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## IWU Welcomes New Students With First-Year Convocation

Aug. 19, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - In the calm after the storm of moving into residence halls, Illinois Wesleyan University's class of 2009 will be formally welcomed to the institution at the annual Convocation for First-Year Students, which will be held in the Shirk Center (302 E. Emerson St., Bloomington) at 4:15 p.m. on Tuesday, August 23.

The ceremony kicks off Fall Festival, IWU's six-day orientation for first-year students, which allows the new students to move in, register for classes and familiarize themselves with the campus before upperclassmen return to school and the fall semester begins on August 29.

At the convocation, approximately 600 first-year students in Fall Festival T-shirts will process into the performance arena of the Shirk Center, where the University's president, Richard F. Wilson, will welcome them. Roger Schnaitter, acting provost, will speak on behalf of the faculty and Kevin Maliszewski, Student Senate president, will represent IWU's student body.

After a vocal performance by a member of the class of 2009, tenor Justin Holloway of *Metamora, Ill.*, convocation speaker Mary Ann Bushman, associate professor of English at IWU, will address the students and their families.

A member of the IWU faculty since 1980, Bushman served as the department chair of English from 1989-1993. On April 13, 2005, she was named winner of the 2006 *Pantagraph* Award for Teaching Excellence, IWU's top teaching honor.

Bushman's speech, entitled "In Media Res: an Epic Beginning" is inspired by epic poems such as *The Odyssey*, all of which begin "in media res," a Latin phrase meaning "in the middle of events." Bushman will suggest that, though incoming students often consider college a new beginning, like the epic heroes of literature, the first-year students are, in fact, already well into the action of their personal stories.

Through images of Chartres cathedral, a contemporary ad and a painting by Hans Holbein called *The Ambassadors*, Bushman will also illustrate the importance of the liberal arts in decoding both ancient and contemporary images and messages.

Bushman hopes that students will come away from the convocation understanding that, at Illinois Wesleyan, a high G.P.A. should not be the only goal. "In choosing a liberal arts school, you've chosen to explore," said Bushman.

Fall Festival activities, including workshops about campus life, mural painting, a book discussion group, service projects and social events in the Hansen Student Center, will continue through Sunday, August 28.



Mary Ann Bushman