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## Student Selected as Finalist for Chemistry Award

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## **Student Selected as Finalist for Chemistry Award**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Jamie Rogers, a senior chemistry major from Elmwood, Ill., has been chosen as one of 11 finalists for the Frank and Sara McKnight Prize in Undergraduate Chemistry.

The prize, established by Dr. Steven McKnight, chairman of University of Texas Southwestern's Department of Biochemistry, and awarded by the university, acknowledges undergraduate achievement in chemistry research.

In November, Rogers will attend the UT Southwestern Biochemistry Research Retreat in New Braunfels, Texas to present her research along with the other finalists in a poster session. The prize's selection committee will judge the finalists on their presentation as well as the gravity of their research.

"Being a finalist for this highly competitive award is an honor in itself," says Ram Mohan, professor of chemistry at IWU, who supervises Rogers' research in his lab.

Rogers' research explores replacing toxic chemical processes with more environmentally friendly ones, particularly by utilizing the element Bismuth. In her nominated research project, Rogers used bismuth-based catalysts to replace more toxic catalysts previously used to synthesize molecules of interest to the pharmaceutical industry.

"By performing this synthesis with a Bismuth compound, we eliminate the need for toxic or corrosive catalysts that have been used in the past, and it is also cheaper than many of the alternative catalysts that have been used for this type of synthesis," says Rogers.

"The use of a safe and inexpensive catalyst for this process should be of considerable interest to the pharmaceutical industry," says Mohan.

For additional information, please contact the Office of University Communications at (309) 556-3181.