



Summer 8-19-2009

New Students Urged to Find 'Right Kind of Confidence'

Rachel Hatch
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news>

Recommended Citation

Hatch, Rachel, "New Students Urged to Find 'Right Kind of Confidence'" (2009). *News and Events*. 5659.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/5659>

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

August 19, 2009

Contact: Rachel Hatch, (309) 556-3960

New Students Urged to Find 'Right Kind of Confidence'

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – It was a day of beginnings and welcome for Illinois Wesleyan University students of the class of 2013. Celebrating their first day on campus, 526 new students and 31 transfer students gathered in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall on Tuesday for the New Student Convocation, part of the annual “Turning Titan” week on campus.

“This is a very talented and diverse group that comes from across the nation and around the world,” said President Richard F. Wilson at the Convocation. Wilson noted students sitting in Westbrook had come to Illinois Wesleyan from 21 states and from 11 different countries. “You hail from China, Spain, Nepal, Ghana and Israel, just to name a few. The diversity of your background, interests, talents and ideas adds to the vitality of our campus community.”

Wilson led the students in their first recitation of the campus motto, “*Scientia et Sapientia*” (which translates to “knowledge and wisdom”). “You should do more with your time here than simply acquire facts and information,” Wilson explained. “You must learn how to use that knowledge wisely for the benefit of others.”

Keynote speaker Associate Professor of English Wes Chapman said he could envision the excitement and nervousness new students experience on their first day. Still, he encouraged students to “have confidence. Have confidence that it is going to be okay, but try to have the right kind of confidence – a genuine confidence rather than a false one.”

Chapman, the 2010 winner of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, advised students to avoid the type of confidence that could lead to mistakes, such as thinking they can start a paper the night before it is due, or feeling they do not need to study for tests. “That kind of false confidence cannot usually stand the test of experience,” said Chapman. “It flips over easily into destructive self-doubt.” He also urged students to avoid the doubt that comes from basing confidence wholly on test grades. “Your GPA will matter for about 15 minutes after you graduate,” he said, quickly adding with a smile. “It’s an important 15 minutes, so don’t think you can ignore your grades.”

Instead, Chapman encouraged students to find confidence in challenges. “Genuine confidence consists of learning exactly how good you are because you have been tested, you have been pushed to your limits,” he said. “The very best kind of confidence comes from having been pushed beyond your limits, and having risen to that challenge to do work that is better than you ever thought you could achieve.” He dared students to take demanding courses, join organizations, volunteer and study abroad. “Do things in the long run to develop the confidence to do anything you want in the future. Explore as much as you can.”

Other speakers assured new students they would have resources to help them find their path on campus. “I think I can speak for many on this campus when I say it’s not my job, but my very passion to make sure you are finding your passion,” said Dean of Students Kathy Cavins to the audience. Alumnus and Young Alumni Committee Chair Justine Robinson, a 2006 graduate, let students know that support will continue long after they leave Illinois Wesleyan. “When you graduate, you will look behind you and realize how big an army of Titans are marching behind you,” she said.

-30-