

# University Notes

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## President Hoops announces retirement plans

USI President **H. Ray Hoops** will retire effective June 30, 2009 after a 40-year career in higher education, the last 14 years leading the University of Southern Indiana. He announced his retirement plans to faculty and administrative staff at the spring faculty meeting on Monday. To read excerpts from Hoops's speech, go to [www.usi.edu/NEWSINFO/RELEASE/press\\_detail.asp?num=2599](http://www.usi.edu/NEWSINFO/RELEASE/press_detail.asp?num=2599).

In the six years prior to coming to USI, Hoops served as the vice chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Mississippi. When it was announced that Hoops would join USI as its second president, Sidney Rushing, president of the Board of Trustees for Ole Miss, told an Evansville reporter, "I don't think you realize yet how lucky you are."

Success has marked the Hoops administration from 1995 into the next century with capital projects including the Science and Education Center, Liberal Arts Center, Fitness Center, Rice Library, residence halls, and the soon-to-be constructed Business and Engineering Center. Academic offerings continue to grow to meet the needs of the 10,000 students who attend USI. Since the graduation of the Class of 2007, alumni have increased to more than 25,000.

During his tenure, Hoops ordered two studies of USI's impact on local workforce and economic development. The reports examined the University's leadership and responsiveness in regional economic development and recommended academic and training programs that meet the future workforce and economic development needs of Southwestern Indiana.

**Kristina Pelly**, president of the Student Government Association, said, "It has been a pleasure to work with President Hoops over the past year. He has brought positive changes to the University community. We look forward to see what the future holds for USI."

**Dr. Christy Baker**, chair of the Faculty Senate, said, "Dr. Hoops has been a great leader for the entire USI community of faculty, staff, and students. He has collaboratively worked with multiple constituencies to provide the tools, resources and inspiration to move the University of Southern Indiana to the next level. The impact of his leadership on higher education in the tri-state region will reverberate far into the future. Dr. Hoops has had the vision to advocate for new academic programs and then trust deans, program directors and faculty members to implement and grow the programs. His ability to handle the many roles required of a university president and keep an open door policy for faculty has been nothing short of amazing."

**Angela Torres**, chair of Staff Council, said, "Staff Council appreciates the support President Hoops continues to show the employees at USI. Other Universities do not have the opportunity to present directly to the President regarding budgeting proposals or other issues. We have been fortunate to have administrators who work with us to make USI a wonderful place to work."

Alumni Trustee **Frank F. McDonald '73** commended Hoops for his "extraordinary leadership" and approachability. "Ray Hoops was the right person in the right place at the right time. The University

and the entire Tri-state community have benefited from his people skills and his management of the University and its growth. I think he's one of the most decent, straight-forward people I've had the opportunity to know. It goes without saying in that position that you must have the academic background, the skills, the degrees, etcetera, but it takes so much more than the academic skill set to be an active University president and I think the president's people skills are just extraordinary."

**John Dunn**, chair of the USI Board of Trustees, said, "Under the Hoops administration, the University of Southern Indiana has grown in all aspects—expanded physical plant, increased enrollment, added academic programs including an engineering degree—establishing USI as one of the most valued higher education options in Indiana."

A native of Illinois, Hoops received his undergraduate degree from Eastern Illinois University and masters and doctoral degrees in audiology and speech sciences from Purdue University. At a later date, he also completed an M.B.A. degree from Moorhead State University.

Hoops began his career as an educator at Wayne State University. During his eight years there as professor of communicative disorders, he received a Master Teacher Award from the students and was promoted to associate and full professor within a six-year period. He published extensively and was nationally recognized for his contributions in the areas of rehabilitation of post-surgical patients with cancer of the larynx and in the analysis of language dynamics resulting from brain damage. Among his numerous publications in a variety of behavioral and medical journals was the report on a study which received the National Research Award, the highest honor of the American Speech and Hearing Association.

He held three appointments in addition to the professorship - directorship of the division of marketing in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Senior Fulbright-Hayes Research Scholar for the College of Medicine for the University of the Philippines; and associate director of the Wayne State Office of Grants and Contracts Administration.

