberg spoke about her work researching *The Underground Girls of Kabul* in gender-segregated Afghanistan. The book details the practice of *bacha posh* – translated as “dressed up like a boy,” in which parents dress their female children as boys so that they can enjoy rights denied to girls in Afghan society. Following several of these girls for years, including their transition back to their birth genders, Nordberg said she struggled to draw a conclusion as to whether the practice was good or bad. It “is something that can have horrible consequences for individuals and families, and it’s also, maybe, one of the best expressions of human creativity.” Looking at cultural oppression in Afghanistan and other societies, both in the present and throughout history, Nordberg noted, “There will always be people who try and get out from under that, they will try to join the other side, they will try to lie, they will try to disguise themselves, they’ll do anything to be part of the group that’s the accepted group, the one who has the rights.”

(Photo by Robert Frank III '14)



The University’s 2016-17 intellectual theme, “Women’s Power, Women’s Justice,” got off to a spirited start with a luncheon attended by more than 200 students, faculty and staff. At the luncheon, students grappled with women’s issues such as equal and fair compensation, societal gender expectations, pressing health care needs and choosing their own paths in life. Students will continue to think and discuss aspects of issues women face through more than 25 fall semester courses related to the theme, and at dozens of co-curricular events, lectures, films and other forms of programming. (Photo by Phone Vilailuck '18).



When James Tribett is not lending his mellifluous voice to the singing of the national anthem at Titan football, volleyball, softball, lacrosse or basketball games, he’s a custodian at the Shirk Center. “James normally likes to stay out of sight in the press box, but for the football home opener, we coaxed him to come out in front of the fans to belt it out,” said one longtime admirer of Tribett’s vocal skills. (Photo by Robert Frank III '14)





Acacia fraternity member Andrew Pichette '18 gets drenched during the chapter's Wetter for the Better special event. With proceeds benefitting the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, the fundraiser invited participants to toss or throw a water balloon at their favorite Acacian — or, in this case, just break the balloons over his head for maximum effect. (Photo by Tana Smithsakol '18)



At the annual RSO Fair, even Tommy Titan joined hundreds of students shopping among the many options for activities or organizations to join. While gobbling free pizza and enjoying the sounds of WESN Radio, students talked with representatives from more than 200 registered student organizations, campus offices and even a few community service organizations as groups touted their selling points on a glorious late summer afternoon. (Photo by Tana Smithsakol '18)



Outside hitter Tyler Brown '19 was selected as the national winner of the Sports Imports/American Volleyball Coaches Association Division III Women's Player of the Week in mid-September. Brown is the first student-athlete from Illinois Wesleyan to win the national Division III Sports Imports/AVCA Player of the Week. She was also chosen as CCIW "Offensive Player of the Week" the same day. Brown and her volleyball teammates had a great September, defeating No. 10-ranked Washington University and ranking No. 16 in the weekly American Volleyball Coaches Association Division III poll, the highest ever attained by an IWU volleyball team. (Photo by Robert Frank III '14)





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Developing content from their own personal experiences as students and young adults, performers and designers in the lab theatre production of *Nervous/System* run through the performance piece during dress rehearsal. The production was conceptualized by the students and guided by interactive-electronics artist and School of Theatre Arts alumnus Andrew Schneider '03. (Photo by Marc Featherly)



Chair and Associate Professor of Economics Ilaria Ossella-Durbal clarifies a concept in her course "Intermediate Microeconomics." The course is a core requirement for economics majors and can be quite challenging for students because it involves an analytical thought process that is somewhat abstract, according to the professor. "It's extremely rewarding to me when students are able to internalize these abstract concepts and begin to think like economists," she said. "The course teaches students how to use graphical models to help them think about what is going on in their own lives, such as the choices they make, or in their town, like what firms are entering a market and what prices they are charging. It is extremely rewarding when students begin to use these tools to think more deeply about the world around them." (Photo by Makenna Merritt '17)



Members of the IWU student acapella group silenceinterrupted strike their best album-cover pose while friends and fans record the moment. The group performed during Saturday morning festivities at Family Weekend. (Photo by Tana Smithsakol '18)





President Eric Jensen joined other luminaries attending the launch of the Peace Corps Prep program at Illinois Wesleyan. The program prepares students for international development fieldwork and potential Peace Corps service. To receive a certificate from the Peace Corps, students in the program must complete work sector training, master a foreign language, and gain intercultural, leadership and professional development experience through community service opportunities and existing IWU courses. The program “is a strong confirmation of our commitment to service,” said Jensen. “This is a natural fit.” (Photo by Kim Hill)

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Utilizing the format of a presidential debate, the Hart Career Center invited recruiters from four prominent employers to share what they look for in a resume and to present strategies for interviewing. Hansen Student Center was decked out in red, white and blue for the well-attended event, which included opportunities for students to network with recruiters after the presentations. “I’m so lucky to be at a school that sponsors events like this that are student-focused,” said attendee and business administration major Reilly Kasprak ’17. Though she confessed to being intimidated by the HR recruiters at first, “by the end of the event I felt more confident, and with their tips and advice, I am going to be a much better candidate.”(Photo by Tana Smithsakol ’18)

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Students and their families pondered questions during Family Weekend’s “Nerdology,” an interactive pop-culture trivia show in which teams match wits to determine who is the master of trivia related to nerdy knowledge and pop culture. (Photo by Phone Vilailuck ’18)

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The football team from Monterrey Tech in Mexico traveled to Tucci Stadium for an exhibition game Sept. 3 against the Titans, who won 33-16. (Photo by Robert Frank III '14)

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In less than three weeks and with little more than a sketchy idea of the show's content, theatre alumnus Andrew Schneider '03 led students in the creation of an elaborate and memorable performance piece for the E. Melba Johnson Kirkpatrick Laboratory Theatre's first fall production. "I wanted to force myself into a quick time period, making things, trusting myself in a room with other people, and having them trust me and see where we are all going to end up," Schneider said of the process. Based in Brooklyn, N.Y., Schneider is a performer, writer and interactive-electronics artist. He won an Obie Award in 2015 for *YOUARENOWHERE*, an original performance work that was also nominated for a Drama Desk award for unique theatrical experience. (Photo by Marc Featherly)