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## West Bloomington Revitalization Partnership Receives Award

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## **West Bloomington Revitalization Partnership Receives Award**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The West Bloomington Revitalization Partnership (WBRP) will receive the American Planning Association Award for their strategic plan in improving the neighborhood of West Bloomington. The award will be presented at the city council meeting Monday, Oct. 26.

The honor acknowledges the hard work of multiple community organizations, members of the Illinois Wesleyan University faculty and staff, as well as 13 IWU Action Research students who are working to improve the West Bloomington neighborhood.

Illinois Wesleyan has worked with the WBRP since it's inception in the spring of 2008, and placed two summer interns with the association, senior sociology major Aaron Massey and senior political science major Mike Kotz. The Action Research Seminar class in the fall of 2008 also contributed to the program, focusing their research on the youth on the Westside. Currently, junior sociology major Bianca Spratt and junior business administration major Brittini Gray are working for the organization.

The WBRP developed after community members identified West Bloomington as a concern and in need of intervention. After surveying a portion of the neighborhood and obtaining feedback, the partnership created an improvement plan with six key components; Greening, Youth, Safety, Economic Development, Housing and Education. Each topic has a list of short and long-term goals that will be implemented in the coming months and years.

Some of these changes have already occurred, including developing a community garden on the corner of Roosevelt Ave. and Mulberry St., the acceptance of food stamps at local grocery stores, a community computer donation and rehabilitation program with Blue Jay Computers and numerous safety improvements in the neighborhood.

Large projects still underway include, a west side athletic/recreation center, a full grocery store, retail stores on Market Street and new or rehabbed housing units.