

# History and Character of Drake University

(taken from Drake University Undergraduate 2005-06 Catalog)

It was an ambitious undertaking.

Confronted with declining economic conditions, the Disciples of Christ in Iowa were faced with the decision to move their established Oskaloosa College, the first Christian college founded in Iowa, to another location.

In 1881, a zealous group, led by George Thomas Carpenter, journeyed to Des Moines, where they found support for their proposed move. In March 1881, bolstered with a \$20,000 pledge from General Francis Marion Drake of Centerville, Iowa, the educational institution became a reality. In gratitude, the University's trustees named their institution after General Drake, a Civil War general, former Iowa governor, banker, railroad builder and attorney.

This was Drake University's modest beginning. Its founders dreamed of an institution that was broad-based and liberally nonsectarian. To establish the educational climate in which the University would operate, they issued the following statement:

"This University has been designed upon a broad, liberal and modern basis. The articles of incorporation provide that all its departments shall be open to all without distinction of sex, religion or race. In its management and influence, it will aim at being Christian, without being sectarian."

While corporate affiliation with the Disciples was eventually terminated, the University continues to be guided by this statement of nondiscrimination and the progressive vision of its founders.

During the administration of Drake's first president and chancellor, George T. Carpenter (1881-1893), the University established itself as an integral part of a young and growing community in the world's richest agricultural area. In 10 years, it boasted of eight departments, 53 teachers and more than 800 students — more than tenfold the number of students enrolled during its first semester in 1881. In 1888, a University plan was developed that separated the departments into colleges.

Upon the death of President Carpenter, Barton O. Aylesworth was named acting chancellor and served until 1897, when William Bayard Craig became chancellor. Subsequently led by President Hill McClelland Bell (1902-1918), Drake expanded its academic programs and established new ones as needed.

An outstanding educator and administrator at Drake University and in the state of Iowa, President Bell led Drake through a major building program and the economic

difficulties that began with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Cole Hall, which is now the Office of Admission, was dedicated in 1904; Memorial Hall was built in 1905; Carnegie Hall was erected in 1908, and an addition to Howard Hall was completed in 1909. Cole, Carnegie and Howard halls now are listed on the National Register of Historic Places along with Drake's main administration building, Old Main.

President Bell also fostered a top faculty trained in scholarship, dedicated to teaching and committed to maintaining a high standard of academic achievement.

The year 1893 marked the advent of organized, planned sports at Drake. John L. Griffith, who became coach and director of athletics in 1908, accelerated the growth of athletics at the University. The D Club, which recognizes athletic letterwinners, was organized that year. The Drake teams, which had been called Ducklings, Drakes, Ganders and even Tigers, became the Drake Bulldogs.

Coach Griffith made his greatest contribution to the University, however, in 1910 when he organized America's athletic classic, the Drake Relays. Now one of the largest university/college track and field meets in the world, the Relays also features a week of fun campus activities, entertainment and other events.

The University is revitalizing Drake Stadium, home of the Drake Relays since its opening in 1926. The \$12.6 million project, to be completed before the 2006 Drake Relays, will include new seating for fans, a wider track that meets international competition standards, an outside safety lane for athletes, a state-of-the-art artificial grass field by FieldTurf that will be large enough to accommodate Drake's NCAA football and men's and women's soccer teams and a new scoreboard. The improvements will position Drake and Des Moines to bid for the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships, along with AAU and USA Track and Field competitions. The estimated economic impact of these events and the ongoing Drake Relays will be in excess of \$300 million over 10 years.

With the end of World War I, Drake University's fifth president, Arthur Holmes (1918-1923), turned to peacetime planning. He set up a psychological clinic, established new departments and used an elementary school as a practice school for prospective teachers. He also recognized and emphasized the need for student residences.

Daniel Walter Morehouse served as Drake's president from 1922 to 1941. Under his leadership, the University constructed new student residences and classroom facilities to meet demands of growing student enrollment. A Phi Beta Kappa chapter also was established.

As the University celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1931, the country was in the midst of the Great Depression. The effects were felt on campus as well. However, in

1937, the Gardner Cowles Foundation donated funds for Cowles Library, Drake's main library. In 1966, a \$1.7 million addition to the original building tripled its size.

Drake also further developed its graduate studies, which had existed at the University since 1883. President Morehouse organized a graduate division to increase the list of master's degrees in professional fields.

Following President Morehouse's death in 1941, the responsibility for leading the University through the chaotic period of World War II fell to President Henry Harmon (1941-1964). New and more vigorous policies governing selection and admission of students were established; the Office of the Dean of Students (now incorporated in the Office of the Provost) was created in 1945; and a community college offering evening programs for adults was established in 1946. In 1950, the College of Commerce and Finance became the College of Business Administration and, in 1962, the journalism program became the School of Journalism.

Between 1946 and 1966, 16 new buildings designed by distinguished architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe; Harry Weese and Associates; and Brooks, Borg and Skiles were constructed on campus. The structures brought national attention to Drake.

Led by President Paul F. Sharp, Drake experienced rapid growth and development from 1966 to 1971. Library resources increased by more than 50 percent. The size and quality of the faculty increased. New undergraduate and graduate programs were instituted. To support these developments, a capital campaign, the Centennial Development Program, was launched.

