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## Illinois Wesleyan Receives Ameritech Distance Collaboration Grant;

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## **Illinois Wesleyan Receives Ameritech Distance Collaboration Grant; Supports New Chemistry Curriculum Devised by IWU Faculty**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Illinois Wesleyan University has received a \$16,550 Ameritech Distance Collaboration grant, awarded last month by The Foundation for Independent Higher Education (FIHE).

The grant, funded by Ameritech, is one of five collaboration grants, totaling more than \$248,000 awarded to 17 FIHE-member colleges and universities. The grants encourage use of communication technologies in ways that stimulate collaboration and innovation among FIHE-member colleges.

### **New IWU-Crafted Chemistry Curriculum**

Illinois Wesleyan's portion of the Ameritech grant will support a revolutionary new two-year college chemistry curriculum developed by IWU faculty under a \$140,000 three-year grant from the National Science Foundation.

Four IWU chemistry faculty--Timothy R. Rettich, associate professor and project head; David Bailey, professor; Forrest Frank, associate professor; and Jeff Frick, assistant professor--crafted the new course of study, merging general and organic chemistry concepts typically segregated in the first two years of collegiate-level chemistry. By breaking down artificial barriers separating branches of chemistry at the introductory and intermediate levels, students will gain a more integrated view of chemistry, according to the IWU chemists.

"Introductory Chemistry," a 500-plus page, illustrated, softcover textbook is being used for the first time by 150 IWU students this fall, along with students at Huntington College (Indiana), Bellarmine College (Louisville) and Illinois College (Jacksonville). A second textbook for the new curriculum will be off the press next fall.

### **Ameritech Grant Use**

The Ameritech grant will support an aspect of the project called, "Using Technology to Support an Integrated Curriculum in Chemistry," an initiative offered at Bellarmine College, Huntington College, Illinois College, and IWU. These campuses will establish a World Wide Web site through which students learn collaboratively and cooperatively via "chat rooms"--

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used, in effect, as virtual reality laboratories and for homework exercises--using auxiliary text materials on-line. The web-site design also will enable on-line sharing of chemistry equipment located at IWU, creating cost-savings for all participating colleges and universities.

### **Ameritech's Partnership for Private Colleges Campaign**

IWU is a member of the Chicago-based Associated Colleges of Illinois (ACI), the local affiliate of FIHE, which is awarding the Ameritech grants as part of its Partnership for Private Colleges campaign, a four-year initiative to raise \$16 million for development of innovative, collaborative, and technology programs that create efficiencies in higher education.

"Productive, long-term collaborative efforts like these will help private colleges continue to thrive," said Ron Blake, president of Ameritech Enhanced Business Services and a FIHE board member.

"We commend Illinois Wesleyan and its partner colleges for their enthusiasm, teamwork, and commitment to the work that's being funded," Blake added. "This project is a wonderful example of how colleges can work together and use technology to solve tough problems."

FIHE President Carole B. Whitcomb said: "We applaud the winning colleges and Ameritech for demonstrating what a partnership between business and education can do. Ameritech has provided the opportunity for development of five creative programs that will contain college costs through collaboration and the enhanced use of innovative technology. And that is what the Partnership for Private Colleges is all about."

### **Grant Qualifications**

To qualify for The Ameritech Distance Collaboration Grants Program, colleges were required to create a consortium which included at least three FIHE-affiliated institutions, one of which is a college within Ameritech's Midwest service area. Eligible collaborations were comprised of colleges in two or more states for which physical exchanges of students, faculty, and administrators is not feasible.

### **Ameritech**

Ameritech (NYSE: AIT) serves millions of customers in 50 states and 40 countries by providing a full range of communications services. Ameritech has a strong tradition of giving back to the communities it serves. Last year, the company contributed more than \$25 million to 2,000 non-profit organizations, and Ameritech Pioneers, 25,000 employees and retirees

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throughout the Midwest, volunteered 332,500 hours of community service by supporting health and human services, civic and community projects, and education and arts programs.

#### **Ameritech Foundation**

The Ameritech Distance Collaboration Grants Program is funded by the Ameritech Foundation and represents continued and increased support for private higher education-- particularly in the Midwest, where Ameritech has contributed more than \$2.4 million in the last three years alone to the state independent college associations in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

#### **IWU**

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,900 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and its Schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletic center, a \$25 million science building, a \$6.8 million residence hall, and a \$5.1 million liberal arts center. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching ranks Illinois Wesleyan a "Baccalaureate I" institution, a classification that places it among the 159 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges. IWU won the 1997 NCAA Division III men's basketball championship.

#### **FIHE**

Founded in 1958, the Chicago-based Foundation for Independent Higher Education is a national organization that works on behalf of 38 state and regional independent college funds and their affiliated 635 private colleges and universities. More than \$1 billion has been secured through the collaborative efforts of the independent college funds for scholarship programs, the education of public school teachers, the enhancement of science and mathematics education, student voluntary service, and minority education achievement.

Information on private higher education and other FIHE awards is posted on the World Wide Web at <http://www.fihe.org>