

## BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED

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I remember the moment, almost to the day, when I realized that I wanted to be at the University of Indianapolis. It was during a cool, late-September morning that I came to that conclusion. I had just gotten back from my first morning class. The twenty-minute walk across the confusion of one-way streets, looking at Greek

rush propaganda and playful squirrels, had given me time to think. It was barely a full month into my first semester, but I already knew that I would never feel like a Boilermaker. The classes were not the problem—although I’ve yet to master the skills needed to properly balance a chemistry equation. My roommate and I got along well enough, and I missed home only enough to call once a week. The problem had nothing to do with academics or homesickness, but rather had everything to do, it seemed, with connectivity. I felt like one of 30,000—and, as the theme song to “Cheers” tells us, “Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name.”

A parable exists in the Christian religious tradition that says a seed sown in rocky soil never takes root, and although it endures for a while, it eventually falls away. As for a seed grown in good soil, it bears fruit and yields (Gospel of Mark 4:41–9, 13–20). Perhaps, if roots resemble our connection or union with our University, then, for me, Purdue was an example of rocky soil. If that is the case, and our University represents the soil in which we are sown, then the University of Indianapolis is most certainly some of the most fruitful around. Pick up a copy of the alumni magazine, *Portico*, and you’ll find successful teachers, preachers, military officers, CEOs, writers, researchers, lawyers, doctors, mothers, and fathers. Although each of these graduates has bloomed differently, their roots grew in the same soil.

One might ask, what are some properties of a Greyhound? To me, a Greyhound is open-minded, willing to accept new ideas and respect those of others while not forgetting where he or she came from. True Greyhounds embrace multiculturalism. Greyhounds are proactive trailblazers who know that opportunities can await them around every turn, if they will just put forth the effort to seek them. Unlike flowers that bloom only in the spring, students at the University of Indianapolis are ever-changing, always adapting to new challenges, and are in search of ways to improve the academic, spiritual, and social lives of their peers. If you feel as if you might have a lot to live up to, don’t fret.

*Mr. Hill delivered these remarks at the President’s Convocation at the University of Indianapolis on September 8, 2005.*

The University of Indianapolis boasts more than fifty registered student organizations in which to cultivate one's leadership skills. Extracurricular involvement and proof that one can work with a team are all things that employers look for in potential employees. Aside from boosting your resume, getting involved on campus can have more immediate effects on your college experience. Imagine writing home and telling of how you helped coordinate a successful event on campus, or better yet, that the event you planned all by yourself went off without a hitch. Speaking from personal experience, I can tell you that there is nothing more satisfying than knowing that a policy you're enacting now will play a role in the lives of the students to follow. Next week, a seed of an idea that was sewn in a student organization office in the Schwitzer Student Center will materialize, and hourly chimes will once again be heard on the University's campus. Other ideas like this one are blossoming all across the University, from Good Hall to the Ruth Lilly Fitness Center, in weekly organization and class meetings—ideas that are waiting only for proactive students such as you to cultivate.

Likewise, in various locations throughout the southside of Indianapolis, members of the University community are helping enrich the lives of others. Fulfilling the University's motto of "Education for Service," students, staff and faculty members continue to find ways to contribute to the lives of others to ensure a healthy today and a brighter tomorrow.

Last week, a friend of mine said that "True maturity comes when one realizes it is better to give than to receive, and then acts upon that statement." Service should not feel like a daunting task. Just this week, during a group discussion, another fellow Greyhound pointed out that service can be as subtle as holding open a door, or being there for a friend. Whether you are participating in a service project with one of the University's service organizations, working with children at a day care facility, or just answering the phone, do it with a smile. For—according to an unknown author—"there are a hundred languages in the world, but a smile speaks them all." Enrich your lives, and the lives of others, and as blossoms share their fragrance with the world, you too must share your happiness with those you meet.

Ladies and gentlemen, my words cannot express to you how important I think feeling connected to your University is. If we ever expect to bloom into the truly amazing people we are intended to be, we must start nurturing our roots today. It is easy to wake up every day, go to class, and then head back to our homes to study, only to sleep and do it all over again. However, it is just as easy to search the bulletin board or the Intranet for a club or organization, athletic team, or campus job that helps fuel your passions in life. Seize the moment; take the time to step out of your comfort zone. Look around. The opportunities are endless, and it is only the second week of class.

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*Evan Hill '06*

(p. 150) Evan Hill, president of Indianapolis Student Government (2005-2006). Photograph provided by Evan Hill with his permission to use.