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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Red Cross intern Jenny Ritter, left, helps student Ashley Miller register for a blood drive at IU Kokomo.

## Psychology student organizes campus blood drive

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — With blood donations reaching a critical low, one Indiana University Kokomo student makes a difference — with help from her campus community.

A blood drive organized by American Red Cross intern Jenny Ritter brought in 18 units of blood, at a time of year donations typically decrease because of vacations and summer activities.

“I was pleased we were able to get such a good response,” said Ritter, a senior from Tipton. “It exceeded our expectations. We are thankful to everyone on campus who rolled up a sleeve and gave.”

She planned the drive with Toni Fox, donor recruitment representative, who said every unit collected is important and needed.

“Our patients don’t take a vacation from needing blood, but during the summer months, about two fewer donors give at each drive than what we need to provide for our patients,” Fox said. “Jenny’s leadership helps the Red Cross fulfill its responsibility to ensure blood is available to patients, whenever and wherever it is needed.”

In addition to learning professional skills from her internship, Ritter also gained a new respect for the American Red Cross, and the services it provides.

“Willingly donating blood is something only humans can do, and it saves lives,” she said. “That’s a pretty awesome thing we can do for one another. I had volunteered with blood drives in high school, but this was a whole other level of responsibility. I learned how much work goes into planning and hosting a blood drive, and more about specifically what it is like to be in a helping profession.”

Ritter also may earn scholarship money, through the Love. Give. Life. Summer Youth Program. It awards scholarship money to students ages 17 to 24, based on blood units collected at blood drives they organize.

Ritter said her internship, which she gained through the Office of Career Services, is good preparation for her future career working with veterans.

“It’s broadened my view of the Red Cross, and the services they provide,” she said. “I’ve learned in psychology classes that you don’t offer therapy immediately after a traumatic event or disaster, because people have other, immediate needs to consider, like shelter and medical care. The Red Cross is huge in stepping in that middle area between disaster and therapy, and I have a greater appreciation for what they can do.”

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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