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Faculty Member Receives Award for Research

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University Visiting Assistant Professor Meg Rincker has been honored for her collaborative research on women's pathways to political influence in new and developing democracies.

Rincker and her colleague, Candice Ortals of Pepperdine University, were recently awarded the 2007 Carrie Chapman Catt Prize for Research on Women and Politics for their ongoing research studying the effectiveness of women's organizations in countries with authoritarian histories, including Pakistan and Chile.

"Carrie Chapman Catt was one of the most charismatic leaders of the women's suffrage movement in the United States," said Rincker, who will use the \$1,000 prize to continue surveys of women in Pakistan. "To receive an award in her name is a huge honor."

The Catt prize, awarded annually for more than a decade, seeks to support research on women and politics in an ongoing effort to promote collaboration between political practitioners and academic researchers.

The research of Rincker and Ortals was a perfect match for the Catt prize, said Dianne Bystrom, director of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics, housed at Iowa State University. "The work Dr. Rincker and Dr. Ortals are doing embodies the ideals of Carrie Chapman Catt," said Bystrom, who noted that Catt was active in forwarding women's rights internationally. "We were impressed with the international aspect of this project that looks to explore the rights of women throughout the world," she said.

"Carrie Chapman Catt furthered women's rights in America by recognizing that women's suffrage had to be won in the states, as well as in our nation's capital. Similarly, our research looks at whether the political process is open to women at the state level in Spain, Chile, Poland and Pakistan, enabling national policy changes in domestic violence laws, employment and educational opportunities for women," said Rincker. The researchers will compile their work in a book entitled *Relocating Feminist Policy: Decentralization and State Feminism in Spain, Chile, Poland and Pakistan*.