

Internships give college students cancer research experience

A new summer program offered by the SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute at SIU allowed three college students to gain critical experience in laboratory research

Preference for the competitive positions was given to college students who plan careers in medicine with the intent of working in cancer research.

The first SCCI interns and their SCCI research faculty mentors were – Dylan Downs, Jacksonville, who worked with **Randolph Elble, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of pharmacology; Leann Murphy, Rochester, assigned to **Edward Gershburg, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of medical microbiology, immunology and cell biology; and Christian Wichterman, Springfield, who worked with **Andrew Wilber, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of urology, and **Sophia Ran, Ph.D.**, associate professor of medical microbiology, immunology and cell biology.

“We anticipate that this will be the beginning of a program at SCCI that encourages college students who have an interest in cancer research and helps them evolve as they continue their education,” said **Morris D. Cooper, Ph.D.**, professor and chair of medical microbiology, immunology and cell biology at SIU School of Medicine.



A new look

Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and its physician practice have a new logo. The logo uses a stylized snake and staff with the letters “SIU” followed by “School of Medicine” or “HealthCare,” the new name for the physician practice. The snake is the traditional symbol of medicine and a reference to the serpent of Aesculapius, the ancient god of medicine and healing.

The SIU HealthCare version of the logo includes a tagline: “Exceptional Medicine. Partners in Care.”

“Sharing a logo is important for us in order to create a consistent visual identity for the School and our physicians. Our goal is for our name and the SIU “brand” to be more recognizable, helping us achieve an effective public presence throughout the central and southern Illinois communities we serve,” said **J. Kevin Dorsey, M.D., Ph.D.**, dean and provost.

Read more about SIU HealthCare's new name — Page 21



Welcome Class of 2013

The annual White Coat Ceremony welcomed 39 men and 33 women — most from the southern two-thirds of the state — as the Class of 2013. The ceremony was held Aug. 13 in Carbondale, where the students began their medical training.

Dean and Provost **J. Kevin Dorsey, M.D., Ph.D.**, a 1978 graduate of the School, and **Doug Carlson, M.D.**, a pediatrician at Washington University, who is a 1984 graduate and president of the School’s Alumni Society distributed the white coats. The students also received a pin displaying the words “Compassion, Respect and Integrity” from the SIU Foundation.

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was **Gary Dunnington, M.D.**, professor and chair of SIU’s surgery department and the recipient of SIU’s 2008 Humanism in Medicine Award.

The white coat event is designed to establish a “psychological contract of professionalism and empathy” in medicine and is held at most U.S. medical schools.

LANDECKER MEMORIAL AWARD

Sarah Wells of Lincoln received a monetary award from the Hildegard C. Landecker, M.D., Memorial Endowment Fund at SIU.

Wells is the 27th recipient of the award, which is given annually to a freshman female medical student with high academic standing. She is the daughter of Barney and Maria Wells of Lincoln.

The Landecker fund was established in 1982 by the late Manfred Landecker, Ph.D., who was on the political science faculty at SIU Carbondale, in memory of his mother, who was a pediatrician.

For more information about In Brief, contact Nancy S. Zimmers, Public Affairs (nzimmers@siumed.edu) at 217-545-2155.

Memory and Aging Network expands

Three area providers have joined the Memory and Aging Network at the SIU Center for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders.

Memorial Hospital in Belleville, Community Resource and Counseling Center in Paxton and Human Service Center in Red Bud bring to 34 the number of provider sites for the Springfield-based center.

The network of physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, allied health professionals and nursing home staff work with SIU's center so patients can receive care locally instead of traveling to Springfield.

SIU Center for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders

217-545-7830

www.siumed.edu/alz/



Professor of Family and Community medicine Janet Albers, M.D., met with Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin and was his guest to hear President Obama's September address on health-care reform given to a joint session of Congress.

Mentor of the Year

Jeffrey W. Ripperda, M.D., of Murphysboro, has been named the "2008-09 Mentor of the Year" for his work as a volunteer mentor to SIU's first-year medical students in Carbondale.

The Class of 2012, selected him for the honor this spring. The medical student nominating Ripperda wrote, "He provides exceptional care and love for his patients. His wealth of life and cultural experience was evident in the room, connecting to patients across all backgrounds and ages. He always took the time to teach, review and prompt new diagnoses to consider, new areas to further my learning. I viewed the time I spent each week as time with a friend and true mentor who reminded me of why I'm pursuing the path that I am."

A family physician, Dr. Ripperda has been in practice since 2007 with Shawnee Health Service at Murphysboro Health Center.

Sixty-four physicians served as mentors during the 2008-09 school year. Dr. Ripperda was one of eight nominated for recognition.

Suicide: A major public health problem that can be prevented

About 30,000 suicides and about 600,000 attempted suicides are treated in hospital emergency departments in the U.S. each year. Even when the suicide attempt does not result in death, the individual and family suffer significant pain and anguish.

"Ninety percent of people who commit suicide have some kind of psychiatric disorder," says **Jeffrey Bennett, M.D.**, assistant professor of psychiatry at SIU.

"These suicides are often the result of a major depressive disorder that's recurrent. Another important risk factor for committing suicide for people who have a psychiatric disorder is the use of alcohol."

He says there is no formula for knowing if someone plans to attempt suicide, but some signs to watch for include withdrawal from their usual group of friends and family, difficulty mobilizing themselves for the usual activities and extended periods of work absence. Other signals might be job loss, divorce, separation from an intimate friend or acquaintance or loss of someone close.

Dr. Bennett advises family members or close friends to make sure an individual who might be thinking about suicide seeks treatment from their primary care physician or a mental health counselor. Or call 1-800-SUICIDE, a national helpline that is staffed 24 hours a day.

