



South Hampton Roads Center  
1317 Executive Blvd.  
Suite 100  
Chesapeake  
Virginia 23320  
866-756-9388  
757-382-5680  
757-549-5215 fax  
www.devry.edu

Melanie Wright  
DeVry University  
[Mwright1@devry.com](mailto:Mwright1@devry.com)  
215.591.5909

Sean Brickell, APR  
Sharon Freeman, APR  
Brickell & Partners  
757.463.4500

## **VISUAL DISTANCE LEARNING TURNS 95 – HERMAN DeVRY’S 1912 “THEATER IN A SUITCASE” INVENTION BLAZED TRAIL FOR TODAY’S ONLINE EDUCATION**

*DeVry University’s Founder Pioneered the Concept of Visual Distance Learning by  
Providing College and Secondary Schools Across America with the First In-Class Motion  
Picture News Clips and Visual Educational Courses*

Chesapeake, VA: The 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Herman DeVry’s portable movie projector, a technology that pioneered the concept of “visual distance learning”, highlights a timely paradigm shift in the use of technology to facilitate education. High school and college students today take for granted that much of what they learn in class is supplemented with educational tools found on the World Wide Web via the Internet. Live video conferencing, streaming full-length lectures and image-rich e-textbooks have become commonplace in today’s educational landscapes at most universities and a growing number of high schools.

Many parents of current secondary school-aged students might remember their first experience dialing into the Internet to retrieve a document from a virtual library resource. However, imagine how shortly after the turn of the century – the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that is – American students felt when they encountered *their* introduction to distance learning technology as the first portable silent movie projector flickered images from far off lands such as Europe and China right inside the classroom.

Ninety-five years ago, Dr. DeVry, a budding motion picture technology engineer in Chicago, unveiled the prototype of his soon to be famous Model E 35mm portable movie projector, or as DeVry liked to call it, his “Theater in a Suitcase.” Today, his legacy continues as DeVry University has grown to become one of the largest degree-granting higher education systems in North America, with more than 52,000 students enrolled at its 88 locations in 25 states and Canada, as well as through DeVry University Online.

“DeVry’s 1912 silent movie projector was the most advanced educational enabling technology of its time,” said Michelle Delaney, Associate Curator at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, where DeVry’s projector is part of the Photographic History Collection. “For the first time, moving images, whether of foreign societies in motion or step-by-step instructions for complex tasks, could be distributed to audiences regardless of their location. His projector definitely opened the gateway to the concept of distance learning.”

Fueled by early demand from schools, businesses and churches for such a projector, improved versions of DeVry’s 1912 invention would soon become standard equipment in learning establishments across America. The DeVry Corporation (formed the following



year) would sell more than 50,000 units of the Model E and improved versions over the next decades, selling more than all other makes of similar portable projectors of the time combined.

Dr. DeVry's invention was the spark that ignited a life-long dedication to advancing motion picture technology for visual education applications. Used first to bring news clips from a European continent on the verge of World War I into classrooms, DeVry's Model E was quickly seen as a way to provide visual instruction to distant audiences on a variety of subjects – much like streaming video over the Internet enables today's online student. DeVry's projector was most commonly used for the detailed instruction of complex repair of the leading technology equipment of the time such as movie theater projectors and eventually radios in the 1920s.

In 1931, Dr. DeVry teamed up with radio pioneer Lee DeForest, inventor of the Audion vacuum tube (which made live radio broadcasting possible and became the key component of all radio, telephone, radar, television and computer systems before the invention of the transistor in 1947), to open the DeForest Training School in Chicago. The school prepared students for technical work in electronics, motion pictures, radio and, later, television. Compact versions of DeVry's portable projector became a proprietary technological key differentiator as they were provided to students as "visual instruction" course materials when they enrolled in the school's programs from remote locations. The school's name was eventually changed to DeVry Technical Institute in 1953 and then became DeVry Institute of Technology in 1968.

However, the DeVry of today is far from "Your Father's DeVry." After a series of growth activities, including a merger with the Keller Graduate School of Management in 1987, the acquisition of Becker CPA Review (now Becker Professional Review) in 1996, and receiving accreditation approval from the North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission, the school became DeVry University in 2002. Currently, in addition to its renowned technology curricula, a substantial number of DeVry students are enrolled in business and management programs, with 42 percent of the overall enrollment being female.

"Today's DeVry University with its technology-entrenched on-site and online offerings of undergraduate and graduate programs is a shining tribute to the vision Herman DeVry had nearly a century ago of distance learning becoming available to a diverse group of people around the world," said David Pauldine, President of DeVry University.

Reflecting on the success achieved by DeVry University over its 76 year history, Pauldine added, "Having evolved into an accredited university offering a wide-spectrum of degree programs in technology, business and management where our graduates are highly sought after by top employers in the industries we serve, we believe Dr. DeVry would be extremely proud of his legacy."

Pauldine's comments reflect the university's exceptional undergraduate employment statistics, most recently confirming that for DeVry 2006 graduates system-wide, 92 percent of those in the active job market were employed in their fields within six months of graduation at an average salary of \$41,000. Furthermore, a survey conducted as part of its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2006 found that for the 10-year period ending June 2006, 90 percent of U.S. graduates from DeVry's undergraduate programs, who actively pursued employment or who were already employed when they graduated, held positions in their chosen field within six months of graduation.



“As Dr. DeVry’s pioneering invention nears its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the faculty and staff of DeVry University are eagerly looking forward to 2012 when we believe the positive state of online education in America and around the world will enable us to host a grand celebration in honor of Herman DeVry’s commitment to bringing visual education to every person with the willingness to learn,” said Pauldine.

Additional information about DeVry University and its Keller Graduate School of Management can be found at [www.devry.edu](http://www.devry.edu) or by calling toll-free 866-338-7934.

#### About DeVry University

As one of the largest degree-granting higher education systems in North America, DeVry University provides high quality, career oriented associate, bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in technology, healthcare technology, business and management. More than 57,000 students are enrolled in 90 locations in 26 states and Canada, and through DeVry University Online. DeVry University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (NCA), [www.ncahlc.org](http://www.ncahlc.org). In Virginia, DeVry is certified to operate by the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia.