



NEWS RELEASE

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American Cancer Society Provides Illinois High School Students Opportunity to Work in Leading Research Labs *Springfield high school senior interns for a cure*

CHICAGO – July 31, 2008 – For students, summer break typically consists of sleeping in and lazy days. But for Angela Qian, a student at Glenwood High School, this summer has involved doing rigorous cancer research at the SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield. Fueled by her interest in the medical field, Qian hopes to make her mark in the war against cancer through this opportunity.

Qian, along with 23 other Illinois students, is a part of a unique eight-week American Cancer Society program which gives high school seniors the chance to work in leading research labs. Now in its sixth year, the program allows students to experience life as a professional research scientist while also acquiring research and analytical skills.

Working alongside Daotai Nie, Ph.D., assistant professor of medical microbiology, immunology and cell biology and a member of the SCCI research team at SIU, Qian has focused her research on breaking down the Jagged 1 gene, in order to study its effects on prostate cancer. As a high school researcher, Qian spends four days a week in the lab, while attending American Cancer Society seminars with professors from local universities on Fridays.

“It’s very exciting to be a part of cutting edge research” said Qian, who will, in a matter of weeks, present a collective report of her findings. “I’ve gotten greater insight into cancer research and hope my research will either directly or indirectly aid in the search for a treatment or even provide a cure to cancer patients.”

Qian was chosen from a pool of approximately 190 applicants. Now in its sixth year, the program continues to be successful in bridging many of Illinois' finest students into the future of science.

"This program is a unique opportunity for students to nurture their passion for science while making a difference in the fight against cancer," said Clement Rose, M.D., president of the American Cancer Society, Illinois Division. "This internship will not only expose them to the field of cancer research, it will provide them with a sense of what it is like to funnel their knowledge and efforts into something extraordinary."

"We are pleased that we are able to host a student again this year and are able to contribute to her academic development. We congratulate her on her progress this summer," said Dr. K. Thomas Robbins, SCCI director. "We also thank the American Cancer Society for their sponsorship and understanding that it is important to cultivate new young scientists."

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. The Illinois Division has more than 120,000 volunteers and staff fighting cancer in the state. For the most up-to-date cancer related information and to join the fight against cancer, call 800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

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