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Lilly Endowment Community Scholars to gather Saturday to “celebrate education”

Even as the first class of Lilly Endowment Community Scholars prepares for its senior year in Indiana colleges and universities, the fourth class – 360 from every county in the state – prepares to begin its collegiate experience. The students, their parents and “special friends,” and representatives of the community foundations that selected them will join Lilly Endowment and university officials to “celebrate education” Saturday (June 23) at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown.

The audience of more than 1,300 will be treated to a presentation from Robert D. Ballard, whose maritime archaeological feats have earned him almost legendary status. He has been the lead figure in exploring the answers to great and tragic events such as the sinking of the White Star liners *Titanic* (1912) and the *Lusitania* (1915), *Titanic*’s sister ship *Britannic* (1916), the German warship *Bismarck* (1942) and the World War II aircraft carrier *Yorktown* (1942). He was most recently featured on an NBC-National Geographic special program on the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

The distinguished explorer is president of the Institute for Exploration at Mystic, Conn., chairman of the Odyssey Corp. at Old Lyme, Conn., and scientist emeritus at the Department of Applied Ocean Physics and Engineering the Woods Hole (Mass.) Oceanographic Institution.

Ballard is the president of the JASON Foundation for Education, which he founded in 1989. The project offers exciting ways to learn science and technology and

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Lilly Endowment Community Scholars
Add 1

takes students on virtual-education journeys to the Galapagos Islands, the Guaymas Basin in the Sea of Cortez, Belize, Central America, Hawaii, the Florida Keys, Yellowstone National Park, the Brazilian rain forest, the bottom of Lake Ontario and the Mediterranean Sea.

(Southport High School in Indianapolis is one of 37 sites around the United States and Europe that features live broadcasts of JASON projects and connects technology-capable Indiana schools to the worldwide network.)

The Emmy Award-winning Ballard received his undergraduate degree in geology and chemistry from the University of California and his Ph.D. in marine geology and geophysics from the University of Rhode Island. His long list of awards includes the Hubbard Medal, the National Geographic Society's most prestigious award.

The Lilly Endowment Community Scholars – 212 women and 148 men – have dreams of their own. They are planning careers in medicine, genetics, diplomacy, journalism, veterinary medicine, nursing, acting, engineering, business, accounting, education, the law and the ministry.

They have been student government officers, newspaper editors, cheerleaders, athletes, church youth group leaders, musicians and actors. They have served at soup kitchens, walked for worthy causes, volunteered at hospitals, nursing homes and animal shelters. They have grilled hamburgers at fast-food restaurants, detasseled corn, washed cars, cleaned offices, bagged groceries, babysat, mowed lawns, delivered newspapers, sold antiques and designed Web sites. Several have succeeded despite family and personal difficulties and tragedies.

Though the Endowment funds the program, it is administered by the Indianapolis-based Independent Colleges of Indiana. Individual scholars are chosen by their local

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Lilly Endowment Community Scholars

Add 2

community foundation, each with its own criteria and selection process. (Based on each county's population, at least three scholars per county are selected.)

The scholarship provides full-tuition, required fees and a special allocation of up to \$700 per year for required books and equipment for four years of undergraduate study leading to a baccalaureate degree at any accredited college or university in Indiana.

"This program has been one of the most rewarding efforts of the Endowment," said Sara B. Cobb, Endowment vice president for education. "We are indebted to the more than 90 community foundations around this state who work tirelessly to set the criteria, publicize the scholarship in their areas, and undergo the difficult process of selecting the recipients.

"For many of these students and their families, receiving the scholarship is a life-changing event. It allows them to pursue dreams that may have seemed impossible," she noted. "The recipients now in college are excelling in their studies and extracurricular activities. They are making the most of this opportunity, and the Endowment is most pleased to help them realize their dreams. With this new class, more than 35 colleges in the state will have more than 950 Lilly Endowment Community Scholars in their ranks."

When the college year begins this fall, the 2001 scholars will scatter to 35 campuses across the state:

Anderson University – 3
Ball State University –16
Bethel College –3
Butler University –31
DePauw University –26
Earlham College –5
Franklin College –3
Goshen College –3
Grace College –2
Hanover College –6
Huntington College –1
Indiana State University –7
Indiana University Bloomington – 54
(more)

Lilly Endowment Community Scholars
Add 3

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis –5
Indiana University Southeast –3
Indiana Wesleyan University –4
Manchester College –3
Oakland City University –1
Purdue University Calumet –1
Purdue University North Central –1
Purdue University School of Technology at New Albany-1
Purdue University West Lafayette –70
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology –32
St. Joseph’s College –1
St. Mary-of-the-Woods College –3
St. Mary’s College –3
Taylor University –7
Tri-State University –1
University of Evansville –12
University of Indianapolis –10
University of Notre Dame –24
University of St. Francis –3
University of Southern Indiana –2
Valparaiso University –5
Wabash College –8

The Endowment has invested \$51.1 million in the first four scholarship classes and plans for the program to continue. The program is part of a multiyear, focused effort to address Indiana’s dismal ranking (50th of the 50 states and the District of Columbia) in the percentage of its residents 25 years old and older who hold a baccalaureate degree.

The Endowment’s efforts in the educational-attainment arena have included grants to virtually all Indiana colleges and universities (capital improvements; recruitment, retention and placement programs; college preparatory programs), the community scholarship program, and significant grants to several Indiana colleges and universities for proposals that add substantial distinction to their schools and advance Indiana’s interests. Since 1996 the Endowment has committed about \$700 million through these initiatives and programs.

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Lilly Endowment Community Scholars
Add 4

Also under way is Community Alliances to Promote Education (CAPE), a competitive initiative which asks community foundations in the state to work with their communities to identify their areas' most compelling education needs and, with public and private support and participation, devise plans to address them. To date a total of more than \$72 million has been awarded with two more rounds of CAPE grants expected this year.

Also in the offing are competitive initiatives for Marion County public and private schools to propose bold and creative programs to address what they see as some of their schools' or districts' most urgent needs. Awards in this initiative are expected by the end of the year.

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Note – Before Saturday's festivities begin at the Marriott, the scholars and their guests have been invited to visit the attractions in White River State Park: the Indianapolis Zoo, White River Gardens, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, the IMAX Theater and the NCAA Hall of Champions – as well as the Col. Eli Lilly Civil War Museum in the Soldiers & Sailors Monument.

The scholarship recipients and their guests will assemble at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown Saturday for a 5 p.m. reception. The dinner program should begin about 5:30 p.m. in the second-floor ballroom and conclude by 8 p.m. If you need any assistance, please call me beforehand or ask for me Saturday at the event.