

“A Man of Action and Integrity:  
IU President Emeritus Myles Brand”

Honorary Degree Luncheon

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie  
President

Indiana University

Musical Arts Center Lobby

Sunday, March 29, 2009

11:30 a.m.

1. WELCOME PRIOR TO LUNCHEON

Laurie and I are delighted to welcome you all to this luncheon honoring two people who not only are distinguished in their own rights but who are also our friends.

Would you please join me in raising your glasses to President Emeritus Myles Brand and his wife Dr. Peg Zeglin Brand? To Myles and Peg.

We will have more formal remarks a little later. Please enjoy your lunch.

2. WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF GUESTS

Again, it is a pleasure to welcome you this afternoon.

The distinguished group who has gathered here this afternoon to honor Myles and Peg Brand is clear testimony to the deep respect and warm admiration so many people have for both of them. We welcome trustees and former trustees, past and present IU administrators, many of whom served under Myles, past and present legislators, civic

and business leaders, past and present faculty, and many others who are honored to consider Myles and Peg as colleagues and friends. Thank you all for joining us this afternoon. We will save more formal introductions for the Honors Convocation ceremony, taking place at 2:00 in the Auditorium.

### 3. INTRODUCTION: MAN OF ACTION

On the second floor of Johnson Hall at the University of Oregon hangs a portrait of our guest of honor, IU President Emeritus Myles Brand. In it, Myles sits jacketless with his sleeves rolled up. He leans forward, poised on the edge of his chair, ready to rise to meet whatever challenges the day may hold. This portrait brilliantly captures the essence of Myles Brand, who has always been the first to roll up his sleeves and prepare for action.

### 4. ACADEMIC CAREER

This characteristic also reflects the area of research that has been at the heart of Myles' work as an outstanding professional philosopher. Since receiving his doctorate from the University of Rochester, he has become one of the world's foremost philosophers on action theory. To put it simply, and to borrow from one of Myles' own essays, the fundamental question in action theory is—as it has been since the time of Socrates—“what initiates action?”<sup>1</sup> As I am sure Myles would agree, an important but difficult question to answer in the world of university administration.

Over the course of his career, Myles has continued to dedicate himself to philosophical inquiry, teaching, and the life of the mind. In fact, the eminent philosopher Keith Lehrer has said that Myles' highly influential book *Intending and Acting: Towards a Naturalized Action Theory*, “remains the central work in action theory connecting philosophy with

---

<sup>1</sup> Brand, Myles. “The Fundamental Question in Action Theory.” *Noûs* 13.2 (May 1979): 131-51. Page 139.

cognitive science.” Another colleague echoed that notion about Myles’ academic achievements saying that “[i]f President Brand were a full-time member of the [IU] faculty, his academic stature would surely qualify him for an endowed chair. He has achieved that stature during”—and some might say in spite of—“a career devoted heavily, and almost from the beginning, to academic administration.”

## 5. ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

And Myles’ achievements as an administrator are equally impressive. He began his administrative career as chair of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and moved on to head the University of Arizona’s Philosophy Department, founded and directed its Cognitive Science Program, and served as Dean of two different units.

At Ohio State, he served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, leading their long-range planning efforts.

In 1989, he became President of the University of Oregon, where he increased academic standards while stabilizing university funding at a time of decreasing support from the state and in a very difficult financial climate.

### 5.1 IU PRESIDENT MYLES BRAND

At Indiana University, Myles Brand follows in the great tradition of IU presidents who have made a transformative difference in the life of this institution.

Under his leadership, IU embarked on the most ambitious long-range planning effort in its history, quadrupled its endowment to \$1 billion, and tripled the number of endowed faculty positions to its current leadership position among Big Ten institutions.

Of course, close to my heart was Myles' determination to make IU a national and international leader in the area of information technology. Quite frankly, Myles Brand is the reason I am here, so I owe him my personal gratitude. Myles helped secure \$30M from the Lilly Endowment for the Pervasive Technology Laboratories, strongly supported IU's path-breaking enterprise license agreement with Microsoft, and oversaw the creation of the School of Informatics, the first new school at IU Bloomington in over 25 years.

Myles' leadership in IT equaled his commitment to the life sciences at IU. He is responsible for the major focus that IU and the state now have on the life sciences. He led what was then the largest privatization effort in the history of the state: the consolidation of the Indiana University and Methodist Hospitals, including the Riley Hospital for Children, into Clarian Health Partners in 1997—now among the nation's largest and most highly ranked health care systems. He also helped spearhead efforts to secure what was the largest grant ever made by the Lilly Endowment: \$105 million for the Indiana Genomics Initiative in 2000.<sup>2</sup>

Anticipating the university's increasing productivity in information technology and the life sciences and corresponding potential for commercial impact, Myles created Indiana University's Advanced Research and Technology Institute in 1997 as a vehicle to promote technology transfer and augment the university's contributions to the state's economic future. Later renamed the Indiana University Research and Technology Corporation, the IURTC manages, licenses, and protects the university's intellectual property and operates our incubator facility in Indianapolis. Later this summer, we will dedicate a new 40,000 square foot incubator facility here in Bloomington. The home of the Pervasive Technology Institute and a host of life science companies, this facility will truly symbolize Myles' continuing impact here at Indiana University.

