

# Research group targets addiction

The metropolitan Detroit area has more than its share of problems related to drug and alcohol abuse.

The founders of the newly formed Addiction Research Institute of Michigan, the only one of its kind in the state, hope to bring that number down to size.

"There's nothing else like this in the state," said Institute director Dr. Eugene P. Schoener of Southfield. He is associate professor of pharmacology in family and community medicine at Wayne State University.

"Over the next five years, we hope to build this into a nationally recognized, multidisciplinary center for addiction studies," he said.

WITH THE COOPERATION of the WSU faculty and administration, the Michigan Office of Substance Abuse Services and the Detroit Health Department, the Addiction Research Institute formed at the university in April. Now, with its research program well under way, the Institute is moving into its new headquarters on Wayne State's medical campus.

Joanne Sobock of Farmington Hills is coordinator of the Institute and Dr. Antonia Abbey of Ann Arbor, an assistant professor of community medicine at Wayne, is assistant director.

Schoener said the institute will study policy, prevention and treatment.

"Policy deals with environmental factors that control use of mood- and mind-altering substances," he explained. "For example, we have a natural experiment going on right now with the increased costs because of the recent liquor tax increase. We want to know if such an increase has a measurable effect on the use and therefore the detrimental consequences of drinking — cirrhosis, highway deaths, drownings, and so on."

THE INSTITUTE is studying policy with the help of a contract from the Michigan Office of Substance Abuse Services.

On the prevention side, Abbey is heading a pilot study focusing on early elementary school education.

"The program we are evaluating builds kids' self-esteem and their resistance to peer pressure. These skills should help them to resist the abuse of alcohol or drugs as they get older," she said.

"Attitudes about alcohol and chemical abuse are developed by the age of 6, suggesting that we really have to bring prevention programs into the lower grades," Dr. Schoener added. "It is our hope to follow kids who have gone through this program to see if it really affects their behavior as adolescents."

WITH THE BUREAU of Substance Abuse Services of the Detroit Health Department, the institute will provide a service and research program in the city.

"This is a community-based prevention project," Dr. Schoener said. "Public health consultants will work with community groups to foster their own initiatives and develop community strength to resist substance abuse problems."

Institute organizers have already contacted researchers at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University to collaborate on future Institute studies. They especially encourage Wayne State faculty to become involved in the program, adding that funding may be available to help with the research.

Further information about the Addiction Research Institute should be directed to the institute's new address, 1368 Scott Hall, 540 E. Canfield Ave., Detroit 48201, or phone them at 577-1388.

# Competition still open

Michigan teachers interested in involving their students in the statewide Governor's Environmental Youth Awards competition still have a few more weeks to submit enrollment cards to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

DNR Public Affairs Offices, which administer the program, has extended its original Dec. 2 deadline to Dec. 20 for all project enrollment cards. Other program deadlines will remain as previously

stated.

The Governor's Environmental Youth Awards, initiated by Gov. James Blanchard, is geared toward promoting environmental education among Michigan's youth. The department sent program applications to public and private schools throughout the state in November.

"Late" is the 1985-86 program theme. Competing groups are to develop and implement projects dealing with water conservation or management in their communities.

Projects can range from cleaning area lakes and streams to seeking solutions to environmental problems through the local political system.

Students enrolled in Michigan schools, grades K-12, are eligible to compete in the Environmental Youth Awards. Program coordinators say the deadline extension will serve as an incentive for more teachers to consider involving their students in the first annual competition.

All program entries

will receive specially designed DNR arm patches; regional finalists will receive commemorative award ribbons. The three top groups will be presented first place awards by the governor during the "World Conference on Large Lakes" May 18-21 at Mackinac Island.

More information about the Governor's Environmental Youth Awards competition can be obtained from DNR Public Affairs Offices, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing 48909, phone, 517-373-1214.

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