

Community

RMED Program helps students in rural communities

ROCKFORD - The University of Illinois College of Medicine has received a \$450,000 grant, which will provide preceptors and medical students in the Rural Medical Education (RMED) Program at Rockford access to the UIC academic computer system. The physicians, who teach and mentor RMED students in offices located in rural counties throughout the State of Illinois, will have access to full-text clinical information from online medical journals. Medical students in the RMED Program will further develop their computer skills for searching clinical and public health information related to their rural practice in Illinois counties.

"A major part of the RMED Program is giving students the opportunity to learn medicine in a hands-on manner in rural communities," says Michael Glasser, Ph.D., assistant director of RMED. "Fourth-year medical students spend 16 weeks living in and learning family medicine in rural communities. This grant will provide rural physicians with connectivity to UIC and the Internet, it will help bring their

practices up to date in relationship to computers."

Twenty-one Public Health Departments in 31 non-metropolitan and rural counties located in northwest, central, west-central and far southern Illinois will also participate. Public health professionals will learn to access National Library of Medicine databases and to search for information for local projects. Later, they will train others including high school or college students, who may become interested in health careers.

Faculty for the project are from the UIC College of Medicine Department of Medical Education, Department of Family and Community Medicine, UIC Library of Health Sciences, Illinois State University (Normal) and Western Illinois University (Macomb). The project team's goal is to join with Illinois rural health programs and agencies, and to eventually extend the project to other rural counties in Illinois.

The University of Illinois College of Medicine at Rockford

has served the Rockford area since 1971. The College of Medicine shares affiliations with all three Rockford hospitals and operates clinics in Rockford, Belvidere, Rockton and Mt. Morris. Our web site is www.rockford.uic.edu.