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## Five Students Named as 2015 Weir Fellows

Feb. 11, 2015

Illinois Wesleyan University's Action Research Center (ARC) named five students as 2015 recipients of the Elizabeth Weir Fellowship. The Weir Fellows include Leo Martinez '15 (Chicago), Nettie Rauch '15 (Shoreview, Minnesota), Jacquelyn Schirmacher '18 (Orland Park, Illinois), Amanda King '15 (Peoria, Illinois) and Rachel Shaffer '17 (Puyallup, Washington). The award offers fellowships to students who successfully use action research strategies to implement a project that makes a meaningful impact in the community.

"We are really thrilled at the quality of this year's projects," said ARC Director Deborah Halperin. According to Halperin, the projects have potential on- and off-campus, local and global, and short- and long-term impact.



Leo Martinez '15, Jackie Schirmacher '18 and Nettie Rauch '15



Rachel Shaffer '17 and Amanda King '15

The 2015 Weir Fellows are divided into two teams. In the first project, team members Martinez, Rauch and Schirmacher are completing a study of nonprofit organizations across 10 focus areas, including financial management, marketing, board governance and human resources. Based on the data they collect, the team will design workshops and a "Board Boot Camp" to empower current and future nonprofit board members to be effective leaders for the organizations they serve.

In an effort to help more people enjoy the "peace" aspect of the IWU Peace Garden, King and Shaffer will install an area for relaxation, meditation, or just to eat lunch. They plan to grow plants that are typically used in peace ceremonies in cultures and religions around the world.

A 1950 Illinois Wesleyan graduate with a degree in sociology, Elizabeth Weir founded the fellowship. The grant may be utilized by awardees as income or assistance in project development. Weir passed away Feb. 7, 2015.

*By Tia Patsavas '16*