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## Guess Who's Coming to ... Interview You! Former Veep Dan Quayle Focuses on IWU '96

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Guess Who's Coming to . . . Interview You!

**Former Veep Dan Quayle Focuses on IWU '96 Graduate, Family  
In New Book About the American Family, Values**

*local, composite  
features, education  
minority*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--So, what happens when a former vice president of the United States plops himself down at your dining room table for a 10-hour gabfest about marriage, raising kids, education, working, welfare, drugs, crime, and a potpourri of other cutting-edge social issues?

If you're the Burtins, an African-American family living on Chicago's West Side, you end up being one of five families nationally profiled in a new book, co-authored by former Vice President Dan Quayle and psychologist Diane Medved, "The American Family--Discovering the Values That Make Us Strong."

Darnell Burtin, a physics major who graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University May 5, joined his parents, grandparents, other extended family members for talks with Quayle last year, as America's 44th vice president researched his new book about the strengths of diverse families from Virginia to Los Angeles. His sister, DaToya, valedictorian of her high school class and an IWU freshman next semester, also joined in the conversations.

"He's a really nice man," Darnell said, referring to Quayle, a former U.S. Representative and Senator from Indiana. "He briefly talked about being vice president, but really didn't go into it.

"It was a high honor for him to come visit us," Darnell said, quickly adding he's not a person influenced by celebrity figures.

The Burtins were linked up with Quayle-Medved through Paul J. Adams, principal of Providence-St. Mel, a private high school attended by Darnell and DaToya.

"I suppose we were picked for the book," Darnell said, "because the things we do as a family are not typical of black families. We live on the West Side of Chicago, where there are drugs and high crime in some areas.

"But," Darnell added, "we survived without drugs and gangs. We're just normal teenagers and adults."

The Burtins of 5442 W. Flournoy met several times with Quayle-Medved last year and the beginning of this year. One session with Medved, Darnell recalled, lasted until 2 a.m.

The Burtins, according to Darnell, defy stereotyping. "Every night," he said, "you turn on the news and someone is killed--and 90 percent of that involves minorities. The majority of

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the time, you don't hear about positive things about the black community. For Mr. Quayle to see a black family who is making it--a black family who eats Thanksgiving dinner together and talks about work and school--he thought that was excellent.

"But," Darnell pointed out, "with Mr. Quayle's stature it makes me think, 'What do other middle-class whites in suburbia think about blacks?' We're not different from other families I know."

Darnell and DaToya's parents are Dan and Jacqueline (Jackie) Burtin. Both are college graduates. Dan is a computer specialist for the city of Chicago and Jackie is a substitute teacher, working on a master's degree.

The Burtin's are a close-knit, self-reliant family, where education, communication, a stable marriage, and religion play central roles in their lives.

Quayle writes in his book: "Children don't 'get in trouble' in the Burtin family. Dan has eight siblings; Jackie has five. None of the many cousins has had brushes with the law, experienced out-of-wedlock birth, or become involved with gangs or drugs. The main reason is the family's 'preventive medicine.' A child slacking off in the most minor way--disrespectful of elders, earning C's when he's capable of A's--is caught in a net of concern, by family members individually and collectively."

There are several messages in Quayle's books, according to Darnell.

"Despite hardships in raising a family," he said, "you can still do it. Ordinary families stick out because there is so much attention given to the very rich or the very poor--the middle class is missed, and it is shrinking.

"It's my duty to go on to do better than [our parents]," Darnell said. "My sister and I and others have the chance to go to college and do better. We can paint a much different picture [of minorities] than you see on TV."

However, Darnell told Quayle-Medved that "I think success has a stigma in the black community. Young black men sometimes believe sports are their only way out. When I came out of high school--I could show you--I got letters from Stanford, University of North Carolina, University of Nevada, whatever, for track. I didn't accept a track scholarship . . . I can go to school on academics and graduate and be successful in that, and not use sports as my crutch."

When Darnell, an All-State track star in high school, was shopping around for a college, he applied to and was accepted by 17 campuses, receiving NCAA Division I athletic

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scholarship offers.

He selected IWU, a Division III campus with no athletic scholarships, he said, "because I just didn't want to be a piece of meat. I wanted to learn and challenge myself. I also wanted to go to a place where I could work with professors one-on-one."

However, as an IWU freshman, Darnell successfully blended academic and athletics, winning All-America honors in the long jump.

But it was physics courses like quantum and theoretical mechanics that helped Darnell land internships for three summers with Pepper Construction Co., including last year when he was doing budgeting, scheduling, estimating, and value engineering on a project at Northwestern University.

Darnell has had several other enriching experiences:

- After his sophomore year in high school, he participated in an archeological dig, writing an article about the experience.
- After his junior year in high school, he spent the summer at a prep school in Massachusetts, studying economics and history.
- Last summer, he took night classes at Roosevelt University.

After graduation, Darnell, 22, was weighing job offers in Texas, Las Vegas, San Francisco, and elsewhere, expecting to be employed by August. His career goals include becoming an engineer, owning a business, and investing in real estate.

DaToya, a skilled volleyball player, also has had several challenging academic experiences. She spent last summer, for example, studying math applications and archaeology at Oxford University in England. She aspires to be a chemical engineer or a political science professor.

Darnell credits much of the Burtin's success to a strong sense of family. He told Quayle-Medved: "Family is your base. A strong family is—the world. It's the world. You've always got something to lean on."

"Friends lean on my family," Darnell added in an interview. "Two of my best friends are always at our house. Their dads aren't around so they hang around with my family."

Darnell also believes that a commitment to education is another source of his family's success.

"My sister and I were reading at 3 or 4 [years of age] and doing math tables," Darnell said. "As a youngster, he attended a school for gifted students in a Chicago suburb and his sister attended a school specializing in the fine arts.

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"My parents," Darnell said, "we willing to sacrifice for us to get a better education. I keep telling myself, 'Knowledge is the key to success.'"

Darnell and his family are profiled in chapter 6-- "The Burtin Family of Chicago"--in Quayle and Medved's 283-page book, which retails for \$25 and is published by HarperCollins.

Quayle, born in Indianapolis in 1947, is a member of an influential newspaper-owning family. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1980 and was elected George Bush's vice president in 1988. Quayle also is the author of a political memoir, "Standing Firm."

Medved, a clinical psychologist, is the author of "The Case Against Divorce," "First Comes Love," and "Children: To Have or Have Not." She is married to film critic Michael Medved.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,850 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994; and a \$25 million science building opened in the fall of 1995. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 161 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition.