

# Dowden named Citizen of the Year



JEFF MOOREHEAD / The Herald-Press

**CITIZEN OF THE YEAR** — Huntington University President G. Blair Dowden talks with Herald-Press publisher Andy Eads after receiving the newspaper's 2012 Citizen of the Year award on Tuesday. *Make this image yours. Go to [www.h-ponline.com](http://www.h-ponline.com).*

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## Outgoing HU president surprised, honored

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Huntington University President Dr. G. Blair Dowden was first surprised, then happy to receive the Herald-Press' Citizen of the Year award Tuesday morning.

"This is a shock," Dowden said upon receiving the award. "This is amazing. It really is an honor. I will treasure this honor."

"(Dowden) has worked tirelessly in his ten-

ure here to put us on the map," Herald-Press publisher Andy Eads said of selecting Dowden to receive the award. "He has encouraged the students to be involved in our community and made sure that programs were created that helped them interact with the community. The type of students he has targeted has helped enrich our community in ways that we will never be able to measure.

"The kids he has recruited have left a lasting impression."

"I've known him a long time," Dr. Del Doughty, interim vice president for academic affairs, said of Dowden. "He's a gentleman. He has social graces, hospitality, a good sense

of humor, a good memory. He's very organized, focused, he's able to think about the big picture and focus on the details as well. ... (He's) disciplined, resilient, goal-oriented."

Jeff Berggren, senior vice president of enrollment management and marketing at Huntington University, said Dowden has done a great deal not only for the university but for its connection to Huntington as well.

"I think Huntington University has a very unique town-and-gown relationship," Berggren said. "I think part of that is the nature of the long-term relationship and he has maintained and strengthened and expanded on that

during his 20 years here. He really appreciates the town and encourages us to work with him to get involved and be part of the community we get a chance to serve and serve along side of.

"He's been a great mentor. I've learned so much about how he values people, how he thoughtfully goes about decision making and tries to do the best with the big-picture perspective."

Dowden credited much of his success to his staff and the community of Huntington at large.

"We have such a good gown-to-town relationship," he said. "The largest group that's given

# Citizen: Dowden also worked at Taylor

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to the university in the past 22 years has been the community. I thank them for their generous support. It's a great place to have the university and raise a family."

Huntington mayor and HU alumnus Brooks Fetters agreed with Dowden on the positive relationship between the city and the university.

"I certainly would applaud the efforts of Dr. Dowden in his tenure over 22 years. He helped lead the university to a place of national status as far as an institution of high quality and value. The university plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life in our community," Fetters said.

"Huntington University just reflects what is so good about this community. It's had a huge impact. Huntington would not be what it is today without Huntington University," he added.

"We can celebrate that (relationship), that doesn't naturally come," Berggren said. "It's a reflection of the leadership of the community and university and we should celebrate that."

Dowden has been president of Huntington University since 1991. During his tenure programs such as the EXCEL adult program, Master of Education, digital media arts, social work and worship leadership were started.

Huntington University made the transition from Huntington College during Dowden's time as well.

The university was named to the U.S. News

and World Report's "Best Values" in 2007, "Best Midwestern Colleges" by the Princeton Review and one of "America's Top Colleges" by Forbes. Huntington University also receives CCCU's Robert and Susan Andringa Award for Advancing Racial Harmony in 2012.

In addition to being named Citizen of the Year, Dowden was named the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics' 2007 Charles Morris Athletics Administrator of the Year Award, the International Biographical Centre Leading Educators of the World in 2005, is a charter member of Kappa Delta Pi and was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash Award by former Gov. Mitch Daniels in 2012.

Dowden has been a member of many committees and boards related to both higher education and the community. Dowden is currently a member of the Huntington County Hometown Improvement Steering Committee; an executive committee member, chair of the student aid committee and member of the board of directors for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; a member of the Northeast Indiana Vision 2020 Regional Opportunities Council; chair of the Harmony Initiative Task Force; chair of the Lenawee Christian Ministries Board; member of the Independent Colleges of Indiana; and the presidential representative to the NAIA Regional Man-

agement Committee.

Dowden received his bachelor's degree in political science with honor from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill. He received his master's degree in student personnel, administration in higher education and a Doctor of Education from Ball State University.

Dowden worked at Taylor University in Upland from 1974 to 1981, going from an admissions counselor to special assistant to the president and assistant professor. Dowden was vice president for development at Houghton College in Houghton, N.Y. from 1981 to 1991.