

## HeraldTimesOnline.com

Indiana University

### A boost to students' dreams

#### Full-ride 21st Century Covenant Scholarships helping 275 students get education at IU

By **Steve Hinnefeld**

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Monica Burris has long known that she wanted to go to college, but a new program at Indiana University made the decision easier.

She is one of the first students in IU's 21st Century Covenant Scholars program. Combined with need-based state and federal aid, the program is providing a full ride to college for 275 students.

"It made a major difference," Burris said, sitting on a bench at Ashton Center, where she had just moved into a dorm room.

Burris said her aunt, who adopted her when she was in the fifth grade, pushed her to do well in school. "Without her and this program, I don't think I'd be in college, at least not at a Big Ten university," she said.

IU residence halls formally opened Wednesday, and thousands of IU freshmen and their parents hauled piles of gear to dorm rooms, then made their way to the IU Auditorium for freshman induction ceremonies.

New IU President Michael McRobbie, his wife, Laurie Burns McRobbie, and new IU Bloomington Provost Karen Hanson greeted students and parents Wednesday morning at the dorms.

For Burris, dorm life is nothing new. She spent six weeks on campus this summer in the IU Groups Student Support Services program, which provides a head start for selected minority and low-income students and students with disabilities. She got a "most improved student" award in an English class.

A graduate of Thomas Carr Howe Academy in Indianapolis, Burris drove to Bloomington Wednesday and moved herself into a single room in Ashton's Johnston Hall.

She plans to study elementary education, and she intends to get involved at IU with student government, starting with the Residence Halls Association and groups such as the Black Student Union.

"I'm a first-generation college student," she said. "I'm trying to push myself higher for future generations of my family."

Mario Ramirez, a 21st Century Covenant Scholar from East Chicago, plans to major in finance at IU's Kelley School of Business. According to an IU news release, Ramirez said the covenant program means "everything" to him.

"It enables my mom and me to sleep at night, not worrying about how to pay for college," he said.

Hanson, the IU Bloomington provost, said it's a pleasure to welcome 21st Century Covenant Scholars to campus. "This is an excellent example of IU's continuing commitment to keeping access affordable to all eligible Indiana students to attend the flagship campus of IU," she said.

The program, announced last fall, builds on Indiana's 21st Century Scholars program, established in 1990 by then-Gov. Evan Bayh. In the state program,



#### Move-in day at IU dorms Keeping it legal online

The black T-shirts worn by IU information-technology staff got lots of attention from students moving into the dorms — and from their parents.

"Are you legal?" was printed in big letters on the front of the shirts. About 300 IT staff helped greet freshmen Wednesday as the dorms opened. They were providing information about technical support for computer users. And they were issuing pointed warnings about the risks of illegally sharing music and video files over the IU network.

"We are sharing with parents and kids that 19 IU students were sued by the Recording Industry Association of America," said Merri Beth Lavagnino, the university's chief IT policy officer.

Most IU students who were sued over illegal sharing and downloading of files paid between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to settle the industry lawsuits, said Lavagnino, staffing an information table at Briscoe Quad.

She said illegal file-sharing can also put IU at risk, with some members of Congress wanting to force universities to install costly and intrusive software to stop the practice.

She said IU students this year will get clearly worded warnings about file-sharing laws on two occasions: when they connect their computers to the IU network, and when they establish IU accounts.

students from low-income families pledge while in the seventh or eighth grade to keep up their grades, meet college-admission requirements and avoid alcohol and drugs. In return, the state will cover tuition costs for a state college or university.

But even with tuition paid, living expenses and room-and-board costs can be prohibitive for low-income students. So IU established the covenant program, which supplements state and federal aid.

The covenant boosted IU Bloomington's enrollment of 21st Century Scholars, officials said. The university is paying \$1.3 million from its general fund for the program, an average of \$4,700 per student.

It's in addition to another new IU program, called Pell Promise, that will cover full tuition for students who qualify by family income for federal Pell grants.



Monica Burris, an Indiana University freshman from Indianapolis, is one of 275 students attending IU this fall on a full-ride 21st Century Covenant Scholarship. Steve Hinnefeld | Herald-Times  
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Tiffany Davies, a freshman from Portage, tips a load for her dad, Jim Davies, as they move into Forest Quad Wednesday at Indiana University. David Snodgrass | Herald-Times  
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Jim Davies sets a television on boxes in his daughter's 10th-floor room at Forest Quad. IU dorms opened Wednesday. Classes will start on Monday. David Snodgrass | Herald-Times  
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Wendy Richmond of Fishers waits with her daughter's stuff as Brian Todd of Bloomington carries a load of boxes into Forest Quad. Indiana University's dorms opened Wednesday and students clogged the streets, driveways and elevators. David Snodgrass | Herald-Times  
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