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## Award-Winning Entrepreneur Callfomia Computer Industry Executive, IWU Alum

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Award-Winning Entrepreneur

## California Computer Industry Executive, IWU Alum To Address Business-Professional Group, Feb. 11

Locals,  
Cent. Ill.,  
Chicago,  
McLean Co.,  
Business

*Entrepreneur*--A person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--One of the nation's top computer industry executives and an award-winning entrepreneur will address a group of Bloomington-Normal business leaders at Illinois Wesleyan University next month.

Phillip White--president, chief executive officer, and board chairman of Informix Software, Inc., of Menlo Park, Calif.--will speak to a luncheon meeting of Illinois Wesleyan University Associates at noon on Tuesday, Feb. 11 in the Main Lounge of IWU's Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St., Bloomington.

Illinois Wesleyan Associates is a business and professional group that supports IWU. About 200-300 IWU Associates are expected to attend the invitation-only luncheon.

White, a 1966 IWU graduate, was named Entrepreneur of the Year at the seventh annual San Francisco Bay Area Entrepreneur of the Year awards. Award sponsors were the accounting and management firm, Ernst & Young; the brokerage house, Merrill Lynch; and the small-business oriented publication, *Inc. Magazine*. White won the honor in the "Turnaround" category, based on Informix's record-breaking 1992 financial performance in the volatile computer software industry.

Informix, a relational database management company, had run into trouble after acquiring a Kansas City-based firm, which was more focused on office automation software for desktop applications.

In a 1993 *Wall Street Journal* article, White explained the root of the company's financial problems after the acquisition: "There were two sales forces, two manufacturing operations, two marketing operations, two of everything."

White joined Informix as "Mr. Fixit" in 1989 after 15 years in sales and marketing with International Business Machines Corporation (IBM). He also had served as vice president of sales and marketing for Altos Computer Systems and president of Wyse Technology, Inc.

White--an IWU political science graduate and a member of IWU's Board of Trustees, who earned a master's degree in business administration at the University of Illinois--made three key

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## Illinois Wesleyan Associates/2

moves to turnaround Informix, which he explained in a profile of IWU alumni who are entrepreneurs, published in the spring, 1996, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*.

"I downsized the company," White explained, "to get expenses in line with revenues, made California the company's single headquarters, and hired a new management team, bringing in 12 new vice presidents."

New products and aggressive marketing overseas also fueled Informix's turnaround. Sixty percent of Informix's business, White reports, is outside the United States.

White described Informix in the *IWU Magazine* article as a 15-year-old company, the fifth largest software company in the world, with 45 subsidiaries around the globe, a workforce of 3,000, and revenues of \$750 million, compared to about \$179.8 million in 1991.

For these entrepreneurial achievements and others, White twice has been named Chief Executive Officer of the Year for the software industry.

As with most successful entrepreneurs, White is keenly interested in the future. He's anticipating big computer industry changes as the World Wide Web and other innovations bring a revolution in personal computing by giving people access to all sorts of information in multi-media formats at lower cost.

"The Web is driving our business," White said in the *IWU Magazine* article, "generating millions of new users who want new types of data delivered efficiently on high-performance computers."

Established in 1953, Wesleyan Associates are business and professional leaders interested in the advancement and support of IWU and independent higher education. In addition to providing financial support, Associates sponsor internships and part-time and entry-level job opportunities for IWU students.

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 \$4.6 million Center for Liberal Arts--a facility housing 60 faculty offices, six classrooms, and other facilities for social science, humanities business and economics, and interdisciplinary studies' faculty--is slated to open next fall, as well as a \$6.5 million residence hall, accommodating about 118 students. 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.

**Editor's Note:** Phillip White's Feb. 11 address to Illinois Wesleyan Associates is available for news media coverage. To schedule interviews, Mr. White's schedule permitting, call IWU Public Relations-News Services, 309/556-3181.