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IWU Student Accepted in National Marketing Competition

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- Illinois Wesleyan University senior Megan DeSerf is one of 32 college students from across the country that has been accepted to participate in the Direct Marketing Collegiate Institute.

The institute, which is conducted by the Direct Marketing Educational Foundation and sponsored by the Chicago association of the foundation, will be held Nov. 7-11 in Itasca, Ill.

DeSerf, a business administration major from Dalzell, Ill, is a 1998 graduate of Spring Valley Hall Township High School. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ted DeSerf, 320 Mine Shaft Rd., Dalzell.

Professors nationwide recommended their top students, who were screened by a committee of direct marketing practitioners. Students were evaluated based on their understanding of direct marketing, their resumés, writing abilities and their answers to judges' questions.

Fred Hoyt, associate professor of business administration at IWU, encouraged DeSerf to apply. He chose students who have enrolled in at least one marketing class and who are active in the American Marketing Association (AMA).

In addition to the AMA, DeSerf has been involved in the Illinois Wesleyan Panhellenic Council, the Economics Society, and the campus chapter of the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. She is a member of Egas, an honorary for senior women, and Omicron Delta Epsilon economics honorary.

"We have been fortunate enough to have an IWU student attend the seminar every year for the last 12 or 13 years," Hoyt said. "That's really impressive considering it is a national competition."

DeSerf will attend the week-long business seminar where direct-marketing professionals will conduct classes. The once-a-year seminar features classes with different speakers making presentations from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and in the evening there are small group sessions.

The four-day institute is an intensive business seminar in direct/interactive marketing taught by leading marketing professionals. In addition to an overview of direct/interactive marketing, there will be sessions on media (mail, telephone, electronic, catalogs); lists and database marketing; understanding the consumer/customer; offers and testing; creative, and business-to-business.

There will be an emphasis on e-commerce and the Internet.

Students will work on a case, have the opportunity to work on their resumes and get some tips on marketing themselves, and tour of the facilities of Experian, the event's corporate sponsor.

Experian enables organizations to find the best prospects and make fast, informed decisions to improve and personalize relationships with their customers. It does this by combining sophisticated and intelligent decision-making software and systems with some of the world's most comprehensive databases of information on consumers, businesses, motor vehicles and property. Through multi-channel delivery of its Web-based products and services, Experian enables its clients to conduct secure and profitable e-business and develop state-of-the-art customer relationship management (CRM) systems for communicating and building relationships with customers.

Experian is a subsidiary of GUS plc and has headquarters in Nottingham, U.K., and Orange, Calif. Its 12,000 people support clients in more than 50 countries. Annual sales are approximately \$1.5 billion.