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## **Dixon Student Center is Dedicated**

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# LINDENWOOD

Lindenwood University - Campus News

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## Dixon Student Center is Dedicated

08/09/2011

On Friday, August 5, Lindenwood University-Belleville held a dedication ceremony to officially open the Senator Alan J. Dixon Student Center, honoring the man Lindenwood President Jim Evans referred to as a "hometown hero." The Dixon Center, part of a continuing capital campaign on the Belleville campus, includes a library, computer lab, snack bar, dining hall, and lounge area with billiards and table tennis.

Master of ceremonies for the dedication was Jerry Bladdick, vice president and CAO for Lindenwood-Belleville, who introduced President Evans; Mark Eckert, mayor of Belleville; Mark Kern, St. Clair County Board chairman; Tom Holbrook, state representative (113th district); Ben Blanton, vice chairman of the Lindenwood Board of Directors; student Catalina Albarracin, who delivered the invocation; and Dixon himself.

Dixon received proclamations from the city of Belleville, St. Clair County, and the state of Illinois recognizing his accomplishments in public service and commemorating the day in his honor, after which he spoke about his time in elective office and his various ties to Lindenwood University.

With a public service career that spanned more than 40 years, Dixon was in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1951 to 1963. He was elected to the Illinois Senate and served there from 1963 to 1971. He served as Illinois treasurer from 1971 to 1977 and as Illinois secretary of state from 1977 to 1981. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1980 and served from 1981 to 1993. He is credited with co-sponsoring legislation that established Illinois' community college system.

He spoke of his strong ties to the campus that is now Lindenwood University-Belleville. It was once the site of Belleville Township High School, where his mother attended during World War I and he attended during World War II. His three children also attended the school. Dixon said he has nearly as many ties to Lindenwood University, beginning with his wife, Joan Fox Dixon, who attended Lindenwood in St. Charles and was named the school's Harvest Queen in 1952.

Dixon's daughter, Stephanie Yearian, is a faculty member at Lindenwood-Belleville and recently received her doctorate in education from Lindenwood University. Her daughter, Fawne Yearian, earned a master's in business administration from Lindenwood in 2009. Finally, Dixon delivered Lindenwood's commencement address in 2008.

"I was delighted to see old friends I have known throughout my career," Dixon said. "I am pleased to see this institution in the shape it is in now and its importance to Belleville, culturally and economically."