



*Dr. Sophia Ran is studying tumor metastasis. She is the first new basic science researcher to receive a grant as part of the research team of the SIU Cancer Institute.*

## SIU researcher awarded grant to study tumor metastasis

A research scientist at the School of Medicine has been awarded a one-year research grant from the American Cancer Society to study tumors and how they metastasize. Total budget for the grant is \$87,478.

Sophia Ran, Ph.D., is the principal investigator for the project. An assistant professor of medical microbiology and immunology who was recruited last year, Dr. Ran also is a member of the new research team at the SIU Cancer Institute.

Over the last eight years, Dr. Ran has created a unique antibody that could be used to inhibit the growth of new blood vessels, which allow tumors to grow and spread throughout the body. Dr. Ran holds two patents in cancer treatment and has four others pending.

"This is the first grant for one of the new basic science researchers

we've recruited to our growing institute, and we're delighted that it is coming from the American Cancer Society," said Dr. Thomas Robbins, interim director of the SIU Cancer Institute. "Her work is an excellent example of the kind of cutting-edge research we are working to develop here."

The SIU Cancer Institute began nearly three years ago with funding from the State of Illinois with both operational funds and \$14.5 million toward a permanent facility. The Institute is focusing the medical school's efforts in cancer research, physician and public education, and treatment for patients from across central and southern Illinois.

More than 50 SIU physician and basic science faculty are involved with the Institute.

## Research Symposium Awards given

Nine medical and graduate students and resident physicians received top awards at the School's 14th annual Combined Research Symposium. The top three projects in each category, as judged by a panel of faculty, received monetary prizes.

Sponsored by the School and SIU's chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha, the symposium offers medical students, graduate students and residents an opportunity to gain experience in making formal presentations of their research findings.

The first place medical student winner was Lindsay Jackson, a sophomore from Springfield, for her project, "Neuroprotective Effects of Estrogen in the Aging Brain: An Analysis of Proteins Involved in Synaptic Sprouting."

The first place graduate student winner was Saif Lalani, a medical microbiology and immunology student from India, for his project, "C-maf Enhances Apoptosis in T Cells and Thymocytes."

The first place resident winner was Dr. Lisa Little, an obstetrics and gynecology resident from Danville, Penn., for her project, "Apoptosis Induced by Vitamin E Succinate (VES) in Ovarian Cancer Cells Lines is Not Mediated by FAS."

*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.*

## Federal grant to benefit SIU patients

The Quentin N. Burdick Rural Health Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program awarded fellowships to health-care providers at SIU family medicine departments in Springfield and Quincy to address local health-care needs.

The fellowships will establish postdoctoral/postgraduate interdisciplinary training fellowships in dentistry, pharmacy, nutrition, nursing, social work and medicine.

The Springfield Center for Family Medicine will use the grant to develop wellness activities for

children and adults in the Girard area, the second Burdick fellowship SIU has brought to that community. The first project developed a prenatal care program for local patients.

The Quincy Family Practice Center will attempt to decrease the number of patients who do not show up for their scheduled care.

The project grant has been awarded to the Illinois Health Education Consortium that operates the Western Illinois Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC) based in Quincy.

## Supersized teenagers

The national trend of obesity in teens causes additional medical complications to patients says Dr. Mark Fishbein, an associate professor of pediatric gastroenterology. According to a new study reported in the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, teenagers in the U.S. are more likely to be overweight than teens in 14 other countries.

“The major medical complications include sleep apnea, orthopaedic problems from weight bearing, and insulin resistance and diabetes,” Dr. Fishbein explains. Insulin resistance syndrome also includes hypertension and heart disease.

Dr. Fishbein says teenage obesity poses a greater health concern than children’s extra pounds, because children may grow up to become adults of normal weight, but a teenager’s obesity is likely to continue into adulthood.

“Although teens and parents want quick fixes to the weight problem, there are none,” Dr. Fishbein says. He recommends teens work to change their lifestyles, which includes eating a variety of healthy foods, eating slowly and engaging in daily physical activity.



## GRADUATION 2004

### Heroines of humanism

An SIU faculty member and a graduating senior received the 2004 Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Awards.

Dr. Elizabeth A. Peralta, associate professor of general surgery, and Dr. Jillian J. Tyler, a 2004 graduate from Monroe Center, were announced as recipients at the medical school’s graduation on May 22. (See page 4.)

Awarded by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, the national honor is given at many U.S. medical schools to honor two people who demonstrate compassion, respect for patients and families, and clinical excellence.

Dr. Peralta joined the SIU faculty in 2000 after completing a three-year fellowship in surgical oncology at the City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, Calif.

Dr. Peralta’s nominator wrote “She is compassionate, courageous and committed to making the world a better place by working hard to find a cure for each and every patient, either in the operating room or the research lab.”

Dr. Tyler was chair of the class of 2004 and involved in numerous volunteer activities. She has begun an obstetrics and gynecology residency at University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver.

Dr. Tyler’s nominators said that “Jill’s record of service is unmatched in our class.”

She is the daughter of Dr. Richard and Marcia Tyler.



Dr. Peralta



Dr. Tyler