

Mayor Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins

“Community, Questions and the College In Collegeville”

Ursinus College is in the heart of our community. It is the heart of our community for good. For over 150 years this college, one of the nation’s highest rated liberal arts institutions, has been the grand signature statement of Collegeville. Located on 170 acres of beautiful trees, with stunning buildings and incredible sculptures is a wonder place to stroll and visit. I want to encourage all our residents to embrace our school as it has taken steps over the years to embrace our community as well.

One of the ways that the school does this is through inviting the public to engage in its outstanding theater and dance productions. For many years, my wife and I have attended plays, concerts dance events at Ursinus that in my estimation are ridiculously affordable. The theme for the 2022-23 season is “Community”. You may learn more about these offerings at their web site at [Community Theater](#) .

Ursinus also fosters community by inviting students, faculty and staff to reflect on four core or essential questions: What should matter to me? How should we live together? How can we understand the world? What will I do? Through grappling with these four questions, collegians prepare themselves to live thoughtfully and deliberately as human beings and as citizens. I commend these questions to all of Collegeville as I believe that they enhance our community becoming a great place to come home to. Consider how you and I might use them

What should matter to me?

What matters more: honesty or friendship? Love or success? Security or risk? We all make hard choices, and whether we realize it or not, those choices reflect our values. But how often do we stop to ask what those values represent and where they come from? This question invites us to take a careful look at what really matters – to ourselves, to the communities we live in, and to the world at large – and to make thoughtful decisions about our own principles. By doing this, we develop specific habits of mind – habits that support making a meaningful life as an individual and enable full participation in democracy.

How should we live together?

Deciding how to live means deciding how to live together. We need one another, and our value systems reflect this need. Whether with family and friends; within schools,

neighborhoods, and religious communities; or in our towns, nations, and even on our shared planet, connections with others shape us, and we shape our communities. As our country and our world become more diverse and interconnected, this question grows more interesting, more urgent and more challenging. As we study the ways others across the world, both past and present, have answered this question, we prepare ourselves to live more thoughtfully, with greater moral sensitivity, in a world of burgeoning complexity.

How can we understand the world?

This question asks us to reflect on the nature of knowledge and how it is communicated. It also prompts us to remember that others see the world differently. We all operate with different knowledge bases, speak our own languages, and see the world through our own lenses. Each asks a different set of questions. By reflecting on the sources of knowledge, we see more clearly what others can teach us.

What will I do?

Difficult decisions with real consequences will confront all of us, often in situations of ambiguity, complexity, and rapid change. This final question encourages us to lead a life of thoughtfulness, responsibility, independence, and interdependence.