

May 13, 2004

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SIU Med School to Graduate 73 New Physicians

Commencement exercises for the 30th graduating class of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine will be held at noon Saturday, May 22. Seventy-three physicians and three doctoral students will graduate during the ceremony, which is held in the Sangamon Auditorium at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Two of the medical students are completing a six-year combined program for a M.D./J.D. dual degree.

Dr. Thomas S. Inui, Sam Regenstrief Professor and associate dean for health care research at Indiana University School of Medicine as well as president and CEO of Regenstrief Institute, is the commencement speaker. A primary care physician, educator and researcher, Inui's special emphasis in teaching and research includes physician/patient communication, health promotion and disease prevention, the social context of medicine and medical humanities.

Inui previously held the position of head of general internal medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine and served as the Paul C. Cabot Professor and founding chair of the ambulatory care and prevention department at Harvard Medical School. His honors include elected membership in Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Omega Alpha, the Johns Hopkins University Society of Scholars, the Institute of Medicine and a U.S. Public Health Service Medal of Commendation, and serving as president of the Society of General Internal Medicine and receipt of its Robert Glaser Award (for generalism).

Jillian J. Tyler of Monroe Center, class chair, will deliver remarks on behalf of the graduates. SIU President James E. Walker, Ed.D., will participate in the program and Walter V. Wendler, Ph.D., SIUC Chancellor, will confer the degrees. Dr. Erik Constance, associate dean for student affairs, will present the medical students for degrees while Edward J. Moticka, Ph.D., associate dean for research and faculty affairs, will present the doctoral candidates. Dr. J. Kevin Dorsey, Ph.D., dean and provost, will award diplomas to the medical students. John A. Koropchak, Ph.D., vice chancellor for research and graduate dean for SIUC, will present diplomas to the graduate students. Peter C. Alexander, J.D., dean of the law school, will present diplomas to the law students.

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SIU School of Medicine graduation – add 1

The graduates will honor two of their teachers with roles during the ceremony. Dr. John E. Murphy, professor and chair of pathology, will read the Hippocratic Oath and Dr. David E. Steward, professor and chair of internal medicine, will hood the graduates.

The Humanism in Medicine awards will be announced during the ceremony and presented to both a faculty member and graduating senior who “embody compassion and sensitivity in the delivery of care to patients and their family members.” The class previously honored Jaime Estavillo, Ph.D., professor and chair of anatomy, as the Carbondale Teacher of the Year for his contributions during the students’ first year.

Other faculty will be honored at the graduation reception Friday evening. Dorsey will receive the Golden Apple Award for outstanding teaching. The AOA Volunteer Faculty Award will be presented to the community physician who “effectively and generously donates time, skill and experience teaching students clinical skills.”

During the ceremony, an alumnae will receive the medical school’s distinguished alumna award. The award from the School’s Alumni Society Board of Governors recognizes outstanding contributions to medicine and distinguished service to humankind. The 2004 recipient is Dr. Zita J. Surprenant, class of 1981, who is being recognized for her efforts in the field of domestic violence, both nationally and in the Kansas City area where she practices. She is an assistant clinical professor of preventive medicine at the University of Kansas Medical Center and serves as co-chair of the medical committee for the Kansas City Majors Domestic Violence Task Force and board member for Physicians for a Violence Free Society.

Surprenant is a native of Kankakee, Ill., earning her bachelor’s degree at Illinois State University (1978) and later a master’s of public health at St. Louis University School of Public Health (1996). After earning her medical degree at SIU, she completed her internship at SIU and her emergency medicine residency at Truman Medical Center in Kansas City (1984).

The new SIU physicians will begin residency training in their chosen specialty fields in July. SIU School of Medicine is based in Carbondale and Springfield and is specifically oriented to educating new physicians prepared to practice in Illinois communities. Since 1975, 1,847 physicians, plus the new graduates in this class, have earned SIU medical degrees and two thirds are now in primary care fields.

NOTE TO MEDIA: An interview time with Dr. Inui can be provided after the commencement ceremonies at about 1:45 p.m. (His address will occur at approximately 1 p.m.) Please confirm your interest in an interview with SIU Public Affairs in advance.