

Doctors Fair 2002

The 22nd annual Doctors Fair was a rousing success, with 33 Illinois organizations participating in the event, which was held at the School of Medicine in Springfield.

The fair, co-sponsored by SIU School of Medicine and the Illinois Hospital Association, links residents, medical students and physician assistant students from SIU and other Midwest medical schools and residencies with job opportunities in central and southern Illinois. The event helps fulfill SIU's mission to help Illinois meet its ongoing need for medical staff, particularly in the underserved areas of the state. Many Illinois towns participate in the fair as part of ongoing recruitment efforts.

A top producer of primary care physicians, the medical school has hosted the fair since 1979.



Channing Petrak, M.D., '00, a pediatric resident at the University of Illinois, chats with Judy Acheson of St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur.



Keeping Safe on the Farm

Farm accidents and other occupational hazards related to farming cause a variety of injuries. Debra Phillips, M.D., professor of family and community medicine in Quincy and director of the SIU-based Rural Health Education and Research Center, says safety devices can help farmers protect themselves from hearing loss, lung disease and other illnesses.

The long-term health of lungs is a major concern. "Combining and other harvest activities stir up a lot of dust," she says. "If farmers don't wear respirators or

masks, the dust gets into the lungs and accumulates over a period of years, causing breathing problems."

Noise can be another significant health hazard. Dr. Phillips advises farmers to use protective hearing devices such as earplugs or earmuffs to protect against loud machinery.

She also advises farmers to make sure they have a first-aid kit and take time to do a 15-minute safety check for potential hazards and to fix problems before accidents occur.

Pediatric Cancer Awareness

As the only pediatric oncologist in the central Illinois region, Gregory Brandt, M.D., appreciates the progress that has been made in the treatment of leukemia and tumors in children.

"In general, children's cancers are treatable, more amenable to various therapies. Also, a child can tolerate a lot more in terms of treatment than an adult can, so the success rate is vastly superior to that of adults with cancers," says Dr. Brandt, an assistant professor of pediatrics and director of SIU's pediatric hematology/oncology division.

"In Springfield, we're able to offer virtually all front-line clinical trials that a child might need for any tumor type that they may have. We offer these clinical trials through the Children's Oncology Group, a national consortium of pediatric oncologists."

To promote Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in September,



Dr. Brandt and the pediatric oncology team he works with at St. John's Hospital organized several activities. These included a picnic for young cancer survivors and their families, distribution of gold ribbons and posters in the community, and a medical education symposium with prominent speakers on cancer in children.

Connie Poole Named Associate Dean for Information Resources

Connie Poole, M.L.S., has been named associate dean for information resources and chair of the information and communications sciences department, a position she has held on an interim basis since September 2000.



She is responsible for assessment, development and implementation of information resources of the School and also will continue as director of the School's medical library.

Poole joined SIU in 1990 as head of technical services. She was named director of SIU's medical library in 1996 and also is an assistant professor in medical humanities. She earned her bachelor's degree at Grinnell College (1973) and her master's degree in library science at the University of Michigan (1974).

How Do Students Learn Surgery?

That question is the basis of a two-year grant awarded to SIU by The National Science Foundation to study how medical students learn in a surgical setting. Total budget for the grant is \$417,635.

Timothy Koschmann, Ph.D., associate professor of medical education, is the principal investigator for the project, and Gary Dunnington, M.D., professor and chair of surgery, is a co-investigator. The study will examine how teaching occurs among medical

students, surgical residents and physician faculty while working together in the operating room. Specifically, it will focus on how instructional interaction occurs as a part of learning in medical students' early experiences with endoscopic surgery, using a scope to view the body's interior. This research has important implications for understanding how verbal communication affects learning in a complex setting and could help develop new teaching methods.

Dr. Sherrick Named Radiology Chair

Andrew D. Sherrick, M.D., has been named chair of radiology at the School of Medicine. He succeeds Dr. Paul Mahon, who is retiring from the academic post with SIU, in the part-time position.

Dr. Sherrick has been a radiologist with Clinical Radiologists, based at Memorial Medical Center since 1995, and a volunteer faculty member with SIU since 1996.

He completed his radiology residency followed by a one-year fellowship in thoracic imaging, both at Mayo Graduate School of Medicine (1994, 1995). He earned his medical degree at SIU (1990) and his bachelor's degree at Southern Methodist University (1986).

For more information about *In Brief* stories, contact the Office of Public Affairs, SIU School of Medicine, P.O. Box 19621, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9621, 217-545-2155 (office) or 217-545-0580 (fax) or e-mail Nancy S. Zimmers, director of public affairs, at nzimmers@siumed.edu.