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UIS receives largest gift ever to establish Lincoln chair

UIS announced May 9 that it has received the largest gift in its history, \$1.25 million, to establish the university's first distinguished chair - the Chancellor Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies. The donors, Dr. Richard E. Vaden and his family, have been close personal friends of Chancellor Lynn and her family for many years and were on hand for the announcement. The appearance of Dr. Vaden and his sons, Val and Erich, and the announcement of the gift and chair, came as a surprise to Chancellor Lynn, who had been taking part in the annual faculty achievement awards ceremony in the PAC restaurant.

Dr. Vaden and his wife and sons first met the Lynn family in 1969 at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. Dr. Vaden said he and his family felt it was appropriate to put the

names of both Chancellor Lynn and Lincoln in the title of the chair. "Lincoln espoused the values of honesty, faith, determination, and character. Naomi has brought those same virtues into our friendship and into her professional life." He added, "Lincoln led the United States through tumultuous years, and Naomi has ably led the university through a critical period of change." Chancellor Lynn will step down from her position on May 31.

Noting that UIS is the most logical location for a distinguished chair in Lincoln studies, Provost Wayne Penn said, "There is no better home for this chair than UIS, located as it is in Lincoln's city near the nation's most important archive of Lincoln documents." The chair will be part of UIS' History Department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

According to Penn, the holder of the chair should be a leading Lincoln and Civil War era scholar who will continue to make outstanding contributions to the field and bring national recognition to the campus. "The Lincoln Legal Papers project, also associated with UIS, has shown that there is still much scholarly discovery and interpretation to be done regarding Lincoln's life and career," Penn said. "Moreover, the building of the new Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield during the next few years makes the presence of a distinguished Lincoln scholar doubly important."

William Bloemer, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, said that former UIS history professor Cullom Davis, current director of the Lincoln Legal Papers project, set a strong precedent for public service related to Lincoln. He also noted that members of the UIS History Department have played an important role in assisting the State Historical Library, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and individual historic sites with research, planning, and interpretation.

The Lincoln Chair represents the third major academic development gift that UIS has received in the past nine months. Last August, the College of Business and Management received a half-million-dollar gift from National City Bank to create the National City Distinguished Professorship in Banking and Finance. In March, the college announced that Ameren Corporation, parent company of AmerenCIPS, had given the university \$500,000 to create the Ameren Professorship of Business and Government.

Vaden is a professor and director of the MBA program at the University

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Reception honors faculty achievements

UIS held its annual spring reception honoring faculty achievements May 9. Presentations were made by Chancellor Naomi Lynn and Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Wayne Penn.

Spencer Award

Loretta Meeks, professor of teacher education, was named recipient of the second Spencer Award for Faculty Service, made in honor of SSU's founding president, Robert Spencer. The \$5,000 award for professional development is made to a faculty member with a cumulative record of public service and service to the academic community.

In making the presentation, Lynn noted, "This year the Spencer Award goes to an individual who epitomizes Robert Spencer's ideal faculty member. Throughout her career on this campus,

Loretta Meeks has responded to community needs and built a record of sustained excellence in service."

Citing Meeks' "long and distinguished career in education," Lynn pointed out a few highlights, including her leadership of the teacher education program and service as director of student teaching. "She has exposed current and prospective teachers to new and innovative methods of teaching science and mathematics at all grade levels, and has helped to place and supervise student teachers," said Lynn. "She has served as director of two special programs that have successfully encouraged students, especially minority students, to complete their educations and to seek teaching careers. She is involved with the GEARUP Project that serves

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