
THE COLLEGE OF
WOOSTER

THE LILLY PROJECT FOR THE EXPLORATION OF VOCATION
Contemplation & Commitment

*Speeches at The Lilly House Ribbon-Cutting & Opening Ceremony
on September 12, 2003*
(Listed in the order in which they were given)



President R. Stanton Hales, The College of Wooster

- It is a delight to welcome all those in attendance for this Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony and Open House. This is a celebration not just for Lilly House itself but also for Wooster's entire Lilly Project on the Theological Exploration of Vocation.
- The beauty of the day matches the beauty of this project, and it is especially gratifying to have on this afternoon's program speakers who will cover the full range of the aspects of the program.
- In addition to Charles Kammer, chair of the Religious Studies Department (and with LMC co-author of grant proposal to the Lilly Endowment), and Dianna Kardulias (Director of the Lilly Project), we are honored to have two visitors from longer distances: trustee Anne Wilson, from Houston, Texas, and Lucy Forster-Smith, from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota.
- Wooster's Lilly project was a gleam in the eye of Chuck Kammer and Linda Morgan-Clement as far back as 1999 when Wooster was invited to compete in first round of competition for Lilly grants under the Exploration program. Although we received a planning grant for preparation of our proposal, our gleam was not bright enough; our proposal insufficiently ambitious, and thus we were disappointed to receive a denial letter in November of 2000. However, our attitude of "try, try again" led to a bigger, better, and better structured proposal, which we submitted in the 3rd round of competition, once again with planning grant awarded in early 2002. We were thus thrilled in November 2002 to receive word of our successful proposal and to receive a grant of over \$1.7 million. This success brings us here today with the Lilly program in full bloom.
- The College of Wooster is a liberal arts college and not a technical school; we are about the farthest thing possible from a vocational school. Our purpose is not to prepare students for specific jobs but rather to offer them the opportunity to gain a fundamental understanding of world and our role in it, as thinkers and doers. A natural question was this: would a program on exploration of vocation fit at Wooster? Our eventual answer was, absolutely! The creativity and the universal applicability of the ideas on which our proposal was based make our program an ideal complement to A Wooster Education.
- Wooster's program on exploration of vocation is of special interest for a variety of reasons to trustee Anne Wilson, to professor Chuck Kammer, to our guest Lucy Forster-Smith, and of course to Dianna Kardulias.
- Anne Wilson brings the interest of four constituencies to which can claim membership; she is:
 - An alumna;
 - A former president of the Alumni Association;
 - A current alumni trustee; and most important of all,
 - A parent of a current Wooster junior, Michael.
- Chuck Kammer is also a Wooster parent, of a current first-year student.
- Lucy Forster-Smith is Chaplain at Macalester College and is Director of Co-Curricular Activities for Macalester's Lilly Project on Work, Ethics, and Vocation; she has also been a valuable resource to the Colleges who are members of the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities, to which Wooster belongs.

- Dianna Kardulias, in part of her duties as Director, also serves as adjunct member of the teaching staff in First-Year Seminar and in Classical Studies.
- Please join me in welcoming these speakers.



Anne Takehara Wilson
Board of Trustees, Religious Dimension Committee
 Houston, Texas

Greetings from Houston – the home of Super Bowl XXXVIII! We are on a count down and there are only 141 days left. The local committee is in the process of recruiting some 10,000 volunteers to host an anticipated 100,000 visitors who will stimulate the economy by over \$300 million.

The excitement and anticipation that's building in Houston is the same as what is being ignited here today with the official opening of the Lilly House. While the financial impact of the Lilly project on the campus will not quite measure up to that of the Super Bowl on Houston, the number of lives that will be touched is just as impressive. Not only will the students, faculty, and staff of the College of Wooster be enhanced, but also alumni, local pastors and congregations; local, national, and international seminaries, medical agencies, social service organizations and communities. Over the next several years, I am confident that the cheering fans of the Lilly project could easily fill the Reliant Stadium (site of Super Bowl XXXVIII)

It is my privilege to stand before you this afternoon as a wearer of many different hats of several of the constituencies that will be impacted by the Lilly Project.

