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## Environmental Author, Activist, Alumna to Speak on Campus

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## Environmental Author, Activist, Alumna to Speak on Campus

Sept. 28, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Environmental author and activist [Sandra Steingraber](#) will return to her alma mater at Illinois Wesleyan University on Monday, Oct. 18 to talk about a new documentary, *Living Downstream*, that follows the struggle to bring awareness to the link between cancer and the environment. The struggle is a personal one for Steingraber, who not only is a noted biology researcher, but is also a cancer survivor. The talk will be from noon-1 p.m. at the Hansen Student Center (300 E. Beecher St., Bloomington). The event is free and open to the public.

Steingraber originally published her celebrated book *Living Downstream* in 1997, and it propelled her to national attention. She is eagerly sought as a national speaker, invited to communities all over the U.S. and across the Atlantic Ocean to speak on the silent dangers of environmental toxins – from Alaska where chemicals poisoned a salmon stream, to Ireland where farmers inadvertently poisoned their water supply with insecticides. She has earned many honors and accolades along the way, including being compared to environmental crusader Rachel Carson.

Now in its second edition, the book caught the eye of filmmaker Chanda Chevannes. She decided to document not only Steingraber's studies into the effect of synthetic chemicals on the environment, but also her ongoing battle with cancer.

The Illinois Wesleyan talk is part of a regional tour Steingraber and Chevannes are making throughout the Midwest. Steingraber, a native of Pekin, Ill., will also be making stops in Normal, Peoria, Urbana and Springfield. The documentary will be screened at the Normal Theatre on Sunday, Oct. 17 at 1 p.m. For additional information, go to [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com).

When the documentary first came out earlier this year, Steingraber related her drive to explore the link between cancer and the environment. Diagnosed when she was 20 years old and still a student studying biology at Illinois Wesleyan, she found a gap between the research she was seeing as a biology student and what she heard as a patient. "I decided to help bridge what scientists know and what doctors know," said Steingraber. "We have to be able to talk about cancer and what might cause cancer."

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