

For immediate release
News from the University of Southern Indiana

Berger Award given to USI faculty member in College of Nursing and Health Professions

The program director of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at the University of Southern Indiana is this year's recipient of the Sydney L. and Sadelle Berger Faculty Community Service Award.

Susan G. Ahmad was recognized for her work with occupational therapists at St. Mary's Rehabilitation Hospital and high school and elementary school-age children during National Back Pack Awareness Day. The program educated some 300 elementary school students and 35 Signature School students about the proper method to pack and wear school back packs to prevent back injuries. USI students in the occupational therapy assistant program helped with the training.

Ahmad also is a volunteer presenter of life skills training activities at Vanderburgh County Correctional Facility. She makes presentations two times per month and attendance, though voluntary, averages 30 men and 15 women per session. Lavon Wood, a medical educator in the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office, said Susan provides the participants with skills they can use now and when they are released.

Ahmad is a member of the Health South Advisory Board and participates in the Angel Blanket Project for Raintree Quilters Guild. The guild presents quilts to hospitals for bereaved parents of stillborn children.

Ahmad joined the faculty at USI in 2001. Before coming to USI, she was director of the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Missouri College and an occupational therapist. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Washington University in St. Louis.

The award, presented by the USI Faculty and Academic Affairs committee, was announced during the Honors Programs for the College of Nursing and Health Professions held in March. The award is presented yearly to acknowledge distinguished community service among faculty members. The recipient is given a plaque and a stipend.

The Sydney and Sadelle Berger Faculty Community Service Award is made possible by the Bergers' son Charles and his wife Leslie.