

Inspirational alumni reflect on successes after IIT

By Ryan Hynes
A&E EDITOR

Alumnus John Calamos (ECON '63, MBA '70) recently hosted an alumni reception at the headquarters of his firm, Calamos Investments. The event gave alumni in the Chicago area a chance to connect and share their IIT alumni experience.

The event was also a forum on financial markets, with presentations by Calamos, a pioneer in convertible securities and author of two books on the subject, and Dr. John Bilson, Professor of Finance at the Stuart School of Business. Both men had great insights into our current markets. "America's greatest export is the middle class," remarked Calamos, "We could recapture our once mighty manufacturing base by being the best."

Professor Bilson spoke on Chicago and its irreplaceable role in our financial system. He envisioned the Stuart School of Business producing students who are well versed in the "Chicago School" of finance.

The Stuart School of Business graduate programs will be moving to the IIT Tower next year. This will bring approximately 1000 additional students to the area, and will have a dramatic impact on Main Campus and the surrounding Bridgeport and Bronzeville neighborhoods. Professor Bilson referred to the influx of students as a capital injection for the community, and he is eager to see the transformative impact on the community.

Even more transformative for IIT is Mr. Calamos' gift of 10 million dollars, which will endow a Dean's Chair for the Stuart School, as well as a Philosophy Chair. Calamos recalled that, of all the classes he took at IIT, philosophy was his favorite because it taught him how to think rationally. He stressed the importance of sound logic and reasoning, and said that while a person may have tremendous technical knowledge, without the ability to think, they would never achieve their full potential. Mr. Calamos is a true practitioner, and is able to describe the complexities of financial instrument and markets with remarkable

clarity. Mr. Calamos has achieved fantastic success in both his personal and professional endeavors, and his accomplishments and stewardship as an alumnus make him an ideal role model for current IIT students.

Another admirable alumnus, Bud Wendorf (ME '71), also shared his thoughts on IIT and the opportunities it afforded him. Wendorf remembers growing up in the midst of the Cold War, and being inspired by the spirit of industry and achievement that galvanized the American people during that time.

That spirit inspired Bud to become an engineer, and attend IIT. Wendorf has many fond memories of his years at IIT, and as a member of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. A year after graduating, Wendorf began working at Sargent Lundy, and put his IIT degree to good use. Wendorf is now Chairman and CEO of Sargent Lundy, serves on the IIT Board of Trustees, and is a member of the Armour Society, which recognizes alumni who have given over 1 million dollars to IIT. Wendorf is another IIT success story, and continues to give back to IIT.

The evening was, in one word, inspirational. Generations of IIT Alumni gathered to learn from one another and recall their time at IIT. The commitment of our alumni is what truly makes IIT such a fantastic institution, and the stewardship and generosity of John Calamos, Bud Wendorf, and other like-minded alumni will ensure that IIT continues to be a leader in education, far into the future.



Photos courtesy of Michael Goss Photography

Union Board Photo IIT Contest Winner: Audrey Simper



I didn't have any inspiration for this photo really, I just happened to be walking down that sidewalk hoping to take photos of the sunset and when walking past crown hall I saw the reflection of the colorful sky in the glass which showed up even more prominent on camera. But personally, this photograph means a lot more than that after switching my major from Architecture to Photography. The colors that are being reflected in the full pane windows give meaning to the building, the students inside, and even myself.

AUDREY SIMPER
Photography

-Audrey Simper