Other appointments included dean of the graduate college of the University of Northern Iowa, associate vice president for Academic Affairs of North Dakota State University, and president of South Dakota State University. While at Ole Miss, Hoops received the National Council of State Governments Association Award for his pioneering work on Project '95, a blueprint for the reform of education in the state of Mississippi. He also received the Peterson's Guide Award for contributions to the education of minority students in the innovative and highly successful graduate participation initiative.

Hoops serves on the Deaconess Hospital Board of Directors, the Evansville Education Roundtable, and the Southwest Indiana Economic Development Task Force. He formerly was a member and chair of the WNIN Board of Directors, and a director of the Metropolitan Evansville Chamber of Commerce. In 2005, he was honored as the recipient of the Evansville Rotary Civic Award. He has served the American Association of State College and Universities (AASCU) as a member of its Committee on Professional Development and its Council of State Representatives

and is a former director and chair of the Indiana Conference of Higher Education

## USI grad, filmmaker, imparts messages of tolerance

Matt Myers '83 received word in November that he won second place in the ninth annual One in Ten Screenplay Contest, the world's largest competition focusing on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues. As one of the top three screenwriters, Myers will receive a cash prize and his screenplay will be presented to studios, agents, producers, and managers in New York and Los Angeles.

A USI graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in radio/television, Myers has traveled the U.S. and the world producing documentary, industrial, and independent films for more than 20 years. He has worked on a number of television shows and films, including John Sayles's *Eight Men Out*.

His winning screenplay *An Improbable Life* is based on the life of Oscar Wilde, the poet, playwright, and novelist who found success in his youth but lost everything, including his wife and two children, when he was imprisoned for "crimes of indecency."

Myers tells Wilde's story from the point of view of his son Vyvyan. "He only knows his father as a loving man who takes him to the beach, to swim and build sandcastles, and reads children's stories to him," Myers said. "Oscar Wilde produced a lot of children's stories. He's not known for that to most people."

Wilde's double life is revealed to his son through a series of perplexing events. "It's almost like a mystery that's happening. His father's books are being pulled off shelves, his name is being obliterated from plays. Vyvyan's not sure why his father is becoming a pariah, but he understands things have gone wrong in their lives."

Wilde is one of Myers's favorite writers. "I always found it tragic that a man who was so talented would be persecuted like that," he said. "And maybe I'm looking at it from different eyes since it's a totally different time period, but I also feel that something very similar could happen today. It doesn't take much to turn people against others if they don't deem them to be like themselves."

*An Improbable Life* is meant to be a lesson in tolerance. It is a theme Myers takes up in his screenplays and his documentaries. He is currently at work on a documentary about Holocaust survivors of the Terezin concentration camp. He and Trish, his wife and producer, travelled from Evansville to the Czech Republic to interview six women who had shared a room in Terezin's children's home.

Terezin was a unique concentration camp in that it was populated with prominent artists, performers, and intellectuals. "Initially the camp was called the 'Model Ghetto' by Heinrich Himmler, and it was set up to place prominent Jews at the time, but mostly it was a ruse, a way to fool people into believing the Jews weren't being mistreated. In essence it was a way station, a midway point, for people to be sent to Auschwitz," Myers said.

There were no gas chambers at Terezin. Most people starved to death. "During its operation it held 15,000 children. Only about 100 survived. When it was at its largest size there were 70,000 people there. There was overcrowding and disease. But during all this, they continued to study art, put on plays, and write and perform original music."

The documentary, with the working title *Children of a Model Ghetto*, is currently in post-production. Myers hopes that it will be complete by September, when he and Trish will return to the Czech Republic. Myers also wrote a screenplay, *Model Ghetto*, as part of his Master of Fine Arts degree in screenwriting and film studies from Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia.

Myers said he and his wife, who conducted the interviews, received a great compliment from a woman who initially refused to participate in the documentary. After hearing how pleased the other

women were with their work, she changed her mind. "She told us, 'I want to finally tell my story. I've held it in for so long. I want to let it out.'"

It was the most powerful interview they gathered.