My first hat is that of a member of the Religious Dimensions Committee of the Board of Trustees. I have been a part of this committee for an entire year. My fellow committee members have reassured me that the business of this committee has definitely gotten more interesting during this past year. What is so gratifying to me as a trustee is to realize that here is a way to add yet another dimension to the Wooster education. Wooster has always excelled in educating the head and impacting the heart – of developing a passion to learn, as well as developing independent minds. We now can go a step further and offer the opportunity to explore who each of us is meant to be. What can we do with this education? Together let us now pursue the exploration of vocation.

The next hat I wear is that of an alum. Often times one does not fully appreciate the Wooster experience until after one has left. It is then that so many of us ask – what can we give back in return for all that we have received? Through the Lilly Project countless opportunities exist for alumni to serve as mentors and speakers, as well as contacts for internships and summer programs. I promise to keep the staff of the Lilly project informed as to what methods the Super Bowl committee uses to recruit those 10,000 volunteers.

The next hat that I wear is that of a parent. Our son Michael is a junior here. My husband and I couldn't be more thrilled than to have him be one of the first benefactors of the Lilly Project. Michael is a sociology major with many gifts and interests. Unfortunately, there aren't enough semesters left for him to try seminary life, but I know that he will want to take advantage of discussions of "worthy questions" with fellow students, hearing inspirational speakers, and perhaps even getting involved in a local congregation. All the while he is preparing for a lifetime of work and service. Butch and I hope and pray that the result of his overall Wooster experience is much more than a 9 to 5 job with a paycheck, but rather a vocation that will change the lives of others as well as Michael himself.

Finally, I come to you wearing the hat of Director of Christian Education in the Presbyterian Church. Our denomination has more people leaving through the back door than are coming in the front door. Our families face the challenges of what the culture and society demand. They are constantly being pushed and pulled in so many directions. Our churches are in desperate need of those who feel called into ministry. The church needs individuals who hear God's call to the place where Frederick Buechner says "your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." My personal prayer is that the Lilly project will provide the motivation for such important and life changing work to take place.

So, come February 1st will you be watching that extravaganza called Super Bowl? Who will be the proud winners of those sizeable checks and those sizeable Super Bowl rings?

Starting today will your eyes and hearts be focused on the Lilly House? Who will cross the threshold? Will the participants come away with a vision of who he or she was created to be?

Hmmm.... A gold ring or a deep commitment to a life path grounded in authentic values, spirit, and service. Which would you choose??



The Reverend Dr. Charles L. Kammer, III
Professor and Chair of Religious Studies
The College of Wooster

In the opening to his book, Working, Studs Terkel writes:

“This book, being about work, is, by its very nature, about violence—to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers as well as accidents, about shouting matches as well as fistfights, about nervous breakdowns as well as kicking the dog around. It is, above all (or beneath all), about daily humiliations. To survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded among the great many of us.”

He does, however, go on to write:

“But it is also about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying. Perhaps immortality, too, is part of the quest. To be remembered was the wish, spoken and unspoken, of the heroes and heroines of this book.”

But such astonishment, such immortality, escapes most of us for as, Terkel notes, “most of us like the assembly line worker, have jobs that are too small for our spirit.”

They are too small for many reasons. We are creative, thinking, feeling, dreaming beings and yet jobs increasingly require us to repress our thought, our creativity, our feeling and our dreams. Whether doctors in HMOs, lawyers in corporate enterprises, assembly line workers, cooks or grounds keepers, we are treated like parts of a machine and, when no longer needed, we are quickly discarded. But our jobs are also too small because the dreams of our society have become too small. Medicine becomes the pursuit of wealth in a nation where over 40 million persons are denied health care because health care is regarded as a commodity and not a right. Legal practice has become adversarial combat and not the pursuit of justice. Economic enterprises focus on profit not the creation of jobs that fulfill the human spirit or on meeting the needs of society’s poor and powerless. But our jobs are also too small for increasingly we cannot earn a living doing that for which we have a passion.

And, as we gather here, we need to admit that the erosion of meaning, the diminishment of the spirit has crept into the College of Wooster community as well. Too often education is presented as the avenue to wealth and power. Workers, whether students, staff or faculty are increasingly Ided, measured, scanned and billed, treated as disposable commodities in an education factory.

