

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**University of Evansville Receives \$1 Million
From Lilly Endowment**

The University of Evansville has received \$1 million from the Lilly Endowment Inc. as a part of its "Initiative to Recruit and Retain Intellectual Capital for Indiana Higher Education Institutions." UE will use the funding to improve the undergraduate Honors Program at UE, upgrade science lab equipment and provide more professional development opportunities for tenured and new faculty members, said UE President Stephen Jennings.

"Once again, the Endowment is aiding the state by helping its colleges and universities to recruit and retain the most talented faculty, administrators and students," Jennings said. "The University of Evansville is very excited to have been selected as one of the first schools to be involved in this endeavor. With this funding, I am confident we can continue to recruit strong students and faculty and keep them highly engaged in the future. The end result will be a stronger pool of intellectual talent for all of Indiana," Jennings added.

Of the \$1 million the University has received, various programming is planned including:

Honors Program

UE's current honors program will be developed into one of the best programs in the region with the addition of \$500,000. Several improvements will be made including:

- A separate Honors Residence Hall will help to establish an honors learning community. This will be established in one of the newer residence halls on campus with adequate space to provide several seminar rooms for study sessions, honors seminars, and discussion sessions led by

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faculty. This facility will also house the office for the Honors Program and will have an apartment for a mentor.

- Funding will also go toward curriculum development making creative, interdisciplinary and team-taught courses.
- Special Honors Program internships will be developed which will include a more reflective, academic study of the professional experience and application of the internship work.
- A service learning component will become a defined aspect of the Honors Program – to develop a model for our students in contributing to the welfare and leadership of their future communities.
- The Honors Program will make every effort possible to have its participants take part in study abroad opportunities. Special opportunities during the summer will be developed for those students whose curriculum does not allow them to go abroad during the regular school year.
- Financial support for Honors Program students who are working on their senior projects and thesis will also be provided.

William Connolly, director of the University's Honors Program said the program is an essential component of the University community. "It enables us to provide a stimulating and competitive environment for our best students," he said. "They have the opportunity to engage in independent work, and work with faculty that will prepare them for further studies following graduation." Connolly explained that a portion of the money will be placed in an endowment to sustain the program after the four-year funding period ends.

Science Equipment

Support for high quality equipment for a top-quality undergraduate research program is a major strategy the University will use for recruiting and retaining talented students. "The University wants to attract the kind of students who will choose a school based on the opportunities to participate in a strong program of research with faculty. We also want to recruit the type of faculty who see research with students as an integral part of teaching." Jennings said.

Through the Lilly Endowment's grant, \$200,000 will be added to funds already donated to purchase state-of-the-art equipment and technology for the science labs at UE. A portion of these funds will also be placed in a UE endowment for future equipment in the labs in biology, chemistry,

biochemistry and physics.

Faculty Professional Development

Faculty benefit from professional development through conferences, meetings or training in new areas of scholarship. “Professional development for talented faculty is imperative if they are to remain fresh, energized and well-informed teachers and scholars and if we are to retain our new and most talented faculty,” said Vice President for Academic Affairs Stuart Dorsey. Over a four-year period, \$300,000 will be allocated to this goal.

An increase in funding is proposed in the following areas:

- Start-up funds: To continue to recruit superior faculty, UE needs to develop further resources to initially support them in their scholarship, research with students and/or basic needs for teaching. Primer monies will be available to all new faculty for their initial set-up expenses.
- Curriculum development: This funding will be used for faculty to produce or improve courses that are tied to the University’s Core Purpose: “to provide life-transforming educational experiences that prepare students to engage the world as informed, ethical and productive citizens.” Another component is expanding faculty expertise. “For example, this funding could be used for a faculty member who is an analytical chemist to learn more about forensic analysis to that the individual could develop a course in forensic science,” Dorsey said.
- Travel funds: These funds will supplement travel funding for professional development related to the University’s Core Purpose. There will be an emphasis on global issues and cultural competence, including diversity.

“We believe this three-pronged approach to recruiting and keeping high quality students and faculty at the University of Evansville will provide the greatest impact because it strengthens the intellectual capital of both students and faculty in a very strategic manner,” Jennings said. “The components flow into one another and transfer benefits that will enhance the faculty-student experience.”

The University of Evansville is a private, United Methodist Church-related, comprehensive university that is a member of the Associated New American Colleges. UE is celebrating 150 years of civic mission and sacred trust, providing life transforming educational experiences that prepare students to engage the world as informed, ethical and productive citizens.

<http://www.evansville.edu/aboutue/news.asp?ArticleID=404>