"My hope with the documentaries and screenplays is to get people to think, but also to be more tolerant. When you hear these women talk about what they went through, you realize what wonderful people they are. It might make people think twice before making a joke or an off-color comment about someone they don't understand."

For more about Myers's work, go to [www.matt-myers.com](http://www.matt-myers.com).

## World War II posters will be on display starting Tuesday

An exhibit of World War II posters will be on display in the McCutchan Exhibition Space of the Wright Administration Building beginning Tuesday, January 14.

Evansville resident **William P. Sonntag** collected the posters when he was a high school student living in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, during the 1940s. He and his wife Marylu have presented the collection to the USI Foundation. It will be permanently housed in the University Archives/Special Collections of Rice Library. The exhibit will include selected posters from the 64-item collection.

Government agencies published posters for widespread distribution during the war to motivate citizens to wage war on the home front. The posters reminded people to buy war bonds, give blood, and otherwise sacrifice for the war effort. Merchants and restaurant owners exhibited the posters, and they were displayed in libraries, schools, community buildings, factories, and bus and train stations. Artists and illustrators, including Norman Rockwell, contributed to poster designs.

Sonntag said he collected his first poster from a merchant.

"I happened to be in a store where one was on display. I heard them say they were going to throw it away when they were finished with it. I asked if I could have it," he said.

Then he began asking others around town to save old posters from him when they were replaced with new ones. The posters appealed to him because they were colorful and informative.

Sonntag is retired as a teacher and librarian for the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation.

## "Remember the Titans" coach is keynote for USI's Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Luncheon

**Herman Boone**, the inspirational football coach immortalized in the Denzel Washington film *Remember the Titans*, is the keynote speaker for the University of Southern Indiana's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Memorial Luncheon, which will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, January 21, in Carter Hall in the University Center.

In 1971, racial tensions ran high in Alexandria, Virginia, as three schools were integrated to form T.C. Williams High School. It was from this union that the Titans football team was created. The former rivalries between the schools coupled with the strain between the black and white players resulted in a team that was far from united.

Tensions escalated when Boone was named head coach of the Titans, passing over Bill Yoast, the local favorite and successful head coach of the former white Hammond High. Yoast's supporters were angered by Boone's appointment, which was seen as a gesture of goodwill to the black community.

Remarkably, the two coaches were able to put aside their prejudices, and in doing so they unified their players to form a team whose common vision was to respect each other and win football

games. At the same time, through the game of football, Boone and Yoast were able to help their small Virginia community put aside their intolerance and join together in support of their team. The Titans became one of the best teams in Virginia, compiling a 13-0 record, and went on to win the state championship.

Remember the Titans screenwriter Gregory Allen Howard told the Washington Post, "Herman is Shakespearean. The beauty of Herman and what he did was that it was sort of unconscious. If you'd ask Herman when he took over T.C. Williams, 'Were you trying to make a point with these kids?' he would have said, 'No, I just want to win football games.' He had to get the players to get along to win football games. And it worked for just that reason - because it wasn't self-conscious. He did something quite beyond what even he realized."

A native of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Boone received his bachelor's and master's degrees from North Carolina Central University in Durham. He is retired but continues to motivate and inspire audiences with presentations on respect, teamwork, community involvement, and the importance of character.

USI's MLK Day luncheon also will include performances by the University's Designed by Grace gospel choir, the Thump Squad drum line, Glenwood Middle School Steppers, and the Children's Center for Dance Education.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$10 for employees and the general public. Students with meal plans may use their meal card to purchase a ticket in the lower level of the University Center at Sodexo Food Services. For more information, contact the USI Multicultural Center at 812/465-7188.

## Names in the news

### Accomplishments

Two USI employees were elected 2008 officers in Young Evansville Professionals (YEP), Inc., a nonprofit group dedicated to connecting and engaging young professionals. **Susan Fetscher**, assistant director of development research, publications, was elected president elect and **Dr. Katherine Sauer**, assistant professor of economics, was elected membership committee chair. YEP was founded in 2001 and has more than 150 members.