We come, then, today, with a real sense of celebration to dedicate Lilly House, both as building and as a community. Here is a space and a community where we can explore and grow our own spirit and our own dreams. Here is a place from which we can individually and collectively challenge each other, the College community and the broader world to have dreams and ambitions worthy of the human spirit. Here we can dream a world of justice, a world where all receive necessary care and resources. We can dream a world where peace is the norm and not the exception, where difference is celebrated. Here we can discover, individually and together, how to shape our lives and work so that we might be engaged in the embodiment of those dreams.

In her book, Beloved, Toni Morrison has a character, Baby Suggs, who is the spiritual mentor of an oppressed African American community. She would regularly take the community to a clearing in the woods. When they arrived, they would engage in ritual dance and singing. They would laugh and weep, mourn and celebrate. In the midst of the ritual, Baby Suggs would begin to preach.

“She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they were the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glorybound pure.

She told them that the only grace they could have was the grace they could imagine. That if they could not see it, they would not have.

“Here”, she said, “in this here place, we flesh, flesh that weeps, laughs, flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh.”

We stand here at Lilly House, a community where grace will be imagined, where dreams will be large enough to fill the human spirit and where we will, together shape our lives so that our dreams are embodied in our work, our lives, and the human community.

Studs Terkel, Working, New York (Avon), 1972. pp. xiii and xxix.



The Reverend Dr. Lucy Forster-Smith
*Macalester College Chaplain and Director of
Co-Curricular Activities
Macalester Lilly Project for Work, Ethics, and Vocation
St. Paul, Minnesota*

It gives me tremendous pleasure to be invited to speak at the opening of this absolutely marvelous facility here at the College of Wooster. Some of you may be wondering how I wound up here this afternoon. As a chaplain I might acknowledge from my Reformed faith perspective that it was providence or pre-destination, that of all the places I could be and probably should be today, that I am in the company of such amazing people the likes of Dianna Kardulias, Linda Morgan-Clement, Emily Leachman, Joyce Howard along with a distinguished trustee, President Hale, remarkable faculty and staff members, trustees and most importantly students. But when I am honest, I am here out of self-interest and also because of a partnership that is being forged between the Macalester College Lilly Project and the College of Wooster Lilly Project.

The partnership began with a site visit that occurred over three years ago, when I was deputized by our Lilly Planning Committee at Macalester to select colleges that were similar to ours to see what kind of dreams and hopes they were cooking up for their implementation proposal for Lilly's Theological Exploration of Vocation Program. Having known Linda Morgan Clement for several years through chaplaincy circles, I set up a half day with her and others to talk about plans. It was one of the most influential conversations we had in our work on the "First Round" Lilly grants. And those of us who were in on that conversation with people here went home and wrote like mad and lo and behold, we received the grant. So, we say publicly, thank you for the partnership!

One of the pieces of our project at Macalester was hosting a Convocation that we thought would connect other colleges with our own in thinking of issues that students and other members of our community met as they walked the road of vocation. Part of it, we suspected was finding big enough questions to shape their lives and something worthy of their commitment, as Sharon Parks so ably suggests. This was the next step of this joyful partnership...asking Wooster and four other colleges to join us in California, in January to look at these issues. This leads to the self-interest that brings me here. Dianna Kardulias and Emily Leachman as well as others from Wooster attended that Convocation and got excited about working with a group to develop some resources centering on "life's work." So, yesterday we worked together in the Lilly House library and conference room, crafting resources for use on college campuses nation-wide: in advising appointments, in study circles, dorm lounges, personal retreats, faculty lounges, etc.

Self-interest...partnerships...but there is an even larger purpose for our connection here. And that purpose has to do with the urgency of this project both here and at Macalester and the 86 other campuses nation-wide who have received this generous gift from the Lilly Endowment. There is a crisis of leadership in religious communities these days. Those of us who are Christian know the truth of that claim, but we also see it in Mosques and Synagogues and other settings where religious and spiritual life is practiced. This crisis of leadership extends beyond the clergy and other religious leaders, onto college campuses, into non-profits, seeps into corporate board rooms and roams into our personal relational life. The moral, ethical and religious questions that are upon us at this time in history are not lost on our students. We need to support, engage, challenge and be challenged by the *situation* in which we find ourselves. This project positions us to work on the global leadership crisis right here, right now, with college students. Sharon Parks in her book, Big Questions, Worthy Dreams has said, "The young adult has a unique capacity to receive images that can form the dreams and fire the passions of a generation to heal and transform a world. It is the vocation of a culture-- including every institution that shapes the formation of young adult faith (and I would add higher education culture)--to inform and nurture the young adult imagination." We need to build a foundation for our students' dreams; to frame in their passion; to provide furnishings and add a dash of flourish for their hopes and to open the door or their hearts to the living, breathing, spirit of life, or God, or the Holy, whichever way you name it, is to the heart of this work...the theological exploration of vocation. And we need to unapologetically encourage our students to explore how they will live out a life of commitment to the deepest values they can muster in all arenas of life. For some, this will lead them to a religious profession. For most it will awaken their deepest and most powerful capacities of compassion, conviction and clarity of purpose. And for those of us navigating this Lilly ship, it will mean just doing more of what liberal arts colleges already do...awakening the passion and honing the skill of our students for life's work.

