



Dec. 8, 2003

Contact: Lisa A. Fellers
Director of Communications
Office: (817) 531-4498
Cell: (817) 874-8683
lfellers@txwes.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Texas Wesleyan University graduation tradition
strengthens bond between father and daughter**

FORT WORTH, Dec. 8 – Texas Wesleyan University graduate Ashley Bell will participate in a unique pre-commencement tradition on Friday, Dec. 12 at 11 a.m. in the Polytechnic United Methodist Church located at 1310 S. Collard St. This tradition, known as the robing ceremony, has been a deep-rooted part of the Texas Wesleyan graduation ritual since 1927. Ashley will be “robed” by a man who has supported her emotionally, intellectually and financially over the years. That man is her faculty advisor, professor, friend and father: Dr. Thomas J. Bell III, associate professor of business administration at Texas Wesleyan University.

For the robing ceremony, graduating candidates are vested with cap and gown by the faculty or staff member who have most impacted their lives during their studies at Wesleyan.

“Robing is when you pick the single most influential member of the faculty or staff who helped you out the most. Aside from all of his fatherly roles, he really helped me by advising me with my MIS major, classes and requirements,” says Ashley. “I think my dad is much more than just that. I think my dad is my friend, my confidant ... we discuss things that happen in the news ... and he’s always joking with me.”

When Ashley asked her father to robe her, he says: “I felt quite surprised ... I had

-more-

Dec. 8 – University Tradition, page. 2

encouraged her to ask anyone ... not to feel pressured to choose me ... I was honored, as I am with all students who ask me to robe them,” says Thomas Bell.

The bond between Ashley and Thomas Bell is as strong and deep-rooted as the robing ceremony they will share.

Ashley will graduate from Texas Wesleyan University on Dec. 12 with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major course of study in management information systems. After graduation, she plans to enroll in a pre-medical, post baccalaureate program at Dallas Baptist University. Ashley says she has wanted to be a doctor for as long as she can remember.

“I feel like being a doctor is the only profession that fits my personality ... I like books and learning. What better way to learn than to learn about the human body? With medicine, you can discover something that has the possibility to shake humanity,” says Ashley.

###