

HCC celebrates 160th anniversary

Highland Community College, established as Highland University in February of 1858, is celebrating its 160th year of providing higher education opportunities to Northeast Kansas.

The signing of its charter was conducted on February 9, 1858 by the Kansas Territorial Legislature. That day will be celebrated on not only the Highland campus, but also at its Regional Centers in Atchison, Baileyville, Holton, Perry, and Wamego. The public is invited to join in recognizing the College's mission of providing lifelong learning opportunities and contributing to economic development to enhance the quality of life in the communities it serves.

As part of a Presbyterian mission to area Native Americans, Father Samuel Irvin established a mission building that is located directly east of Highland. As the mission grew and the town of Highland was established, one of the town's first efforts was the creation of Highland University. The first College building, still in use today, was named for Father Irvin. Irvin Hall has been the location for a wide variety of uses in the history of the College; today it houses a student reception area for the College's Admissions Office in the lower level. The upper level houses the College's Student Support Services program and student advising/tutoring.

Through the years, the College has been able to collect many items of memorabilia. During the recent solar eclipse, one of the participants in the College's hosting of that event made himself known as a descendent of Father Irvin and loaned the College a Certificate of Scholarship from February 25, 1874, that provides the heirs of Father Irvin with free tuition in perpetuity.

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