



NEWS RELEASE

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November 9, 2009

Students Named to SIU Med School-Springfield Schools Pilot Program

Twenty-four ninth-grade students in Springfield have been selected for a pilot program to encourage local high school students interested in becoming physicians. Called the Physician Pipeline Preparatory Program or P⁴, The program is a partnership between Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and the Springfield Public Schools (SPS).

“I am very pleased with the selection of these students. Because the applicants were so stellar, we pushed the number of participants to twenty-four,” said Dr. Wesley McNeese, executive assistant to the dean for diversity, multicultural and minority affairs at SIU.

The freshman students were selected by a committee with members from both partners. They submitted letters of recommendation, a personal statement and a summary of volunteer, school and community activities, all of which needed to reflect superior academic performance, high levels of motivation and a sincere interest in pursuing medical careers. Fourteen are minority students.

“We are living in an ever-changing global society where the competition is quite steep. We must produce a body of critical and analytical thinkers who will be able to meet the challenges ahead,” said Dr. Walter Milton Jr., superintendent, Springfield Public Schools. “In order to make this happen, it will take a collective effort. P⁴ is an excellent example of such collaborative efforts that will produce youth who are ready to compete in a global medical environment.”

The P⁴ modules begin this week and run through Nov. 21 as well as next winter and summer, Feb. 8-20 and June 14-25. On most days, sessions will be held after school for three hours and on Saturday mornings. The Saturday program will provide academic support and leadership training as well as sessions in math, science, written/oral communication, test-taking and verbal reasoning.

The curriculum for the pilot program was developed by faculty and staff from both Springfield Schools and the SIU medical school. The P⁴ components for the after-school program include participation in medical school style curriculum; introduction to problem based learning (PBL); tours and shadowing, and interactions with SIU students and faculty.

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The students selected, their parents, high school and medical specialty interest are –

- **Miriam Agamah, Edem and June Agamah, Springfield High School, oncology;**
- **Elaina Conley-Keck, Erin Conley, Springfield High School, neurology;**
- **Kristin Cullen, Marica Cullen, Springfield High School, undecided;**
- **Renay DeFrees, Teirry Woolford, Lanphier High School, forensic pathology;**
- **Merik Ducker, Robert and Beverly Ducker, Lanphier High School, undecided;**
- **Brittany Emuze, Lucky Emuze, Southeast High School, neurology;**
- **Tashida Foxworth, Jerry and Valorie Lambert, Lanphier High School, pediatrics;**
- **Christina Geary, Richard and Diane Geary, Southeast High School, surgery;**
- **Janique Gleghorn, Kevin and Ileen Gleghorn, Springfield High School, pediatric surgery;**
- **Maya Hines, Sharon Hines, Springfield High School, obstetrics;**
- **Cierra Hughes, Titus and Casandra Hughes, Springfield High School, genetics;**
- **Shanna Jensen, Karen Winberg-Jensen, Springfield High School, orthopedics or sports medicine;**
- **Tamieka Lee, Claude and Kelli Lee, Southeast High School, cardiac surgery;**
- **Jordan Lucore, Paula Lucore, Springfield High School, forensic pathology;**
- **Matthew Mannion, Michael and Michelle Mannion, Sacred Heart-Griffin High School, undecided;**
- **Shade Odele, Emmanuel Odele, Springfield High School, pediatrics;**
- **Kyle Pettys, Greg and Johnita Pettys, Springfield High School, emergency medicine;**
- **Suzette Portee, Tobie Portee, Lanphier High School, pediatrics;**
- **Holly Robles, Victoria Simvel, Springfield High School, undecided;**
- **William Sexton, Fred and Shannon Sexton, Southeast High School, forensic science;**
- **Jasmine Warren, Sherry Williams, Springfield High School, undecided;**
- **Samantha Weyant, Scott and Mary Weyant, Lanphier High School, neonatology;**
- **Tavion Whitaker-Lyons, Felicia Whitaker, Sacred Heart-Griffin High School, heart surgeon; and**
- **Brianna Wilkins, Riley and Crystal Wilkins, Springfield High School, gastroenterology.**