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Bloomington Neurosurgeon Ann Stroink to Address Commencement

March 31, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Noted Bloomington neurosurgeon and Illinois Wesleyan University alumna Ann Stroink will deliver the address “Cerebral Plasticity: Lifelong Learning” for the University’s [Commencement ceremony](#) on Sunday, May 2 at 1 p.m. on the Eckley Quadrangle. Stroink will be one of two recipients of an honorary doctor of humane letters degree during the Commencement ceremony, along with Robert Quinn, executive director of the Scholars at Risk Network (SAR).

Ann Stroink

Ann Stroink, a 1976 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan, is a board-certified neurosurgeon and senior partner of Central Illinois Neuro Health Sciences, a large neurosurgical practice in central Illinois she established in 1985. A biology major at Illinois Wesleyan, Stroink was the first woman to train in general neurosurgery at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and was a fellow in pediatric neurosurgery at the Hospital for Sick Children at the University of Toronto.

In addition to a busy neurosurgical practice, Stroink is a passionate educator, researcher and philanthropist. Her commitment to education, research and the pursuit of excellence in patient care led her, and several colleagues, to establish the Central Illinois Neuroscience Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing neuro health care through education and research. As Director of Continuing Medical Education for the Foundation, Stroink has championed life-long learning in the neurosciences among physicians, nurses and allied health professionals with the overarching goals of providing the highest quality care and improving patient outcomes and quality of life. Building on the success of this program, Stroink and her colleagues, in collaboration with local hospitals, also established a neurosurgical residency program to train young physicians in the art and science of neurosurgery, raising the level and access to neuro health care in the central Illinois community.

Hand-in-hand with her educational endeavors, Stroink is also an active clinical researcher with interests in the applications of biomedical materials and spinal instrumentation specific to the cervical spine. She has been instrumental in the design and implementation of several research protocols in her field including the use of the CyberKnife[®], a non-invasive radiation system, in brain and spinal-cord cases. Her contributions to the body of evidence-based medicine have been published in some of the most rigorous and widely respected peer-reviewed journals.

A former president of the Illinois State Neurosurgical Society, diplomat and officer in the Council of State Neurosurgical Societies, and active member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Stroink also actively volunteers her time and energies to give back to her profession.

A 1986 recipient of Illinois Wesleyan University’s Outstanding Young Alumna Award, she also served as a member of the Illinois Wesleyan University Board of Trustees from 2002 to 2003. Read more about Stroink in an article in the [Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine](#).

Robert Quinn

Robert Quinn is the founding executive director of the Scholars at Risk Network (SAR), of which Illinois Wesleyan is a founding member. SAR is an international network of more than 200 universities in 26 countries dedicated to promoting academic freedoms and defending the human rights of scholars worldwide.

Quinn launched SAR in 2000 with seed money from the MacArthur Foundation. His goal was to arrange temporary academic fellowships in safe locations for scholars from any country and any discipline whose lives or work were threatened in their home country or region. SAR handles between 50 to 75 cases a year. As a founding member of SAR, Illinois Wesleyan has hosted two Scholars at Risk in residence and sponsored six scholar lectures regarding academic freedom violations in Iran, Pakistan, Chechnya, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

A lawyer and former adjunct professor of law at Fordham University School of Law in New York, Quinn taught courses in international human rights and the U.S. legal systems. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University in 1988 and a law degree from Fordham in 1994.

Quinn is the former founding executive director of the Scholar Rescue Fund, an initiative founded in the spring of 2002 by the Institute of International Education (IIE). He serves on the Steering Committee of the Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR) and the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was recently named a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow by the Council of Independent Colleges.

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