I have had the privilege of being the co-director of our grant at Macalester for 2 and a half years. We are over half way through with it. Ours was a project, that was launched with both enthusiasm and I have to be honest, some

cynicism. But at this point, the impact of the program on the lives of students, the remarkable Lilly courses that have been launched by well respected faculty, the questions that are being engaged and probed and the way the grant has touched the wider Twin Cities community has exceeded the highest expectations of those of us who drafted the proposal. In short, it has been thrilling.

And so, on this day, as we stand together at this wonderful landmark...this dedication, I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to celebrate with you. And I deliver a charge that in all that you do, that you bring your very best energy and passion to this endeavor and that you keep students at the center of the work you do here. And please know that those of us at other institutions will watch with great interest and I must admit, some envy to see how this Lilly House awakens the work and vocation of this great College. Thank you.



Dr. Dianna R. Kardulias
Director, The College of Wooster Lilly Project for the
Exploration of Vocation

Vocation. A funny word, a bit antique, and if it sounds somewhat strange that's good, because it shouldn't be overused, perhaps it shouldn't trip out as easily in American speech as the word "career." I can picture a "career wardrobe," can't you? But not a vocational wardrobe—the mind fails before that. Vocation is too imaginative and inspired, personally crafted, focused on service to humanity. Perhaps too, "vocation's" Classical Latin roots won't let it perform services beneath its dignity—and glibly stand where "career" can and occupy the place where "authentic identity" might reside, and that's all for the best. We all hope that the doctor, lawyer, professor, or rabbi standing before us in our time of need has a "calling," not a career, not a job, not just work she's got to do. Because "vocation" means that a creative, insightful, committed, human identity has awakened and is doing the talking, and no matter if it is newborn, it cannot be anything but original, and strong, and ethical. That's quite a claim, isn't it? Justified, I think. As we gathered today realize, vocation means that you are "called" to do something, rather than that you just do it. There is sap springing at the center of this word, "calling," life bubbling up, whereas the word "job" might be dry as sawdust, sign of the tree at its end. Vocation feeds spirit and listens to it; vocation is an internal and external dialogue that never stops unfolding because it is in and for the whole life, not 8 to 5, or just before graduation, and it is about integrity, not being slowly strangled and ethically manacled by having a "work self" that drains or fails to converse with a "vacation self." Human beings respond in really funny ways to receiving a "CALL." I've spoken to monks who deplored having received the call to the monastery even as they deeply loved the peace and ritual richness of their daily life; who wrestled daily with love of God and loss of other opportunities. But they kept wrestling. I might be called to landscape artfully; I might be called to choose just the right light fixtures, organize work crews within a budget, paint vibrant Victorian schemes in five colors; I might be called to build a lovely front porch or to create eye-catching graphics design for brochures; I might be called to inspire others to humanitarian service, to lavishly give of a personal library built over a lifetime of study, or quietly to do the most sober and exact financial accounting. From thinkers as different as Socrates and St. Augustine we learn that upon "being called," upon conceiving a vocation, a new life begins, unforeseen, momentous, full of mystery even for the taker of the path—later there may even be trouble with the authorities. From Jesus, Martin Luther, Gandhi, or Desmond Tutu, we learn that "being called" to a project can result in a deeply felt commitment that might be expressed like this: "Here I stand, I can do no other."

