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5th Class of Lilly Endowment Community Scholars to “Celebrate Education”

Their career goals cover everything from actuarial science to computer science, from biology to business, and from medicine to teaching. They are the 363 Lilly Endowment Community Scholars who will be honored Saturday (June 29) at the fifth annual “Celebrate Education” dinner at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown.

They will be joined by their parents, guardians, and a special teacher, coach or other “significant person” in their lives. Also on hand will be representatives from the more than 90 community foundations around the state, which establish the scholarship criteria for their counties and select the scholars who receive four-year, full-tuition scholarships. Representatives from Indiana colleges and universities and officials from Independent Colleges of Indiana, the organization that administers the program, also will attend.

More than 1,300 are expected to join in celebrating the students’ achievements so far and the high expectations for their futures. This fall they will head out from their hometowns to 33 campuses across Indiana to begin studies toward attaining their baccalaureate degrees.

The highlight of the evening will be an address by Robert Putnam, the Malkin professor of public policy at Harvard University and the author of the influential *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Published in 1999, the book

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Community Scholars
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claims that over the past 30 years Americans have been less engaged in activities that promote civic life—neighborhood friendships, dinner parties, clubs, church committees, discussion groups, bowling leagues and many others.

A frequent guest on National Public Radio and a contributor to publications including *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and the *Journal of Democracy*, Putnam is the author or co-author of 10 books and more than 30 scholarly articles published in 10 languages. He is the founder and director of the Saguaro Seminar, a program that brings together leading practitioners and thinkers for a multiyear discussion to develop broad-scale, workable ideas to fortify this nation’s “connectedness.”

Born in Port Clinton, Ohio, a rural town on Lake Erie, Putnam was educated at Swarthmore College, attended Balliol College, Oxford, and received his Ph.D. from Yale University.

Earlier in the day, as part of the celebration, the students, families and guests may use passes to enjoy the sights in White River State Park: the Indianapolis Zoo, White River Gardens, the brand-new Indiana State Museum, the NCAA Hall of Champions, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, plus the Colonel Eli Lilly Civil War Museum at the Soldiers’ & Sailors’ Monument.

“This scholarship program has been an absolute joy to watch over the last four years,” said Sara B. Cobb, Endowment vice president for education. “It is such a pleasure to be able to help these talented Indiana young people who we are convinced will make a difference in the world and in Indiana. We are indebted to the state’s more than 90 community foundations who go through the challenging process of selecting these scholars, and we know their communities are as proud of them as we are.”

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Community Scholars
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This year's scholarship class of 363 includes 227 women and 136 men who have worked hard to achieve their success. They have held jobs at every conceivable fast-food restaurant, gone on church mission trips in Latin America, entertained at nursing homes and cleaned trash from highways. Some have overcome obstacles that would defeat others.

Even as these students begin their college careers, many from the first class of Lilly Endowment Community Scholars – 117 strong – have received their undergraduate degrees and are heading into careers or graduate education. They have been accepted to medical, dental and law schools; they will begin teaching careers in Indiana elementary and high schools; they have jobs as accountants, marketing coordinators, engineers, missionaries and business managers.

Since that first class entered college in 1998 – and including these 2002 scholars – the Endowment has invested \$74.7 million in their education. More than 1,300 have received Lilly Endowment Community Scholarships. This year's class will head for the following campuses:

- Anderson University – 4
- Ball State University – 19
- Bethel College – 5
- Butler University – 47
- DePauw University – 18
- Earlham College – 2
- Franklin College – 6
- Grace College – 2
- Hanover College – 7
- Huntington College – 5
- Indiana State University – 9
- Indiana University Bloomington – 44
- Indiana University Northwest – 1

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Indiana University Southeast – 1
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne – 3
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis – 4
Indiana Wesleyan University – 6
Manchester College – 1
Marian College – 1
Purdue University – 68
Purdue University North Central – 1
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology – 40
St. Joseph’s College – 1
St. Mary’s College – 4
Taylor University – 8
Tri-State University – 2
University of Evansville – 16
University of Indianapolis – 7
University of Notre Dame – 16
University of St. Francis – 1
University of Southern Indiana – 3
Valparaiso University – 5
Wabash College – 6

The scholarship program plays an important role in the Endowment’s efforts to address the state’s low educational attainment level. Indiana ranks near the bottom in the 50 states and the District of Columbia in the percentage of its adult population with a baccalaureate degree. As is becoming more and more clear every day, this situation affects all areas of life – from the state’s economy to the quality of life in its neighborhoods. Since 1996 the Endowment has invested more than \$1 billion in programs to strengthen higher education institutions in Indiana, to make “connections”

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Community Scholars
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between high school and college, to prepare young people for college success, and to encourage communities to examine their own educational needs and how to address them.

“We realize, of course, that Indiana’s educational challenges are longstanding, and it will take the concentrated efforts of all sectors of society in this state to make a difference,” Cobb said. “We are beginning to see signs that more Indiana residents are becoming aware of the urgency of the situation. We hope that education will increasingly be put on the ‘front burner’ of public concern so that these impressive young scholars will find a bright future in Indiana.”

Endowment officials expect the scholarship program to continue next year.

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Note to reporters and editors: A complete list of the 2002 scholarship recipients is included with this release. You are cordially invited to come hear Putnam speak (his address should begin about 7 p.m. in the Marriott Ballroom) or, if you wish an interview, please contact me at the Endowment by Friday at 3 p.m. at the Endowment (916-7304).

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