---

<sup>2</sup> This was followed in 2003 by another \$50 million gift from the Lilly Endowment for the same initiative.

During his tenure at IU, Myles' strong leadership also extended to intercollegiate athletics, and that has continued in his role as president of the NCAA. As in all other areas, Myles' actions in relation to athletics have been driven by his integrity and his dedication to the best values at the heart of American higher education.

As most of you know, this brief overview of Myles' professional accomplishments only begins to scratch the surface of his innumerable achievements. I have not mentioned his support for IU's Arts and Humanities programs, his role in the Central Indiana Life Science Initiative, or his strong support for racial and gender diversity at IU. I have not mentioned his work in developing the Tempe Principles on Scholarly Publishing and Archival Development or his leadership in the AAU. I have not mentioned his numerous honorary degrees, his Sagamore of the Wabash Award from Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon, or then-Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's proclaiming December 5, 2002, "Dr. Myles Brand Day."

Even with these, we only have a glimpse of the tremendous impact Myles has had on American higher education.

## 6. HONORING PEG BRAND

Of course, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the vital role Peg Zeglin Brand has played in Myles' success and the obvious love and affection she has for him. As most of you know, Peg is on the philosophy faculty at IUPUI and is a practicing artist who represents Indiana in the Feminist Art Project. When Myles served as IU's president, Peg redefined the role of presidential spouse. As a productive scholar and full-time faculty member in two departments, she also represented the university, working with donors and alumni. In fact, Peg was the driving force behind the Colloquium for Women of IU, a model university advocacy program, and one in which Laurie is continuing in Peg's tradition.

Please join me in thanking Peg for her great efforts on behalf of Indiana University.

## 7. PERSONAL REFLECTION

Let me end on a personal note. I would like to think that Myles and I warmed to each other the first time we met—when he interviewed me in June, 1996. Then, from when I began work at IU in January, 1997, I saw him regularly—quite often weekly, sometimes daily. I worked for Myles for the next six years, and, though I had worked for some fine leaders, I have never worked for anyone better than Myles. And I think this is a sentiment I share with the many people in this room who worked for him, and those who continue to work for him. He was an outstanding president and a truly great man. And I am honored that since he left IU, he has remained a staunch friend and a source of the greatest wisdom. As a leader he has a remarkable ability to inspire confidence. It can truly be said of him, as it was of the great British Prime Minister William Pitt the Elder, "No one left his presence who did not feel the braver."<sup>3</sup>

In presenting Myles Brand with an honorary degree, we recognize his tremendous contributions to Indiana University, to American higher education, and to the life of the mind. In accepting this degree, he honors us and continues to bring honor to Indiana University.

Please join me in congratulating, Myles Brand.

[Brand offers brief remarks]

---

<sup>3</sup> This refers to British soldier and politician Colonel Isaac Barré's statement that "Nobody entered his [William Pitt the Elder's] closet who did not come out of it a braver man." Cited in a number of different sources, see Macaulay, Thomas Babington, and R.F. Winch. *Macaulay's Essays on William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*. London and New York: MacMillan, 1898. (Page 175) See also Leadam, Isaac Saunders. *The History of England from the Accession of Anne to the Death of George II*. Volume 9. New York: Longmans, Green, 1909. (Page 479.)

## 6. INTRODUCING SYLVIA McNAIR

As you know, it is a great tradition at IU to celebrate occasions such as this with music. Our thanks goes to Bill Cook for generously providing air transportation that allowed for the return from a concert engagement last night of this afternoon's special performer.

It is now my pleasure to introduce an award-winning member of the IU faculty, who, like the Brands, really needs no introduction. Would you all help me welcome a jewel of Indiana University and longtime friend of the Brands—Sylvia McNair?

## 7. CONCLUSION

Thank you, Sylvia. I can think of no better way to mark this special day.

I will have the honor of officially conferring Myles' honorary doctoral degree at the Honors Convocation ceremony beginning at 2:00 in the IU Auditorium. Feel free to use the courtesy shuttle that will take you to the Auditorium. I do hope that you will join this celebration of academic achievement at which we will welcome our newest alumnus.

Would you once again join me in congratulating—and thanking—Myles and Peg Brand for all that they have done for Indiana University?