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Founding of Brokaw Nursing School Celebrated at IWU Homecoming

BLOOMINGTON, Ill — In recognition of the centennial of the founding of the former Brokaw Hospital School of Nursing this fall, Illinois Wesleyan University has organized special Homecoming events to recognize the Brokaw graduates.

In 1902, the Brokaw School of Nursing was founded at what is now the BroMenn Regional Medical Center. The class from that diploma school graduated in 1961. Between 1902 and 1961, 580 nurses graduated from Brokaw.

The Brokaw Collegiate School of Nursing at Illinois Wesleyan was founded, with action of the University's Board of Trustees, in 1958, and the door opened in 1959, which was the first year of the four-year program leading to the bachelor of science in nursing degree.

The formal relationship between Illinois Wesleyan and Brokaw dates back to 1923 when a formal agreement between the two institutions established a five-year degree program. Many of the diploma school graduates completed three years of "technical" education at the Brokaw School of Nursing and two years at Illinois Wesleyan. These graduates received a B.S. degree from Illinois Wesleyan.

According to Donna Hartweg, dean of the School of Nursing at IWU, all living alumni of Brokaw along with those physicians who taught in the program have been invited to a Homecoming brunch on October 5. The special program will be held from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the Center for Natural Science Atrium and The Beckman Auditorium during which returning alumni from that program will have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences at Brokaw and their post-graduate lives and careers.

Beginning on October 4, The Ames Library will have a special exhibit commemorating the 100th Anniversary of The Brokaw Hospital School of Nursing. In addition to historic photographs, the display will also have examples of the way in which nursing uniforms have evolved over the last 100 years.