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12th Annual John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference

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12th Annual John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. --The 12th annual John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference, co-sponsored by the Illinois Wesleyan University Provost's office and the IWU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society, is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, April 20-21. The conference will be held in the Center for Natural Science (CNS), 201 E. Beecher St., Bloomington.

First held in 1990, the research conference showcases approximately 22 oral presentations and 43 poster sessions by approximately 65 students. Projects and presentations include a variety of fields including, but not limited to, biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, physics, psychology, scientific illustration, mathematics, ecology/conservation, astronomy, astrophysics, invertebrate zoology, computer science, environmental studies, history, English, economics, political science, sociology, Spanish, religion and Russian literature.

Eric Pallant, director of the Center for Economic and Environmental Development (CREED) and associate professor of environmental sciences at Allegheny College, Meadville, Penn., will keynote the event. Pallant's presentation, "There's More to Recycling Than No. 2 Plastics," will begin at 9 a.m. in the Anderson Auditorium of the CNS. His research focuses on the prerequisites and techniques necessary to promote sustainability in the French Creek watershed.

Pallant, a member of the advisory committee for the French Creek Project (protection program), promotes grassroot efforts to reduce point and non-point source water pollution.

Students participating in the poster presentation aspect of the conference will set up at 8:30 a.m. in the Commons area of the CNS. A complimentary continental breakfast also will be held in the Commons at 8:30 a.m. Poster session A will begin at 10 a.m. following Pallant's keynote address. Attendees are encouraged to browse the displays and talk to the students about their projects. Oral presentations, where student researchers will describe and explain their research projects and findings, will begin at 11 a.m. in room E103 and Anderson and Beckman Auditoriums of the CNS.

Lunch will follow the morning presentations at 12:30 p.m. and poster session B will follow at 2 p.m. in the Commons. Oral presentations will continue at 3 p.m. in Anderson and Beckman Auditoriums. Students will be awarded certificates of participation and Phi Kappa Phi Awards will be announced at 4:30 p.m. in the Anderson Auditorium.

Phi Kappa Phi, a national scholastic honorary society for juniors and seniors established in 1922 at IWU, will award three research awards of \$100 each to selected students participating in the conference. An interdisciplinary committee of faculty Phi Kappa Phi members will make the award decisions.

Examples of research projects to be presented at the conference are:

- Social Capital and the Potential for Political Violence
- Voices of Our Past: Illinois Wesleyan University at the Millennium
- Design and Construction of a Radio-Frequency Plasma Device
- The Influence of Loanwords on the Japanese Language
- The Influence of Passive Flow on the Feeding Current of Sea Squirts
- Behavioral Contrast at Low Levels of Reinforcement

The conference is named for explorer-geologist John Wesley Powell, a Civil War veteran and a founder of the National Geographic Society, who joined IWU's faculty in 1865. Powell became the first U.S. professor to use field work to teach science. In 1867, Powell took IWU students to explore the Colorado mountains. It was the first expedition of its kind in the history of U.S. higher education. Powell later became the first director of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology.