



Summer 7-5-2002

## IWU Program Continues Fight Against Medical Professional Shortage

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### Recommended Citation

Wallace, Sherry and Eich, Mart, "IWU Program Continues Fight Against Medical Professional Shortage" (2002). *News and Events*. 581.  
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July 5, 2002

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## **IWU Program Continues Fight Against Medical Professional Shortage**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- With a shortage of workers in the medical field today, Illinois Wesleyan is doing its part to increase interest in medicine. From July 14th through July 17th, 2002, Illinois Wesleyan will hold the second annual "Health Professions in the 21st Century: Explore Your Options" program.

More than 60 high school students from Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin will meet on campus to learn firsthand about a wide variety of health careers.

During their visit, the attendees will be addressed by two prominent medical professionals from the Bloomington/Normal area. The keynote address will be given by the McLean County Coroner, Beth Carlson-Kimmerling R.N., and Dr. Robert M. Reardon will give the closing address. Reardon, a retired ophthalmologist from the Gailey Eye Clinic, is an honorary Illinois Wesleyan alumnus and former vice-president of the IWU Board of Trustees.

The students will have an opportunity to travel to two workplaces of the careers of their choice in the areas of neuroscience, surgery, nurse midwifery, psychiatry and many others. Participants will also attend two health panels on different career paths that will discuss various career choices similar to the shadowing program and will also review topics such as sports medicine, nurse anesthesia, pharmacy, and forensics.

"We started doing the health professions panel on campus for our students at Illinois Wesleyan four years ago," said Warren Kistner, director of the Illinois Wesleyan Career Center, and an organizer of the event. "We discovered that a lot of the participants were interested in going into medicine, specifically dentistry and graduate-level nursing, but that there wasn't as much information out there about these [fields]." Giving students already enrolled at IWU a leg-up through the health panel was originally the idea. However, the panels were such a success, it was decided IWU use them as a vessel for recruitment as well as instruction. "For a student to get this information in high school and identify what it is they want to pursue, and how to get started from day one, is a great tool," said Kistner.

Kim Schultz, recruitment coordinator for the IWU School of Nursing and also a member of the preparation team, added, "There are areas in health professions that are experiencing shortages: nursing, pharmacy and dentistry. This program is to expose the students that have not thought about those careers, and we're hoping to inspire them to examine those health professions for their life work."

Attendance for the program has increased by over 50% from a year ago. Schultz and Kistner attribute the influx of participants to the strength of the program and to word of mouth from prior participants.

Schultz said creating a program with such vast opportunities including the ability to shadow health professionals in their field, requires a team effort. "The people in our community who are participating welcome the students from Illinois Wesleyan, and our alums are definitely more than willing to help out in all cases."

For more information contact the Illinois Wesleyan School of Nursing at 309/556-3051, or the Illinois Wesleyan Career Center at 309/ 556-3071.

Assisting Professionals from the area will include:

Beth Carlson-Kimmerling, RN, MFS (McLean County Coroner) – Keynote Speaker

Robert M. Reardon, MD (Gailey Eye Clinic Ltd. Retired) – Closing Speaker

Stanley E. Allen, MD – Medicine

Robert K. Seidl, MD – Sports Medicine

Renee T. Dunlap, OD (Gailey Eye Clinic Ltd.) – Optometry

Troy Williams, RPh (C/o Ryan Pharmacy) – Pharmacy

Beth H. Smith, CNM – Nurse Practitioner/ Nurse Midwifery

Stan Huff, EdD LCPC LMFT (Central Illinois Psychiatric Associates) – Psychology/  
Psychiatry

Chris Byers, RPT – Physical Therapy

Scott Peterson, DDS -- Dentistry

Curtis J. Hayden, MD (McLean County Neurology) – Neuroscience

Juanita Smith, RN, CRNA – Nurse Anesthesia

Erin Laipply, P.A. (Office of A.R. Stoink, MD) – Physician Assistant