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## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Allen Safianow receives the Jacob Piatt Dunn Jr. award for his article about the Ryan White Oral History Project.

## **Ryan White oral history project is focus of free IU Kokomo lecture**

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — Nearly 30 years ago, a teenager’s fight to attend public school, despite having AIDS, put Kokomo in the national spotlight.

Allen Safianow, Indiana University Kokomo professor emeritus of history, and Judy Lausch, a retired Howard County public health nurse and faculty member, will talk about how this story continues to resonate in the community, in “The Ryan White Oral History Project and the Development of Universal Precautions.” The free lecture is on Tuesday, March 25, at 7 p.m., in the Kelley Student Center, Room 130. A reception will take place before the lecture at 6:30 p.m.

Safianow and Lausch were part of a team that interviewed more than 20 people who played key roles during White's efforts to attend classes at Western Middle School, after he acquired the AIDS virus through an injection of Factor VIII, part of his treatment for hemophilia.

"We will be discussing the challenges and values of oral history as an important means of gaining a fuller understanding of complicated and controversial events," said Safianow. "An oral history is a way of providing voices from many different perspectives, perhaps to go a little deeper in some aspects than the media was able to do at that time."

Lausch will address Western School Corporation's efforts to develop and implement universal precautions, or ways to prevent people from coming in contact with bodily fluids, once courts determined it was safe for White to attend school.

"Western was forced to develop strategies to deal with this situation, and was one of the pioneers in the area of universal precautions," Safianow said. "This is one of the many nuances of this story."

White and his family later moved to Cicero, where he attended Hamilton Heights High School. He died April 8, 1990, at age 18.

Safianow was honored by the Indiana Historical Society for an article he wrote about the impact White's fight to go to school had on Kokomo. The Howard County Historical Society received the 2012 Indiana History Outstanding Project Award for the oral history project, which can be examined at the Seiberling Mansion, 1200 W. Sycamore St., Kokomo.

Lecture sponsors include the Department of Sociology, History, and Political Science, the History and Political Science Club, and the Office of University Advancement.

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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