

1025 words/ 7 minutes

The Installation of Susan Elrod as Chancellor of IU South Bend
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
IU South Bend Campus Auditorium
Northside Hall
Tuesday, September 10, 2019
2:00 p.m.

1. MAKING EDUCATION WIDELY AVAILABLE, RESPONDING TO LOCAL NEEDS

In 1962, at the dedication of the building in which we are gathered today—formerly known as the Indiana University Center, and now as Northside Hall—IU’s 11th president, Herman B Wells, spoke (in this very auditorium) of the university’s purpose in establishing the centers around the state that would later evolve into IU’s thriving regional campuses.

The mission, Wells said, was “to make education widely available to Hoosier youth and keep it as responsive as possible to local needs.”¹

Fifty-seven years later, as we celebrate the installation of Susan Elrod as the sixth chancellor of the South Bend campus of Indiana University, we celebrate a campus that has undergone enormous growth and development since its earliest days. We celebrate a campus that, today, is more responsive than ever to the needs of the community and the region. And we celebrate a campus that continues to make an education of the highest quality available to Hoosiers of all ages, as well as others from around Michiana, the nation, and the world.

¹ Herman B Wells, Remarks at the Dedication of the South Bend-Mishawaka Center Program. University Center Theater, South Bend, Indiana, Delivered March 25, 1962, Indiana University Archives.

2. THE IU BICENTENNIAL AND A BRIEF HISTORY OF IU SOUTH BEND

We celebrate this important milestone in the history of IU South Bend at the beginning of what is a special year for the university as a whole. It is the year in which we celebrate the Bicentennial of the founding of Indiana University 200 years ago on January 20, 1820.

Over 200 years, Indiana University has grown from its humble beginnings in the wilderness of Southern Indiana into a powerhouse global research university that has delivered enormous benefits to the people of Indiana, the nation, and the world. And over that time, IU's educational reach has expanded to every part of the state, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, through vibrant regional campuses like IU South Bend.

For more than a century, IU has had a productive presence in South Bend, a city that has always believed in the power of education. IU's engagement in the South Bend area dates back to 1916, when IU classes aimed at local teachers met in public school buildings in and around South Bend. With the Great Depression on the horizon, IU expanded its programs in 1933 to allow students to stay in the area to complete their first two years of coursework. About 200 students enrolled in this two-year program.²

Today, the IU South Bend campus is historically the largest regional campus of Indiana University. It is home to around 5,000 students and a strong tradition of academic excellence.

The history of this campus includes, of course, a history of dedicated and committed leadership.

² Ibid.

During the distinguished tenure of Chancellor Lester M. Wolfson, IU South Bend became the first IU campus to offer a master of liberal arts degree, and the campus developed an emphasis on the arts that continues to this day.

The South Bend campus continued to grow through the 1990s, as evidenced by the construction of Wiekamp Hall—which was, at the time, the first purpose-built classroom facility added to the campus in more than 30 years—and the Student Activities Center, which was dedicated in 2004, and a facility in which former Speaker of the Indiana House of Representatives, Pat Bauer, from whom we will hear in a moment, played such an instrumental role.

In more recent years, new campus facilities that were part of the legacy of leadership of Chancellor Una Mae Reck were dedicated, including the long-awaited River Crossing Campus Apartments and the renovated Education and Arts Building.

The campus has also received, in recent years, a number of generous philanthropic gifts that have strengthened an already exceptional learning experience for IU South Bend students. These transformative gifts have resulted in the naming of the Judd Leighton School of Business and Economics, the Vera Z. Dwyer College of Health Sciences, and the renovation and naming of the Louise E. Addicott and Yatish J. Joshi Performance Hall. In addition, generous donors to the ongoing *For All Bicentennial Campaign* have given more than \$7.8 million to endow 158 new scholarships at IU South Bend.³ These scholarships will give students who could not otherwise afford to attend IU the opportunity to earn an IU education that will change their lives.

And in 2017, the superbly renovated Riverside Hall opened as the new home of the expanded IU South Bend Health and Wellness Center and the Clinical Laboratory Sciences program.

³ These totals include both matched and unmatched scholarship gifts.

Countless campus leaders, faculty, staff, and students have helped to transform this campus into what it is today. They helped build an intellectual community that is a vital part of this civic community and this entire region.

3. INTRODUCING SUSAN ELROD

Today that strong leadership continues as we officially welcome and install Susan Elrod as chancellor of the South Bend campus of Indiana University.

Having served as chancellor since June 1st of this year, Dr. Elrod may need no introduction to many of you. But let me take just a moment to highlight a few of her accomplishments prior to her tenure at Indiana University.

Most recently, Dr. Elrod served as Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and she is a nationally recognized leader and scholar in STEM higher education programs and institutional change. She previously served as interim provost at California State University, Chico; as dean of science and mathematics at Fresno State; as director of the Center for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; and as director of Project Kaleidoscope, the STEM higher education reform center that is part of the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Dr. Elrod brings to IU South Bend a proven record of effective administrative leadership and a commitment to shared governance. Throughout her career, she has been a champion of programs and initiatives that have led to greater student success, support for faculty and staff development, and the formation of productive and sustainable community partnerships.

We are fortunate to have found, in Dr. Elrod, a visionary and accomplished leader to advance IU South Bend's strong traditions of academic excellence and community engagement.

Like the many individuals who have contributed to the growth of this campus—including her immediate predecessors, Chancellor Terry Allison and Interim Chancellor Jann Joseph—Susan Elrod is building towards a future of continuing partnership between northern Indiana and IU South Bend.

This is a partnership based on shared aspirations—the same aspirations Herman Wells mentioned in this very auditorium 57 years ago—and it is a partnership in which all of us can take great pride.