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Dermatology explores on-line teaching tool

As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words and IUSM students are echoing that sentiment -- thanks to an innovative teaching tool used in dermatology coursework. In fact, a survey of the first class exposed to the new on-line teaching tool showed rousing approval with 95 of students recommending that other courses provide materials on the Internet.

One of the challenges of teaching the classroom portion of dermatology to second-year medical students is teaching them to recognize skin conditions and diseases. The students need to see quality images of diseases and conditions, but the cost of producing enough photographs of each is prohibitive. Photocopies are not as precisely detailed.

With that in mind, **Antoinette Hood, MD**, put on her thinking cap and decided to utilize the benefits of modern technology. In so doing, Dr. Hood believes she has developed a comprehensive and unique teaching tool.

In 1997, Dr. Hood had students assist her with the creation of a compact disk with 100 photos of skin conditions and diseases. It was intended as a teaching tool, but there were some limitations, such as an inability to track which students were using the CD. That's when she became aware of a new computer program, WebCT.

Using the images already created for the CD plus others from various sources available in teaching collections and on the Internet, Dr. Hood was able to expand the project into an interactive, on-line teaching tool with restricted access. The restricted access allowed her to link her program with high-quality images already on the World Wide Web. All students need to access the program is a computer and a password.

Access to photos and written lectures are not the only advantage to the teaching tool. Quizzes and tests can be administered after students review the on-line information. They also can study the information at

their own convenience and as many times as necessary. In other words, the classroom is always open to them, day or night, 24-hours a day.

The program also gave Dr. Hood the flexibility of tracking how many students are using the teaching tool and, best of all, grade the on-line tests for her. Since the final examination is an open book test, the students can take it at their convenience, which is a definite plus for medical students who have many demands on their time. Students also can test their comprehension of the subject with on-line quizzes before tests are administered.

Of course, there still are in-class lectures and other assignments, but Dr. Hood is optimistic she has discovered a gem of a way to help students grasp the complex world of dermatology. And, apparently her students agree.

BRIEFS

RMA news

After 23 years as head of the Riley Memorial Association Board of Governors, **Otto N. Frenzel III** has retired and handed the reigns to **C. Perry Griffith Jr.** Griffith's chairmanship officially began Nov. 18 following the annual RMA luncheon.

Each year at the luncheon, a Riley Hospital nurse is presented the Margaret Martin Nursing Award. This year's recipient was Connie Buran, DNS, RN. She is the clinical coordinator/disease management for children with multiple handicaps.

A 22-year veteran of nursing, Buran joined the Riley Hospital staff in 1993. Specializing in spina bifida and cerebral palsy, she has worked closely with children afflicted with the two conditions and their families.

Cancer Center

The IU Cancer Center has been accepted as a member institution of the Association of American Cancer Institutes.

AACI, an international organization of cancer centers, admitted the IU Cancer Center to its category of Comprehensive Cancer Centers.

Guidelines set for handling suspicious letters, parcels

Indiana University has issued guidelines for handling potentially dangerous incoming mail. The guidelines were prompted by the receipt of anthrax letter threats at various sites in Indianapolis and Bloomington during the month of October.

If a suspicious letter is received, the recipient should call 911 before opening the envelope or package.

Warning signs that a letter or parcel may be considered suspicious include:

- Excessive postage is affixed
- Incorrect titles are used
- Titles but no names are used
- Misspellings of common words
- No return address
- Visual distractions on outside
- Restrictive markings, such as "confidential"
- Handwritten or poorly typed address
- Excessive amount of sealing material
- Contents include a powdered substance
- Stains on the envelope

Additional information can be found at <http://www.indiana.edu/~mailsvc/whats.htm>.

Kenyan hospital experiences topic of presentation

The Medical Ethics and Humanities Seminar will host **Gary Mitchell, MD, and Gregory Gramelspacher, MD**, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 3, when they present "A Year in a Kenyan Hospital."

The program will be in Room 301 at the Medical Library. Lunch will be served. Seating is limited and reservations may be made by calling 274-4740 or by e-mail to jizukac@iupui.edu.

Holiday break sparks call for submissions

The final *Scope* newsletter of 1998 will be published Dec. 14. The holiday hiatus will continue until Jan. 18 when publication will resume.

Individuals or departments with news items for the December issue must submit them by 8:30 a.m., Monday, Dec. 7.

The deadline for submitting copy for the Jan. 18 issue is 8:30 a.m., Monday, Jan. 11.

Honors

Eugene Klatte, MD, is the recipient of the 1998 Gold Medal Award presented by the Radiological Society of North America. The award is the highest honor presented by the society and is presented annually to an individual who exemplifies unusual service to the science of radiology.

Michael Tsangaris, MD, clinical associate professor of pediatrics, received one of 10 Leaders in Excellence Awards from the Indiana Chapter of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Nov. 19. Dr. Tsangaris was nominated by his patients and is being recognized for providing excellent and compassionate care to people with cystic fibrosis.

Roberta Hibbard, MD, is the recipient of the 1998 Preventive Medicine and Public Health Award, one of the Tony and Mary Hulman Health Achievement Awards. The Hulman Awards were established to recognize Indiana's citizens and organizations who make major contributions in the fields of environmental health, geriatrics, preventive medicine or public health. Dr. Hibbard was recognized for her proactive education and research efforts for the prevention of child abuse.

Health care facts

One out of every nine Hoosiers work in Indiana's health care industry, which has an \$8 billion annual payroll, according to statistics from the Indiana Health Industry Forum.

Employees of the health care industry in Indiana enriched the state coffers by paying \$323 million in

individual income and sales taxes and by spending about \$4.6 billion on local consumer expenditures.

Last year, the National Institutes of Health provided IUPUI with \$58.9 million in research funds, primarily to IUSM, and also to the IU schools of Nursing and Dentistry, and the Purdue School of Science.

<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>
