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Lilly Endowment to honor 366 statewide scholars Saturday

Nearly 1,400 people will make their way to their seats in the ballroom at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown Hotel Saturday evening (June 26) for a program to “Celebrate Education.” The “guests of honor” will be the 366 recipients of Lilly Endowment Community Scholarships from across the state, their parents or guardians, representatives from Indiana colleges and universities, and officials from the more than 90 community foundations in Indiana. Also invited are “special persons” in the young students’ lives – teachers, coaches, ministers, family friends, grandparents.

This will be the seventh class of young people in the Endowment’s scholarship program, which already has seen almost 1,700 students head for campuses across Indiana. Recipients receive a full-tuition scholarship to attend any Indiana college or university of their choice, required fees, and \$800 per year toward the purchase of required books or equipment.

The special guest speaker for the evening will be Mario Livio, senior astrophysicist at the Space Telescope Science Institute, which conducts the scientific program of the Hubble Space Telescope. He received his doctorate in theoretical astrophysics from Tel Aviv University in Israel and joined the institute in 1991. During the past five years, his research has focused on supernova explosions and their use in cosmology to determine the rate of expansion of the universe.

A renowned researcher and lecturer, he has published more than 300 scientific papers and lectured at the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the Johnson Space Center in Houston. He also has been a guest on the CBS news program, *60 Minutes*. Besides his scientific interests, Livio is an avid art enthusiast.

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Livio follows in a line of distinguished previous scholarship dinner speakers including NASA astronaut David Wolf; Gilbert Grosvenor, chairman of the board of the National Geographic Society; and Robert Ballard, oceanographer and underwater explorer.

Before the students assemble at the Marriott, many will have taken tours of downtown sites including the Indianapolis Zoo, White River Gardens, Indiana State Museum, IMAX Theater, NCAA Hall of Champions, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art and the Colonel Eli Lilly Civil War Museum.

The students – many of whom will be the first in their families to attend college – have high hopes. They will be doctors and nurses, lawyers and physicists, writers and physical therapists, ministers and veterinarians, teachers and diplomats, chemists and entrepreneurs, engineers and pharmacists. They already have labored in the teenage job world. They have prepared and delivered pizzas, bussed tables, filed papers, manned cash registers, babysat, tutored, mowed countless yards, been janitors, custodians and lifeguards.

Some have overcome physical disabilities, illness or less-than-favorable family situations to shine in the classroom and in extracurricular activities. Most have assembled records of community service to rival any adult's. They have been active in their churches, gone on mission trips, served at countless soup kitchens, volunteered at senior citizen centers and nursing homes, mentored younger students, sold popcorn and peanuts at ballparks, and built houses for Habitat for Humanity.

Of course, they have taken the leadership roles in their school organizations and activities, from student government to marching band, Spanish clubs to soccer teams, newspaper and yearbook staffs to track teams.

“Every year the Endowment has been impressed with these scholars’ academic performances, their sense of civic duty, their many talents and their enthusiastic hopes for their future,” said Sara B. Cobb, Endowment vice president for education. “In virtually

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all instances, these hopes have been well-founded. The Lilly Endowment Community Scholars have thrived in college. Three cohorts of the scholars already have graduated, and they are continuing their studies at the postgraduate level or finding meaningful employment in their chosen fields—mostly in Indiana. We are very proud of them.”

The Endowment has authorized more than \$130 million for the program, which began in 1998. The scholars are nominated by the community foundations in their counties, and most go through a rigorous selection process. The nominations are sent to the Independent Colleges of Indiana, an association of private colleges in the state, which makes the final selection. The scholars – from senior classes numbering slightly more than 30 to those only slightly fewer than 1,000 – often are celebrated at luncheons and dinners in their hometowns, their names sometimes adorn billboards in their counties, their achievements are captured with stories in their local newspapers.

The scholars may choose to attend any accredited Indiana college or university for four years of undergraduate study leading to a baccalaureate degree. The 2004 scholars have selected the following campuses:

- Anderson University – 9
- Ball State University – 14
- Bethel College – 3
- Butler University – 41
- DePauw University – 26
- Earlham College – 4
- Franklin College – 7
- Hanover College – 9
- Huntington College – 6
- Indiana State University – 3
- Indiana University Bloomington – 49
- Indiana University Southeast – 1
- Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis – 8
- Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne – 3
- Indiana Wesleyan University – 9
- Manchester College – 2
- Marian College – 3
- Purdue University West Lafayette – 66
- Purdue University Calumet – 1
- Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology – 29
- St. Joseph’s College – 2

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St. Mary-of-the-Woods College –1
St. Mary’s College – 3
Taylor University – 6
University of Evansville – 7
University of Indianapolis – 8
University of Notre Dame – 21
University of St. Francis – 2
University of Southern Indiana – 5
Valparaiso University – 8
Wabash College – 10

The scholarship program is only one element in the Endowment’s multifaceted effort to raise the educational attainment level of Indiana citizens. Since 1996 the Endowment has funded a series of grants to strengthen K-12 education around the state (Community Alliances to Promote Education), encourage distinctive programs on Indiana’s college campuses, establish and strengthen links between secondary and higher education, increase college recruitment and retention, strengthen board and alumni philanthropy for Indiana colleges, and promote opportunity through educational collaborations. Some \$100 million has been allocated for the most recent initiative to recruit and retain intellectual capital for Indiana higher education institutions. Altogether, the Endowment has invested more than \$1 billion in these programs.

“Education is the key to a brighter future for Indiana and its citizens. Indiana’s workforce must be better educated if it is to compete in the fast-changing, increasingly global economies of the 21st century,” Cobb said. “It will take intentional, enthusiastic and constant collaboration among all sectors of society – government, business, education, the nonprofit sector – to meet these educational requirements for future prosperity. The signs of increased awareness, concern and action throughout the state, however, give us hope for Indiana’s prospects in the years ahead.”