



Spring 3-31-2003

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### **Recommended Citation**

Hanna, Jeff, "Wayne Messmer To Speak at Illinois Wesleyan Commencement" (2003). *News and Events*. 5515.

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March 31, 2003

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## *Wayne Messmer To Speak at Illinois Wesleyan Commencement*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. —Wayne Messmer, the popular “Voice of Wrigley Field” who made a miraculous comeback from a near-fatal gunshot wound to the throat, will deliver the commencement address at his alma mater, Illinois Wesleyan University, on Sunday, May 4.

The University’s graduation ceremony in its 153<sup>rd</sup> year will take place at 1 p.m. on the Eckley Quadrangle. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held at the Shirk Center.

Approximately 510 students will be awarded bachelor’s degrees at this year’s commencement. The graduating class includes students from 20 states and 12 foreign countries. Individual honors will be announced at commencement.

Messmer received a bachelor’s degree in music education from Illinois Wesleyan in 1972 and went on to earn a master’s degree in counseling from Loyola University Chicago and a Ph.D. in theocentric psychology from La Salle University.

Although Messmer’s career has ranged from radio broadcaster to musical theatre performer to inspirational speaker to founding partner of a professional hockey team, he is best known for his stirring rendition of the National Anthem prior to events in his native Chicago.

Most closely associated with the Chicago Cubs, Messmer not only sings the National Anthem prior to games but also serves as the team’s public address announcer.

In April 1994, Messmer was shot in the throat during an armed robbery attempt and temporarily lost his voice. His subsequent jail visit to his assailant has made him a nationally recognized speaker on the topic of forgiveness. His recovery from that shooting is the subject of his book, *The Voice of Victory*.

Messmer has held a professional association with the Chicago Cubs since 1985. For three years prior to joining the Cubs, he was the field announcer and soloist for the Chicago White Sox. He also spent 13 seasons with the Chicago Blackhawks of the NHL. His association with sports began as the announcer/soloist for the Chicago Sting soccer team. He is a founding partner of the Chicago Wolves professional hockey team for which he now serves in a consulting role as senior vice president.

A reader’s poll of Chicago’s *North Shore Magazine* once listed Messmer as second only to Michael Jordan on a list of Chicago’s favorite personalities.

Messmer is the founder of Wayne Messmer & Associates, a company specializing in the area of human development and interpersonal communications. Through a series of original workshops, the topics of life balance, time management, and value-centered management coaching are taught.