

News Release

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IU Kokomo to host Howard County Science Fair

KOKOMO, Ind. — Jenna Powell knew nursing was her future career after she completed a Howard County Science Fair project in high school.

Now a sophomore in the Indiana University Kokomo School of Nursing, she said her project prepared her for the rigors of college, and showed her the high-quality science facilities available to her on the campus.

“I love science, and I love helping people,” she said. “When I take those two things, being a nurse is a natural fit. Once I figured out what I wanted to do, I decided to go to IU Kokomo, because it has an excellent nursing program.”

This Saturday, the campus will once again host the annual science fair in the Kelley Student Center. Howard County’s future nurses, doctors, scientists, and researchers will present their projects to judges, to earn cash scholarships and other prizes. The fair is a partnership between IU Kokomo and Haynes International, for middle and high school students.

Christian Chauret, dean of the School of Sciences, said the campus and students both benefit from the fair.

“The students learn how interesting an applied science can be, and get a sense of accomplishment from completing their project,” he said. “The fair also connects IU Kokomo to middle and high school students. They meet our sciences faculty members, who volunteer as judges, and it showcases our campus. This is a great service to the community.”

Junior division projects are open for public viewing from 1 to 3 p.m., while the top 10 senior projects are judged a second time, for award placement. Awards are at 3 p.m. in Kresge Auditorium. In 2012, top award winners took home more than \$4,000 in prizes, donated by area businesses.

Powell had not thought about a career or a college when she completed her project, comparing solutions used to clean produce before consumption. She developed a hypothesis, tested effectiveness of cleaners, and wrote a report summarizing her findings. She placed in the top 10 at the county science fair, and also won regional science fair awards.

“It was a great hands-on way to use the scientific method,” she said. “I also learned about correct format for a research paper, and how to present my research effectively. It really helped me in all of my classes. I had to be self-motivated to find the answers for myself, rather than a teacher giving them to me.”

These skills have served her well at IU Kokomo, where she works as a tutor in microbiology and anatomy, which was one of her favorite classes.

“Anatomy has been my really strong background,” she said. “I like studying the functions of the human body. I excelled in the class, and I enjoy helping other students understand it.”

Powell enjoys the close connections she has made with faculty in nursing and sciences, and appreciates that they care about student success.

“I like the faculty,” she said. “They are really caring, and they want you to understand the material and succeed in class and in your career.”

She said science fair is a great experience even for students who do not choose science careers.

“It’s a chance to dig deeper into your own idea,” she said. “It may show you science is your calling, but even if it doesn’t, it is a great growing and learning experience. Participating in science got me to where I am today.”

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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