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Sept. 11, 1996

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hometowns

Alison Whittington of Wheeling, Ill.

Illinois Wesleyan Names 12 Freshmen Presidential Scholars

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Alison Whittington of Wheeling, Ill. (Wheeling H.S.) is among a dozen freshmen honored today (Sept. 11) as Presidential Scholars at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Whittington, a National Merit Scholar, is an elementary education major. She appears to be following in the footsteps of her parents: her mother is a teacher and her father is a principal.

In her IWU application, Whittington wrote: "Teaching is difficult. It takes good leadership and people skills, the ability to be a team player, dedication, hard work, persistence, patience, optimism, and a love for children, as well as a desire to learn yourself."

Whittington played on her high school softball and swimming teams. She was captain of the swimming team for two years.

Whittington, a member of the National Honor Society, was named an NBC Chicagoland High School Hero of the Week, Nov. 17, 1995.

As a high school student, Whittington was involved in various extracurricular activities, including Academic/Scholastic Bowl, Math Team, orchestra, peer tutoring, Students Against Drunk Driving, Science Olympiad Team, and Special Olympics (volunteer).

Among Whittington's honors are a Bausch & Lomb Science Award and a Close-Up award.

The Presidential Scholars' Program, established in 1978, recognizes a group of entering freshmen distinguished for their past achievements and future promise. They are students who have taken on many challenges in and out of the classroom. Selections for the academic honor are based on personal interviews and application materials.

Nine of this year's dozen Presidential Scholars also are National Merit Scholars. As a group, the Presidential Scholars averaged 1457 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), a major college entrance test with a perfect score of 1600.

Whittington received her Presidential Scholar honor at IWU's President's Convocation, a campus-wide gathering marking the start of the academic year.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Anita DeFrantz addressed the President's Convocation and received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. DeFrantz, president of the Amateur Athletic Foundation and an attorney, won a bronze medal in rowing at the 1976 Montreal games. The Sporting News, the weekly newspaper, has called DeFrantz one of the 100 most powerful women in sports and The Australian Magazine this year ranked her among the 100

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IWU Presidential Scholar/2

most powerful women in the world. Defrantz played a pivotal role in Atlanta securing this year's summer Olympic games and Salt Lake City hosting the 2002 winter Olympics. The Wall Street Journal in a profile of Defrantz last June reported she is the only woman on the 11-member IOC Executive Committee and the first black woman elected to the body.

Alison is the daughter of James and Irene Whittington, 954 Twilight Lane, Wheeling, Ill.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,900 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.