## FYI

### Enjoy a free Chili Supper after Saturday's game

Alumni and fans will be treated to a Chili Supper after the women's and men's basketball games against Lewis University on Saturday, January 12. The women play at 1 p.m. and the men play at 3:15 p.m. in the Physical Activities Center. The Varsity Club and Alumni Chili Supper will be held at approximately 5:30 p.m. in Room 200 in the PAC. There will be complimentary chili, vegetable soup, and grilled hotdogs. Donations will be accepted. The event is sponsored by Varsity Club and the Alumni Association. For more information, call Alumni and Volunteer Services at 812/464-1928.

### AAA meeting will be held Wednesday

The Administrative Assistant's and Associates Club (AAA) monthly meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 16 in Education Center Room 3104. Bring your lunch and enjoy a presentation by guest speaker **Gayle Uebelhor** of Organizational Associates. The topic is "How to get Organized." For more information, contact **Terri Alvey**, systems/Web and computer technician in Rice Library, at 812/465-1131.

### USI and Chamber offer Candidate School

USI and the Chamber of Commerce of Southwest Indiana will

lead a candidate school from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Friday, February 1, at Innovation Pointe, 318 Main Street in downtown Evansville. If you've ever thought about running for political office, here's a chance to explore what it takes to become a successful political candidate. Candidate school will provide practical advice from experienced campaigners, public servants, political scientists, and party officials. Topics will range from why you should run for office to defining yourself as a candidate, election law compliance, and media relations. The registration fee of \$40 includes materials, breaks, lunch, and parking. To register using Visa, MasterCard, or Discover, go to [www.usi.edu/extserv/outreach/candidate.asp](http://www.usi.edu/extserv/outreach/candidate.asp) or call 812/464-1989 or 800/467-8600. Send a check or money order payable to USI to USI Extended Services, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, IN 47712. No employee fee waivers apply.

### Receive texts of weather-related class cancellations

Students, faculty, and staff can receive campus emergency information - including weather-related class cancellations - via their mobile phones. The text messaging system is an option to USI's current emergency communication system which includes notices on the USI Web site ([www.usi.edu](http://www.usi.edu)), telephone and e-mail alerts, and local media notices. The text message service is free. Users need a cell phone capable of receiving text messages, and they may be subject to their wireless service provider's text messaging fees. Mobile or cell phone numbers are maintained in a secure database and are not used for any purpose other than activation during a campus emergency. Alerts about weather, cancellation of classes due to snow, or emergencies related to safety on campus will be sent with information of the situation and instructions to help protect the people on campus. Students, faculty and staff with a USIname@usieagles.org e-mail address can sign up online at [www.usi.edu/emergency](http://www.usi.edu/emergency). Users can discontinue service through the Web site.

### CareerLINK is for all students

The spring CareerLINK Internship/Co-op, Full-Time, and Graduate School Fair will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, February 27, in Carter Hall in the University Center. CareerLINK connects seniors and graduates with employers and graduate schools, and undergraduates with employers seeking summer and fall internships and co-ops. For a list of recruiters that will be on campus, go to [www.usi.edu/careersve](http://www.usi.edu/careersve). For more information, contact Rene Koressel, recruiting supervisor in Career Services, at 812/464-1865.

### Skoglund to lead tour to Spain and Morocco

**Margaret Skoglund**, associate professor of art, is again organizing a two-week trip to Spain and Morocco, May 22-June 4, during Summer I. Places to be visited include Madrid, Toledo, Jaen, Antequera, Seville, Granada, Cordoba and Cadiz in Spain, and Tangier, Casablanca, Marrakech, and Rabat in Morocco. The tour, limited to 25 people, may or may not be taken for University credit and is open to members of the community as well as university students, faculty and staff. For more information, contact Skoglund at 812/465-1023.

### Museum exhibit includes USI's early years

"Evansville in the 1960s," an exhibit currently on view at the Evansville Museum of Arts, History, and Science, includes a section dedicated to USI's early years. The exhibit will run through February 3, 2008. It examines key happenings in Evansville during the turbulent decade and highlights topics including education, commerce, and city infrastructure of the period, as well as successes in athletics. For more information, go to [www.emuseum.org/history/history.html](http://www.emuseum.org/history/history.html).