

“Honoring a Great Benefactor:
Tom Raper’s Support of IU East”

IU East Naming Celebration

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie

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IU East

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGINAL DEDICATION

At the dedication of the IU East campus in 1975, campus leaders paid tribute to the community of Richmond, Indiana. Specifically, in the new IU East building, now known as Whitewater Hall, a wall of signature tiles honored the over 800 people who had made the campus possible through their generous contributions. Some of these grassroots patrons gave a dollar a week for three years to establish the campus; others gave more. What every person gave was the gift of opportunity that has changed the lives of thousands of Hoosiers over the course of the years.

Today, we are remembering those original grassroots patrons as we rename Middlefork Hall in honor of a great Indiana success story: Tom Raper. Mr. Raper has been dedicated to this campus for many years and now has become an integral part of this campus’ rich history. His extraordinary gift—the largest in the history of the IU East campus—serves as the latest chapter in IU East’s story of partnership and community.

2. IU EAST: A STORY OF PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY

That story dates back to 1946 when Indiana University and Earlham College joined forces to serve the community in the Earlham College-Indiana University Extension Center. In 1967, Purdue University and Ball State began offering classes at the center, which changed its name to the Eastern Indiana Center of Earlham College. Over the course of those two decades, enrollment expanded beyond the center's capacity, and the community stepped forward again, raising over a million dollars towards the cost of a new site and construction of a campus in Richmond. Community organizers requested that Indiana University establish the planned regional campus.

At Dedication Week in 1975, the campus welcomed parents of IU East students; area high school seniors, counselors, and principals; Earlham College administrators, faculty, and staff; Wayne County IU alums; graduates of Purdue Programs at IU East; members of Richmond-area service clubs; and many others. This was truly a community milestone.

That strong connection between the campus and the community has never faltered over the years. Within the last few years, the community reinforced their support through the Campaign for Community, a joint IU East and Purdue fundraising effort led by Rob Quigg. The resounding success of this campaign demonstrates the value this community places on higher education in general and IU East in particular, and it reinforces the importance of IU's alumni, supporters, and friends here and across the state. Those supporters recently helped push the Matching the Promise fundraising campaign over the \$1 billion mark, for which we are deeply grateful.

3. MIDDLEFORK HALL: A CAMPUS LANDMARK

In 1993, construction began on the 56,000 square foot, \$6.4 million Middlefork Hall. Built to house the Fine Arts Program, Purdue University Programs, Big Brothers/Big

Sisters, classrooms, laboratories, and many others, Middlefork Hall truly brings people together across disciplinary and even institutional boundaries. The building was originally named after the Middle Fork (now know as the East Fork) of the Whitewater River, and as you know the Middle Fork Reservoir borders the edge of this beautiful—and growing—campus. This wonderful building, which symbolizes the strength of this community, the beauty of the landscape, and the history of partnership, will now bear the name of a Hoosier who has achieved success throughout the state and across the country.

4. GREAT PROGRESS AT IU EAST AND TRIBUTE TO LEADERSHIP

This newly named Tom Raper Hall is the latest step in the great progress this campus has made over the years. In just a moment, Chancellor Paydar, who knows Tom Raper well, will share more about his history. He will also discuss some of the great progress taking place on campus, where enrollment is at an all-time high as IU East continues to serve the citizens of east central Indiana. This campus plays a leadership role in providing affordable and accessible higher education, partnering in innovative ways with Ivy Tech. This campus has evolved into the region's leader in baccalaureate and master's level education. And this campus is reinforcing regional economic development by educating community and business leaders who make a transformative difference in and around Richmond.

This remarkable progress and this great day of celebration is due, in part, to the strong leadership of Chancellor Nasser Paydar. Would you help me thank him for his service and congratulate him on this wonderful occasion?

5. CONCLUSION: THANKS TO TOM RAPER

And of course, this day of celebration is also due to the tremendous generosity of Tom Raper, who has been dedicated to this campus for many years. As we rename Middlefork Hall in his honor, we are paying tribute to his great contributions to this campus. In the coming years, we will remember and honor Mr. Raper's great generosity, which will continue to transform this campus and touch the lives of students, faculty, staff, and visitors, alike. Our deepest gratitude goes out to him and his family.