Dr. Wilbur C. Miller became Drake's ninth president in 1972. The Harmon Fine Arts Center opened that fall and Olmsted Center opened in 1974. In 1973, the Olin Foundation Inc. provided a \$3,263,000 grant to build Olin Hall of Biological Science, which opened in 1975.

Drake constructed a new Law School classroom building, Harold G. Cartwright Hall, in 1976. The Bell Center for Physical Education and Recreation opened in late 1977. Master's degrees in mass communication and in general studies were first offered in 1976. In 1980, the Aliber Foundation made possible the construction of Aliber Hall, the new College of Business Administration building, which opened in the fall of 1982. Amid these developments, Drake celebrated its centennial in 1981.

Dr. Michael R. Ferrari became the University's 10th president in July 1985. Dedicated to ensuring Drake's position as a leader in higher education, President Ferrari built upon programs already in place and instituted changes to strengthen the University.

The National Commission on the Future of Drake University in 1987. Made up of 11 task forces and 330 members — including leaders from across the nation in business, education, government and the professions — and chaired by Drake alumnus and former Iowa Governor Robert D. Ray, the commission examined critically Drake's programs, aspirations and plans. The commission presented its final report, with more than 250 recommendations, to the Board of Governors in June 1988.

That report served as a framework for future planning and as the cornerstone for The Campaign for Drake, a \$115 million national fundraising program to advance Drake for students and society. Publicly announced on October 7, 1989, the Campaign was chaired by Madelyn M. Levitt, a Des Moines civic leader and member of Drake's Board of Governors. On May 7, 1993, the University announced that the \$115 million overall goal of the Campaign had been exceeded — more than one full year ahead of its scheduled May 31, 1994, completion. At its official conclusion, the Campaign had raised more than \$130 million for the University.

As part of the Campaign, the University launched in 1991 the most comprehensive construction effort on campus since the Saarinen plan of the 1940s. The William C. Knapp Center for recreation, sports and convocations and the Tennis Center opened in fall 1992. Dwight D. Opperman Hall and Law Library opened the following spring, and the new Pharmacy and Science Hall was dedicated in fall 1993.

In addition, the acoustically perfect Old Main Auditorium, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was rededicated as Everett A. Sheslow Auditorium in January 1993. Fitch and Ingham halls were renovated, too, and plans were implemented for the upgrading of Cowles Library. Finally, the first phase of a campus landscaping project, Wifvat Plaza, was completed in 1993.

The University continued its proactive planning approach by creating in 1993 the National Commission II — Toward the 21st Century, chaired by distinguished Drake alumnus Benjamin B. Ullem. Working in 13 task forces, the commission's 400 members presented nearly that many recommendations for Drake's further advancement. Their final report helped establish priorities for Campaign Drake — Think of the Possibilities, a \$190 million national fundraising effort announced on November 1, 1997. The campaign, the largest ever undertaken by a private college or university in Iowa, reached its goal on May 31, 2002.

In April 1998, the University's Board of Governors appointed distinguished Drake alumnus Robert D. Ray as Drake's 11th president. Known statewide and beyond for his integrity and commitment to serving others, Ray served as Iowa's governor from 1969 to 1983 and then as president and chief executive officer of two major insurance corporations. Past chair of the University's Board of Governors, Ray also served as interim mayor of Des Moines, Iowa, Drake's home city, in 1997.

Dr. David E. Maxwell became the University's 12th president on May 15, 1999. Upon his arrival, he immediately began work with faculty, staff and students to clearly define the mission, values, vision and goals of Drake and to develop a long-term strategic plan for the University.

Before joining Drake, Dr. Maxwell was director of the National Foreign Language Center from 1993 to 1999, and from, 1989 to 1993, he was president of Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. From 1981 to 1989 he served as dean of undergraduate studies at Tufts University, where he also was a faculty member for 10 years.

Drake consistently ranks among the top universities in academic reputation among more than 140 Midwest master's universities ranked by U.S. News and World Report magazine. The magazine also rates Drake as one of today's best values in higher education as does Peterson's Guide to Competitive Colleges and Barron's 300 Best Buys in College Education.

A total of approximately 5,220 students are enrolled in the six colleges and schools of the University: the Colleges of Arts and Sciences (including Fine Arts), Business and Public Administration, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences; and the Schools of Education, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Law.

### **Collegial Structure**

Drake University is a private and independent major university located in an urban setting in Des Moines, the capital of Iowa and its largest city. Enrollment is selective and size is limited.

Pre-professional programs in the College of Arts and Sciences meet requirements for admission to schools of church vocations, dentistry, engineering, law, medical technology, medicine, physical therapy and social work.

Drake University also offers postgraduate study in the following programs: master's degrees in business administration, education and teaching, financial management, music and public administration; the Specialist in Education degree; the Doctor of Pharmacy degree; the Doctor of Education degree; the Juris Doctor degree in law; and several joint degree programs.

Drake University has been on the approved list of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools since the association was established in 1913. The various colleges and schools are also accredited by their professional accrediting agencies.