



## ***News Release***

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[Nancy Livingston](#)

Public Relations

651-779-3222

Fax 651-779-3470

[Century College](#)

3300 Century Avenue North

White Bear Lake, MN 55110

### **Mr. Atchison's 6<sup>th</sup> Graders at Bruce Vento Elementary Adopt Century College**

James Atchison wants all the 6<sup>th</sup> graders in his class at St. Paul's Bruce Vento Elementary School to go to college. No excuses allowed.

Remembering his own positive experience at Century College when it was Lakewood Junior College in 1967, Mr. Atchison this year had his class adopt Century College as a way to learn more about college and discover that college is possible.

"I still remember the great instructors I had at Century, including Bob Hathaway, who still teaches English there," Mr. Atchison told his class recently. "I still intend to read one of the books he encouraged me to read – *The Brothers Karamazov*. It's on my list of books to read before I die."

Mr. Atchison told his students that he also fondly remembers his college instructors Mr. Quinn, Miss Dale and Miss Scherer.

"Is college fun?" asked one student.

Mr. Atchison assured her that it was, but it was also a lot of work. "And why do you go to college?" he asked.

“To get a good job” was the students’ most common answer.

Mr. Atchison, who has taught at Bruce Vento for 24 years, graduated from St. Cloud State University in 1971 with a major in elementary education. He was one of the first students to enroll at Century (the former Lakewood) and still keeps in touch with friends he made back then.

“It is a fine idea to start at a community college and then go on to a four-year school,” Mr. Atchison told his class. “At this point, you may not know what you want to be, and that’s OK. When I was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I wanted to be an astronaut.”

Mr. Atchison said he decided on a career in elementary education when he was at St. Cloud State. “I fell in love with books and literature,” he said. “Reading is my hobby.”

Mr. Atchison’s students are becoming acquainted with the idea that learning is lifelong, and each of them can go to college if they have the key ingredient – motivation.

“Who wants to go to college?” the children were asked.

All hands waved in the air.



Photo: Mr. Atchison (middle, back) in his class at Bruce Vento Elementary School.