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Illinois Wesleyan University Student Wins Diversity Essay Contest

February 8, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Patrick Halloran, a sophomore history and religion double major at Illinois Wesleyan University from Danville, Ill., was named the first place winner of the Sikh Coalition Diversity Essay Contest for his essay "Diverse Doxology."

The essay competition, which received entries from all over the world, was instituted in 2004 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikh Coalition, which was created 100 years after the founding of the religion. The Sikh Coalition was founded 500 years ago by Guru Nanka, the first guru, who wanted to find peace between the warring Hindus and Muslims of northwestern India.

This year, the Coalition invited young people of all denominations, faiths, cultures, sexes, races, and ethnicities to share their views on the following subject: "Religious pluralism is not mere tolerance of others. It requires constructive and active engagement with those who are different, recognizing that diversity can enrich our lives."

Halloran entered the competition this fall while studying abroad in London, England, with the Illinois Wesleyan's London Study Abroad Program. According to Halloran, he wanted to educate people with his essay and credited his strong multicultural upbringing and friends, many of whom are of the Sikh faith, for inspiring his writing.

At Illinois Wesleyan, Halloran is a member of the South Asian Student Association, which recently raised \$1000 for the tsunami efforts. The area affected by the tsunami is home to many followers of the Sikh Coalition.

Halloran, the son of Dr. and Mrs. Halloran of Danville and a 2002 graduate of Danville High School, plans to donate his essay contest winnings to the tsunami relief efforts.

The winning essay can be read at http://www.sikhcoalition.org/essay_result.asp#Awa.



Patrick Halloran

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