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Illinois Wesleyan Senior Named Lincoln Laureate

January 11, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - Illinois Wesleyan senior Robin Johnson was one of 48 Illinois college students honored by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois as a Student Laureate.

Established in 1965, the Lincoln Academy of Illinois recognizes the accomplishments of individuals who it determines have brought honor to the state of Illinois by either their birth or residence in the state or by their commitment to the principles of democracy and humanity as exemplified by Abraham Lincoln.

2005 was the 30th consecutive year that the academy recognized one outstanding senior from each of the four-year, degree-granting institutions of higher learning in Illinois. The honorees, who are annually selected by the chief executive officers of their respective institutions based on their overall excellence in both curricular and extracurricular activities, are awarded a Certificate of Achievement and thereby become Student Laureates. The students must have a cumulative and major GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Johnson, a physics major, and the other Student Laureates were also presented with a Student Laureate Medallion and a \$150 honorarium by Richard Norton Smith, executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. The awards ceremony took place on Oct. 22, 2005, at the Old State Capitol Building in Springfield.

A Peoria native, Johnson, who graduated from Dunlap Community High School in 2002, was a valedictorian as well as a National Merit Scholar. At Illinois Wesleyan, she is a member of the Sigma Xi Research Society and Phi Kappa Phi Academic Honor Society. A Presidential Scholar and the recipient of the Outstanding Sophomore in Organic Chemistry Award, she has also served as secretary for the IWU chapter of the American Chemical Society and the treasurer for the Pfeiffer Residence Hall Council. Additionally, she participated in and helped to facilitate My IWU, a diversity discussion group on campus.

As a member of the IWU varsity women's swim team, Johnson was a two-time NCAA Division III Swimming Nationals qualifier and NCAA Academic All-American as well as a member of the NCAA Student Athletic Advising Commission.

Johnson has worked as an organic chemistry laboratory teaching assistant and participated in a variety of research projects since the spring of 2004, presenting her findings at both the John Wesley Powell Research Conference and the Great Lakes Midwest Regional Conference of the American Chemical Society. She is currently conducting research for credit and pursuing research honors.

Over the summer of 2005, Johnson was one of 12 scholars invited to the Brookhaven National Laboratory Summer School in Nuclear and Radiochemistry, where she was named the top student in the program. Johnson's interest in nuclear science stems from the potential use of nuclear power as a major energy source and has also grown to include nuclear medical technology, which is used in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Founded in 1850, Illinois Wesleyan is a private, coeducational university with an enrollment of approximately 2,100 and a student-faculty ratio of 12 to 1. The University consists of the College of Liberal Arts, with 17 academic departments; the College of Fine Arts, comprising professional Schools of Art, Music and Theatre Arts; and the School of Nursing.



Robin Johnson