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## UA3/4/8/1 Dero Downing Interview

Dero Downing

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**Western Kentucky University**  
**UA3/4 Dero Downing**  
**Series 8 Interviews & Oral Histories**  
**Item 1 Interview**

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**Biographical/Historical Note:** The president's office was created in 1906. The search for the fourth president of WKU began with Kelly Thompson's resignation announcement May 21, 1969. Vice President for Administrative Affairs Dero Downing indicated that he would serve if asked. The Board of Regents elected him president on August 22, 1969. He served until his retirement in 1979.

Dero Downing was born September 10, 1921 at Fountain Run in Monroe County, Kentucky, and grew up at Horse Cave in Hart County. He enrolled at WKU in 1939 where he played basketball and earned both a bachelor's and master's degree. After serving in the Navy in World War II, he returned to Western as a mathematics teacher and coach at the College's Training School. He later became director of the Training School, college registrar, dean of admissions, dean of business affairs, and vice-president for administrative and business affairs. Upon his resignation as president in 1979 Downing became president of the College Heights Foundation, a position he held until his death on April 4, 2011.

**Description:** Interview regarding the Richard E. Hart Memorial Scholarship.

**Dates:** nd

**Subject Analytics:**

Audio recording

Downing, Dero Goodman, 1921-2011

Interviews

Scholarships

Western Kentucky University

**Accession Information:** These records were transferred to the WKU Archives upon its creation.

**Access Restrictions:** none

**Preferred Citation:** UA3/4/8/1 Dero Downing Interview, WKU Archives, Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA.

**Processing Information:** Audiotape transcribed by Suellyn Lathrop, 2013.

# Oral History Recording List

UA3.4.8.1 ~ Records

12/03/2013

Media ID	Side	Start time	Subject
Tape 1	1	00:00:00	<p><i>Interviewer: Dr. Downing, what exactly is the Richard E. Hart Memorial Scholarship?</i></p> <p><i>DD: Well the parents of Richard E. Hart, Mr. and Mrs. George L. Hart have established a perpetual trust within the College Heights Foundation at Western Kentucky University. The earnings from that trust will be used for scholarships awarded to students who graduate from Providence High School. And the fund is a lasting memorial to Richard Hart. It honors his memory in a lasting and meaningful way. And it recognizes his graduation in 1954 from Providence High School. And Richard also graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1958. He was an artist and he was a Christian gentleman who is well remembered in Providence, Kentucky and was held in high regard by all who knew him. And this is a very meaningful way for Mr. and Mrs. Hart to honor the memory of their loved one.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:01:43	<p><i>Interviewer: Okay what is the importance of scholarships such as this, you know, just made by individual donors to Western?</i></p> <p><i>DD: Well, it's very important in the life of Western Kentucky University to have supporters and benefactors who believe in the work of education to the extent that they are willing to share their resources in order to help deserving students and the scholarships not only give financial assistance they recognize the achievements of students and the give encouragement to their academic endeavors so it's very important to the university and to the students.</i></p>
Tape 1	1	00:02:34	<p><i>Interviewer: Okay, thank you. I think that's about everything I need. Is there anything you'd like to add about the Harts or the scholarship?</i></p> <p><i>DD: Well of course even though we have expressed to Mr. and Mrs. Hart our deep appreciation we would want to in this way to publically express the sincere appreciation of President Meredith, Dr. Kelly Thompson who is the chairman of the board of the College Heights Foundation and all who are associated with the university. We express to Mr. and Mrs. Hart our sincere thanks.</i></p>