

## Alumnus Stephen Soltys, M.D., Named Chair of Dept. of Psychiatry

Stephen M. Soltys, M.D., has been named chair of SIU's Department of Psychiatry. He joined the SIU faculty in April 2002 as professor of psychiatry and director of the psychiatry residency program and was named interim chair in September. He succeeds Earl Loschen, M.D., who retired in August after 28 years at SIU and nine years as department chair.

Dr. Soltys most recently was a senior psychiatrist at Beckman Mental Health Center in Greenwood, S.C. (2000-2) and director at the South Carolina Department of Mental Health in Columbia (1997-2000). He both earned his medical degree (1980) and completed his psychiatry residency at SIU (1984). He completed a two-year fellowship in child psychiatry at University of Missouri and also earned a master's degree in public administration (1987, 1995). He



*Dr. Stephen M. Soltys with psychiatry residents*

earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Illinois in Urbana (1976).

### Two Alums Honored for Humanism Efforts

Two SIU graduates were among 53 national finalists for the 2002 Humanism in Medicine Award, sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative.

Those nominated teach medical students and demonstrate five qualities: mentoring skills, community service, compassion and sensitivity, collaboration and professional ethics.

Janet A. Albers, M.D., was honored as the finalist representing SIU. She is associate professor and associate chair of family and community medicine in Springfield and a 1987 graduate of the medical school. She joined SIU's faculty in 1997. Arpita Patel-Mehta, M.D., SIU class of 1995, was selected as the finalist for Georgetown University School of Medicine. She resides in the Chicago area and is an assistant professor of family medicine at Northwestern University.

### Take Care of Yourself Today for Better Health Tomorrow

Studies show that men postpone going to the doctor for physical examinations and health screenings more often than women. On average, men die about five or six years younger than women.

By taking better care of themselves and doing some simple preventive measures, men can extend their life span, says Robert Bussing, M.D., associate professor and chief of general internal medicine at the School of Medicine.

"The greatest threats to the health of younger men are car accidents, suicides, homicides and military deaths. So working to prevent accidents would improve their health. After age 45, the greatest health threats for men are heart disease and stroke, followed by malignancies," explains Dr. Bussing.

Dr. Bussing suggests several basic things men can do to improve their health — stop smoking, reduce alcohol consumption, get regular check-ups, monitor blood pressure, make sure the cholesterol is under control, and keep their weight down through diet and exercise.

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## 'Brain Bank' at SIU Alzheimer Center Helps to Study Disease

A brain bank that is part of SIU's Center for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders is being used to study this debilitating disease that cripples families, both emotionally and physically.

Robert Struble, Ph.D., associate professor of pathology and neurology and research director for SIU's center, directs the bank.

One of about 20 in the nation and the only one in downstate Illinois, the brain bank contains samples of human brains, which have been donated from autopsies of victims of the disease.

The specimens are used for neuropathological examinations to determine the causes of dementia and serve as a source of tissue for research. Dr. Struble and other researchers study the brain of a deceased patient by doing histologic



stains to bring out details of the brain under the microscope that allow the diagnosis of Alzheimer disease.

"Autopsies are the only way to accurately diagnose Alzheimer disease," explains Dr. Struble. "Physicians are unable to positively differentiate Alzheimer disease from other dementias. Through research like this, Alzheimer disease has been determined to be the major cause of dementia."

The SIU Alzheimer Center can be reached at 1-800-DIAL-SIU or [www.siumed.edu/cadrd/](http://www.siumed.edu/cadrd/).

## NIA Grant to Study Aging and Its Effects on Alzheimer Disease

The National Institute on Aging has awarded a five-year grant with a \$1,498,535 budget to an SIU researcher for the study of how aging affects Alzheimer disease.

Gregory J. Brewer, Ph.D., professor of medical microbiology and immunology, is the principal investigator for the project. The study will look at the brain cells of older rats and compare them to the brain cells of younger rats to determine if there is a decline in function of mitochondria, the "power houses" in cells that generate energy for the body in the form of adenosine triphosphate. The research has important implications for helping to find a prevention or remedy for Alzheimer disease as well as other neurodegenerative diseases.

Brewer's research has been funded for the past 20 years by the National Institutes of Health. He joined the SIU faculty in 1980.

## State Grant Supports Biomedical Research and Technology

Faculty research and economic development got a boost after the School of Medicine received one of eight state grants to fund new Illinois Technology Enterprise Corporation (ITEC) centers.

A \$285,000 grant is funding a Technology Development Center in Springfield, which will provide services primarily to the biomedical research and health care community by assisting technology-based start-up businesses and new ventures. Based at the School of Medicine, the center will serve west central Illinois bounded roughly by Bloomington, Decatur, Hillsboro and Jacksonville.

"Since one of the key elements in

the economy of this region is its health care and medical services sector, this ITEC grant should positively impact many of the region's prominent medical employers who are already developing technologies and procedures that improve medicine and its many applications," says Larry Aut, SIU's director of technology development and transfer and ITEC executive director.

"We believe this focus will help build the region's entrepreneurial climate as well as the capacity of the health care economic sector, allowing us to attract more investment and grow more jobs," he adds.

The Springfield ITEC will

promote and identify licensable, marketable and useful biomedical and technical discoveries and inventions, assist in their development, protect intellectual property, coordinate community efforts to establish a business plan and secure start-up funding for viable technologies.

The School of Medicine established a Technology Development and Transfer Office in 1995. In addition to the grant funding, the ITEC will be supported by the medical school research resources and the research support infrastructure already in place.