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**For immediate release
News from the University of Southern Indiana**

Randolph County, Steeleville, Illinois resident to graduate from University of Southern Indiana with high honors

Janice Esker, a resident of Steeleville, Illinois, will be among the 1,675 degree candidates who will be graduating from University of Southern Indiana on Saturday, May 6, 2006 at Roberts Stadium in Evansville. She will graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in biophysics, magna cum laude, in the Pott College of Science and Engineering. She has a 3.9 grade point average. She is a finalist for the President's Medal, the highest award given to a graduating senior for academic excellence and service to the University.

She attended USI as a Deans Scholar and as a Nonresident Top Scholar. She also received the Judy Benedict Hightower Memorial Scholarship

Esker is a member of Sigma Zeta Honorary Science and Math Fraternity, an Impact Ministries student volunteer, and a volunteer for Orientation, National Down's Syndrome Buddy Walk, the annual Alumni Picnic, the Evansville Half Marathon, Deaconess Hospital, and she served as a judge for the Tri-State Regional Science and Engineering Fair.

Esker enjoys competing for the USI DiscJockeys Ultimate Frisbee team, and she is active in volleyball and softball intramurals.

She is a member of the Biology Club, Indiana Academy of Science, and American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics. She served as a supplemental instruction leader and a student member of a search committee for a faculty position. She was consistently on the Honor's List and made Who's Who Among Students.

She did independent molecular biology research for USI Research, Innovation, Scholarship, and Creativity (RISC) Showcase, Indiana Academy of Science, and the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Last summer she assisted a Vanderbilt University professor with research, and next year she will complete a research laboratory fellowship at the National Institutes of Health on topics related to virus and infectious diseases. She plans to apply to a Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) at an accredited U.S. medical school after that year. Her career goal is to be a physician and a public health laboratory scientist. At some point in her career, she hopes to extend her practice and research efforts to underdeveloped countries.

She is the daughter of Mary and Tony Esker and a graduate of Steeleville High School in Randolph County in Illinois.