



SIU President James E. Walker, Ed.D., met staff and students during his tour of the Medical School October 18. Above, Dr. Walker meets with Dean Carl J. Getto, M.D. and Edward Moticka, Ph.D. Right, he greets Springfield Mayor Karen Hasara.

SIU Welcomes New President

James E. Walker, Ed.D., became president of Southern Illinois University October 1.

“Dr. Walker has the leadership qualities and experience that are needed to guide SIU into the future. His professional accomplishments in higher education are most impressive, and we are excited to have him here and excited about the future of SIU,” said A. D. Van Meter, Jr., chair of the SIU Board of Trustees in announcing the appointment in July.

Dr. Walker, 58, has spent two decades in higher education administration, most recently at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), where he served as president for nine years. He began his higher education career as an assistant professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

A U.S. Navy veteran, Dr. Walker and his wife, Gwendolyn, have two grown daughters, Jamell and Jabrina.

Latino Fest

Latino cuisine, salsa dancing and a presentation on Latino culture were among activities highlighting “Latino Fest,” a series of events held this fall at the School of Medicine.

The four-week celebration was sponsored by the School’s *Latino Midwest Medical Students Association* and the *Students National Medical Association* as part of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

“Many employed in the medical profession are proud of their Hispanic

heritage, and these activities enable them to share a celebration of that heritage with the community at large,” says Jimmy Ruiz, second year SIU medical student, who participated in organizing the events.

Activities also included an informational exhibit in the main lobby of the School, and a Saturday night “Salsa Under the Stars” event organized by students that included a pig roast, music, dancing and other festivities.

Scooters Can Be Safe

Fold-up foot scooters are gaining in popularity as a fun, fast means of transportation. However, they’re also responsible for a growing number of injuries among young children, particularly those 14 years old and under.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, these foot-powered vehicles were responsible for nearly 9,500 injuries last year.

The injuries ranged from simple cuts and bruises to sprains, dislocations and compound fractures. David Rogers, M.D., associate professor of surgery

at the School, says half of these injuries can be prevented by following some simple safety precautions.

“The most important thing is to be sure children wear the appropriate protective gear, which at the very minimum includes an approved helmet, wrist guards, elbow and knee pads and proper shoes,” he notes. “Additionally, parents should make sure that the scooter itself is in proper working condition and that children use these vehicles only in smooth, paved areas.”

Dr. Rogers adds that parents also should be aware of the recommendation from the National Safe Kids Council® that children under eight years of age refrain from using these devices at all. “Likewise, older children and adults should be aware of their responsibility to use these in a fun and safe way,” he says.



Rural Health Reaches Out to Women and Seniors

The School of Medicine's Rural Health Initiative (RHI) has funded two new projects.

The Women & Children's FIRST project at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center in Mattoon received a \$30,000 grant to help promote mobile mammography in rural areas.

The grant, along with funding from nine area banks, has provided an 800-square-foot mobile van that travels monthly through a six-county area. The van brings health care to women who otherwise may not have access to life-saving mammograms and cervical cancer screenings.

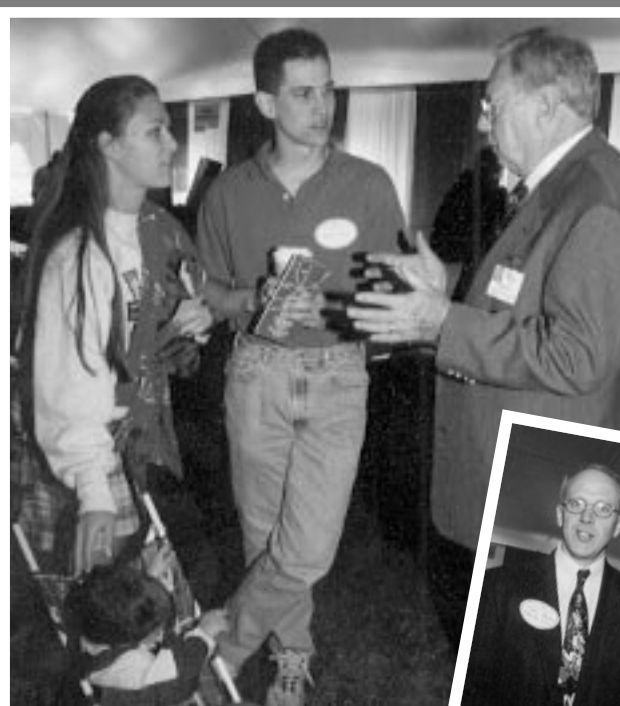
Affordable senior housing is the objective of Southeastern Illinois Residential Organization (SIRO), a not-for-profit organization in Olney, Ill., which has received three consecutive annual RHI grants totaling more than \$72,000.

SIRO has begun work on a 30-unit apartment complex for seniors needing assisted living services. Residents will have access to congregate meals, housekeeping, medication reminders, transportation and 24-hour assistance.

The complex is expected to be completed next spring. Richland Memorial Hospital initiated sponsorship of the project.

The project's most recent RHI grant was for \$25,000, which supported staff salaries and SIRO start-up expenses.

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, 217-785-2155 (office) or 217-785-0580 (fax) or e-mail Nancy S. Zimmers, director of public affairs, at nzimmers@siumed.edu.



Above, Frank Donnelly (right) of St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital, Inc. chats with '97 graduates Drs. Brian and Tracy Lewis. At right, Chris Kashnig of Christie Clinic Association and Alex Amante, M.D.



Doctors Fair Well

As part of SIU's ongoing commitment to help Illinois meet its need for physicians, the School of Medicine hosted the 20th Doctors Fair at the Springfield campus.

Approximately 25 Illinois health organizations met with medical students and resident physicians from SIU and other midwestern medical schools during the event. The fair was last held in 1997.

"For recruiters, the fair provides an opportunity to convince medical students and residents that their facility is the best place to start a medical practice," says John Record, assistant dean of rural and alumni affairs and coordinator of the fair. "Residents and students have the chance to learn about many different practice opportunities in a short period of time."