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Founders' Day Speaker: Breakthrough Discoveries Lead to Real World Applications

Julia Perez
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Founders' Day Speaker: Breakthrough Discoveries Lead to Real World Applications

Jan. 13, 2022

Health and innovative thinking was the focus of this year's Founders' Day Convocation at Illinois Wesleyan University.

[A recording of the virtual Convocation may be viewed here.](#)

Illinois Wesleyan President S. Georgia Nugent spoke of the motives that led to the founding of the University in 1850 and their relevance today, as well as the annual intellectual theme of "Health, Healing and Humanity."

"A theme that obviously could not be more relevant today, as we see these three inextricably intertwined in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic," she said.

Biomedical researcher William Murphy, a 1998 IWU Physics and math graduate, gave the keynote address titled "Mimicking Nature to Create New Technology."

Murphy spoke about how his experience as a Titan helped shape his future career in biotechnology. He shared examples of his research efforts to create regenerative medicine based on materials already found in nature.

"You are fortunate to be enrolled at a 'yes, and' institution," said Murphy. "You don't have to choose to become only a physicist, or only a chemist, or only a business student. You can also be a baseball player or a musician. One can engage in all of these opportunities at once to build what will become the foundation for your life's journey."

He reminded students that every course of study can make an impact on the world.

"I hope I've convinced you today that there is so much more to discover and leverage in nature and that all disciplines can contribute to the future of biotechnology," he said. "Your IWU education is preparing you wonderfully to make breakthrough discoveries and turn them into real-world products."



By Julia Perez