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Student Receives BACCHUS Award

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November 29, 2006

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Student Receives BACCHUS Award

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Katie Hoff, an Illinois Wesleyan University junior nursing major and health minor from Mt. Prospect, Ill., is the recipient of the BACCHUS Network Outstanding Student Award. The BACCHUS Network is a university and community-based network focused on comprehensive health and safety initiatives. Hoff helped start the IWU chapter and has served as the group’s co-president since its inception in September 2005.

“I’ve always been interested in peer health,” Hoff says. “I think peer health education groups are crucial on college campuses when it comes to educating students about the most important issues. We are able to talk to students without shaking our fingers at them.”

Bob Rogers, counselor and alcohol education coordinator at IWU and one of the initial supporters of the group, says Hoff “truly built this program from the ground up. She did not have the luxury of stepping into a program that was already developed.”

Hoff notes the many challenges of starting a new campus group: finding interested members and keeping them interested, understanding the logistics of starting and maintaining a group and securing funding for programs—all while keeping up with schoolwork and a campus job. “Every step of the way I’m learning,” she says.

To give Hoff the opportunity to learn more about increasing her group’s role on campus, the university funded her attendance at both the BACCHUS Area 4 Conference in Milwaukee, Wis., and the first General Assembly in Orlando, Fla.

Last semester, the IWU BACCHUS group sponsored the event, *Get ‘Smashed’ with BACCHUS!* which drew a crowd of more than 80 students. The event included a showing of the documentary, *Smashed: Toxic Tales of Teens and Alcohol*, followed by a discussion. The group also sponsored a speaker on sexual assault and healthy relationships for an event called *Can I Kiss You?* which more than 500 students attended.

The BACCHUS organization’s mission actively promotes student and young adult-based campus and community-wide leadership on healthy and safe lifestyle decisions concerning alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use, unhealthy sexual practices and other high-risk behaviors.

The BACCHUS Network involves over 32,000 student leaders and advisors, impacting over 8 million people on more than 1,000 campuses worldwide.

For additional information about IWU's BACCHUS chapter, contact Hoff at khoff@iwu.edu, or to learn more about the BACCHUS Network, visit www.bacchusgamma.org.

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