

## ICAHN Award Given to SIU Telehealth

The Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN) presented a new award honoring service to rural Illinois hospitals during its annual meeting on Tuesday, January 31, 2006 at The Inn at 835 in Springfield.

The first Partnership Award was presented by Pat Schou, ICAHN executive director, to the Telehealth Network and Programs at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and its director, Deborah Seale. SIU's Telehealth program provides the critical access hospitals in Illinois with teleconferencing connectivity for numerous meetings and educational training.

"Because our members are scattered across the lower half of the state, we had difficulty connecting which can have a significant bearing on how well and how often our network hospitals can connect to conduct meetings and share information. Small, rural hospitals simply do not have the staff to allow their people to be on the road for extended trips to meetings and educational sessions. Having the videoconferencing capability from SIU Telehealth has been and continues to be an indispensable service to the critical access hospital network and the communities they serve," said Schou.

Because its 51 members include small rural hospitals from Galena in the north, Metropolis in the south, Carthage in the west and Paris in the east, travel is a necessity and a hindrance. Because the SIU program can connect to 13 other video sites in downstate Illinois, rural hospital members have a statewide network they can regularly access.

"We simply do not know what we would do without SIU Telehealth because they have saved countless staff hours and money for our hospitals," she added. "In addition, Deborah Seale and the staff are a very professional, accommodating and a pleasure to work with. This Partnership Award comes with the thanks of our entire network of hospitals."

ICAHN is a collaboration dedicated to the success of rural health care in Illinois and focused on ensuring access to appropriate health care services for rural residents. The network allows them to share resources, access technical information and assistance, create benchmark measures for quality assurance programs, provide support and problem-solving opportunities, and plan advocacy activities. Its web site is: [www.icahn.org](http://www.icahn.org).