



Homecoming Review



David Earle
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“It was a totally enjoyable weekend!” “No one wanted to leave our reunion Friday night!” “The energy through all of the events was awesome!”

Those are just a few of the positive comments I heard from alumni and friends about Homecoming 2009. I was proud to be associated with the College--as an alumnus, a parent of two students and a decade-long employee. Homecoming 2009 really allowed Sterling to shine.

The weekend was filled with activities: three performances of the musical “Working,” directed by Gordon Kling and Diane DeFranco-Kling; athletic competitions; the Homecoming Hang-out, with entertainment for all ages; the Athletic Celebration, with displays by all of SC’s varsity sports; and the Alumni Banquet.

The weekend was also filled with alumni; more than 90 people attended the class of 1959’s 50th reunion, and the classes of 1979 and 2004 also met. The Alumni Banquet drew a crowd of 170.

Homecoming 2009 also included the inauguration of Sterling College’s 11th president, Dr. Paul J. Maurer. It was truly a great celebration for the College! If you were here, I am so glad you were a part of it. If you did not attend, I encourage you to make plans now for Homecoming 2010!

Sterling Inaugurates Eleventh President

“This is a day to express gratitude-for the ways God has led this institution for 122 years and the ways He continues to lead it today.” Tony Thompson ‘69, chair of Sterling College’s Board of Trustees, opened President Paul J. Maurer’s inauguration ceremony with those words. He continued, “This day we celebrate the installation of Sterling’s eleventh president and we look forward to his leadership of Sterling’s future.”

Though the ceremony on October 23 formally installed Dr. Paul Maurer, the focus of the day was on God’s plans for Sterling College. Dr. Al Cureton ‘71, member of the Board of Trustees and president of Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minn., gave the charge for the day, reminding Dr. Maurer and the College to weave Scripture into every discipline and to make Jesus Christ the “cornerstone of the institution,” its “True North.”

Dr. Brad Nix, chair of Sterling College’s music department, composed a piece for inauguration, using Dr. Maurer’s favorite Scripture, Romans 10:15, as the text. The Choir performed it during the ceremony, and the words, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” were another example of the day’s true focus.

After accepting the College’s presidential medallion, Dr. Maurer delivered his address, using the inaugural theme of “Rooted. Renewed. Rising,” to answer the question: Why Is Sterling College Important? He ended his address with these words: “Sterling College is on the rise. And that is because Sterling has never been more important to the world that surrounds it. (It) is important because, in the midst of moral confusion, it is rooted. (It) is important because, as higher education has lost its way, Sterling remains true to its original purpose. (It) is important because it provides a certain kind of educa-

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Upcoming Events:

TBA Alumni and Friends Meet and Greet with Dr. Maurer in Great Bend/Ellinwood Area

November 15 and 16 – Campus Visit Weekend for Prospective Students

November 20 -29 – Thanksgiving Break for Students

November 25 -27 – Campus Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

For all sports activities and other calendar items click on the link below: <http://www.sterling.edu/event/2009/11/02/month>

For more event information, visit the online calendar.

For information regarding all Warrior Athletic events, please go to www.sterling.edu/athletics



Top: Dr. Maurer gives his inaugural address.

Middle: The SC Concert choir performs at the inauguration.

Bottom: Faculty and Staff file into the inauguration in their academic regalia.



tion that helps its students become certain kinds of people.

“(It) is important, today and tomorrow, because on the most important questions of the meaning of life, Sterling has something to say. And as we remain rooted, and as we renew our commitment to our core purpose, Sterling College will continue to rise. And as that happens, we will give thanks to God.”

SC Students Benefit From Pen Pal Experience

Some Sterling College students are receiving instruction from an unusual source: third graders!

In an initiative started by Judith Best, an assistant professor in the SC elementary education department, students in the social studies methods class at SC correspond with students at Newark Christian School in New Jersey.

The rural college and inner-city elementary school came together when Dr. Keith Phillips, founder of the inner-city Christian mission organization World Impact, spoke at a Sterling College Convocation several years ago and shared about Newark Christian School, established by World Impact in 1984. Newark Christian School is committed to ministering to the inner-city poor through providing quality education and a godly foundation for young students.

The SC students began their relationships this semester by writing to the third-graders about who they are as college students. They also encouraged the children in some aspect of their lives. The children at Newark then responded with information about their families and school activities. Some included Scripture verses.

The college students also benefit from the pen-pal relationships. These future teachers learn what works for kids in a different cultural setting: what they like to learn, how they learn best, and what keeps them most engaged. They are also learning to care about children.

Professor Best pushes her students one step further in their relationship with the third-graders. Near the end of the social studies methods class, the college students break into groups to create projects that will be sent to Newark Christian School. The projects integrate the knowledge they have gained through their correspondence.

What is Judith Best’s purpose for this project? “Ultimately, my goal is that it touches the lives of our students and connects them with children of a different culture who have different needs. It helps our students learn how to serve in a creative way.”