On Fridays here at Lilly House, we drink tea and discuss the vocational topic of the week: next Friday it will be "Who's afraid of the Big Questions." Certainly a Liberal Arts college is not, nor anyone within its walls. Vocation, like the Liberal Arts project in which it is embedded, asks seeks answers to the Big Questions. But Vocational Exploration is here to deepen the Liberal Arts project. To challenge committee members to never "check their ethical selves at the door" or to value conformity, or precedent, over what is a just or true or better idea. To say to students, yes you are here to develop as a critical thinker—to think critically about what? Yes, to become a leader in some field—why? To invite faculty and staff to get in touch with their passion for their chosen field and to challenge them to find the courage to take that commitment to the next level. To ask all of us to redefine "success" beyond an external good such as keeping your job, being promoted or tenured, but counting "success" as daily living lives of commitment of spirit for betterment of the

world. In a small quiet way, perhaps, but nothing short of betterment of the world. Ok. That takes commitment, time for reflection, human and financial resources, and supportive communities. The Lilly Project is here during the next four years to provide these things and to see what grows; after 2007 the house will remain; the programs we have begun that have become most meaningful to the life of the College we hope will be continued by committed persons and offices beyond the Lilly Project's existence.

What I have learned as Lilly Director. First and foremost, What money can do, which turns out to be: nothing. During the early days of receiving the grant, I was vaguely uncomfortable about all the talk about \$1.78 MILLION DOLLARS, it somehow made me want to shrug and say "So what; let's talk programs." The faculty, staff, and students who wrote this grant, the grant writing team that included Emily and Becky and Stan and Lisa and was headed by Chuck and Linda never sat around and talked about \$1.78 MILLION DOLLARS, I knew that for certain. They talked about Worthy Questions, they talked about Congregational Partnerships, Medical Humanitarian Internships, Service Learning, and Major Speakers, and Retreats, and a Seminary Semester. Saying that money creates the Lilly Project would be like saying that oxygen is the reason that I can talk to you today. It's true, but it's also pretty much beside the point. Perhaps a better metaphor would be...a HOUSE. Saying that money creates the Lilly Project would be like saying that a beautiful, spacious, elegant, retreat-like environment creates the space for people within it to dream new dreams, even as it offers them new books and fortifies them with quiet reflective time...so now we are closer to the mark with the house metaphor. As a Lilly Director I have learned what you can't buy, but only provide space, time, and support for, what you can only hope for and hope to meet enthusiasm and dedication in return. I am standing before Lilly House because of the energy, skill, and dedication of the team Bob Walton assembled in the Galpin board room that first "Lilly House" meeting, when this was Parkinson House and destined for demolition. Because of the hours that Peter Shantz and Jackie Middleton spent with me until evening, defining the vision for the physical space that would be Lilly House. The many hours inside and outside the house with Don Fisher, Jim Fishburn, and Phil Williams. The dedication of Tom Tierney, who has just welcomed back our first batch of medical humanitarian interns, home from Belize and Mexico. A Steering Committee, Faculty, staff, & student members of the Major Speakers, Mini-Grants, and Azimuth committees, College administrators at all levels, Deans, Vice Presidents, and a President, who pave our way and problem-solve by our sides. Joyce & Emily, who daily bring a love and energy and hospitality into this space that they so believe in.

We all deeply yearn for a home that provides us with the strength and support and creative space to face work, and I have that; I also have work that provides me with strength and support and creative space to take home. Here's a vision: what if more of us had that? What would the College look like? Physically, and spiritually, and intellectually? What would the world look like? I'm thinking greener, maybe green as a Commons or a College quad, where people share vision and vocabulary and rejoice in difference, and build things that endure.

In closing. I'm a great spokesperson for the concept of vocation, because my path has been exciting and crooked, and I'm doing work right now that defies description to anybody except maybe another Lilly Director. I get to hear things. People's vocational journeys; their expectations, passions, fears about a meaningful life's work. Here are a few of my favorite sayings, all from the last few weeks and all heard within these walls.

By a student from Worthy Questions: "Is this *really* our house?" We feel so at home here, and can really *talk!* And the big green chairs are *so comfortable!*

By a freshman: What if most the time I walk around and I feel like a fraud?

By a staff member: "You know, I love my job, but there's an emptiness inside it somewhere."

By another staff member, eyes shining with possibility: "If I could check out any book from this library, it would be this one." And so she did.

And lastly, by a junior, said in the Reading Room with great passion and need: "But where do I find the courage to make the most important decisions in my life?"

I close with her words rather than mine.

Thank you.