Fine Arts Hall of Fame Inductees

The first members of the Sterling College Fine Arts Hall of Fame were introduced at this past weekend’s Homecoming festivities. “Sterling College has a rich tradition of the fine arts in its 122-year history,” said Greg McGlynn ‘87 as he introduced the Hall of Fame. “As an alumnus and educator I have come to respect and appreciate belonging to this tradition. The Hall of Fame was created to recognize the accomplishments of Sterling alumni, faculty and friends both here at Sterling and out in the world.” The awards are divided into three categories: Alumni, Mentor, and Patron

Laura Stewart ‘36 from Stafford, Kan., was active in the SC theatre and debate/forensics programs, winning the national championship in extemporaneous speaking in 1934 with a speech titled “Woman’s Place in Modern Civilization,” which was then featured in the National Forensic League magazine. Stewart worked as a high school English and Latin teacher and speech activities director and has been a member of the Stafford Drama Guild since its inception, participating in their Little Theater productions as actress, director, and stage crew member for over 50 years.

Gail Wenos ‘67 and her puppet Ezra have developed a national following, entertaining and teaching audiences across the U.S. After graduation Wenos worked as a kindergarten teacher but then discovered her talent with her puppet companion, Ezra D. Peabody. Wenos, currently living in Murrieta, Calif., has received community service awards and has been recognized as an Outstanding Young Woman of America. She has made several recordings and television appearances and toured with the Johnny Mann Singers.

Retired Sterling College music professor Robert Gordon was at Homecoming to be inducted into the Hall of Fame and to celebrate the 60th anniversary of his graduation from Sterling College. Gordon taught high school music in Fowler and Lyons, Kan., before returning to SC in 1960 to teach music and direct the band, becoming the College’s first full-time band director. Since his retirement in 1983, Gordon has been active, performing with community bands and the College Homecoming orchestra pit, singing in the United Presbyterian Church choir, and serving on numerous church boards.

Lyons dentist Dr. Thane Frazier, recognized as a Fine Arts Patron, was the only inductee who is not an SC alumnus. Frazier has been performing on various stages for almost 70 years. Originally from Lacrosse, Kan., Frazier served in the military before settling in Lyons. He has directed and performed in numerous productions of the Lyons Coronado Court Theatre and the Good Samaritan dinner theatres. He has also made several appearances on the Sterling College stage as part of the Sterling Community Theatre Troupe. Memorable productions at Sterling include “Anything Goes,” “Oliver,” “A Grand Night for Singing,” and most recently, “Guys and Dolls.”

Leon Akin ‘36 taught vocal music in Cedar Vale, Kan., and Torrington, Wyo., before returning in 1940 to teach vocal music at his alma mater. Akin directed the Concert Choir and was music professor at Sterling for a total of 35 years. In 1941 he left to serve in the Army and was held as a prisoner of war in Germany. He returned to Sterling in 1945. His choirs toured coast to coast and also overseas to Iceland. On his retirement in 1979, Akin was quoted in the College newspaper, the STIR, as saying, “I liked Sterling as a student and as a professor. I liked the students and the atmosphere, as a professor I got along well with my colleagues. Sterling was a happy experience.” He died in 1993.

Also recognized posthumously were Sterling arts patrons, Harold '24 and Aileen '23 Evans. They made Rice County their lifelong home. Harold served on the Board of Trustees for 50 years and was given an honorary doctor of humane letters degree in 1990; Aileen won the Alumni Award in 1958; and Evans Hall is named in their honor. The couple was named "Rice County Citizens of the Year" in 1987, the College's centennial year. Though they supported the College in general, the Sterling College Theatre department was at the heart of their commitment. They created the ongoing Evans Actor and Actress of The Year awards in the 1970s. During their lifetimes they never missed an SC Theatre production.

Comment on Sterling College

Sterling College is seeking comments from the public about the College in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit December 7-9, 2009, by a team representing The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Sterling College has been accredited by the Commission since 1957, and its last comprehensive visit for reaccreditation occurred in 2000. The evaluation team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation.

The public is invited to submit comments about Sterling College:

Public Comment on Sterling College
The Higher Learning Commission
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and signed. Comments cannot be treated as confidential.

All comments must be received by November 7, 2009.

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Keep Us Informed

Just as we share life at Sterling College with you, we want you to share your life with us as well. Please let us know your recent life events so we can rejoice with you, pray with you, and share your updates with other alumni who want to do the same. Here are some specific kinds of information that will help us stay up-to-date:

- New phone number, address, or e-mail
- Birth or marital/family changes
- Illness, injury or death
- Change in careers
- Accomplishments
- Prayer Requests

At your request, we will publish any updates in the Alumni News and Classnotes section of the *Sterling* magazine to keep your college friends updated as well. E-mail David Earle at dearle@sterling.edu or call him at 620-278-4228 and share your latest news.

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