



# News Release

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## **WESTERN STUDENTS PRESENT AND PERFORM AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**St. Joseph, Mo.** —Dec. 5, 2005—Eight Missouri Western State University students recently presented a workshop at a national conference on student health issues and peer education programs for colleges and universities in Orlando, Fla. The students are part of an improvisational theatre group on campus.

At the conference, the improvisational group presented skits and monologues, and held question and answer and audience participation segments on topics such as date rape, alcohol awareness, low self-esteem and relationships.

“The feedback on the presentation was phenomenal,” said Dr. Tim Crowley, Western counselor who accompanied the group. “It’s a powerful medium to get across tough information and they do it really well.” He said several colleges and universities approached the group about not only performing on their campuses, but also training their students.

Mignon Wilkins, a senior from Kansas City, Mo. and the head of the improvisational team, said she was a little surprised at the audience reaction to their group’s monologues. Many cried and came up after the presentation wanting to talk with them. “The monologues touched people in a way I never realized.”

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Along with Wilkens, the following students attended the conference: Jasmine Thomas, sophomore speech and theatre major from Kansas City, Mo.; Sarah Ambriz, junior psychology and Spanish major from Kansas City, Mo.; Brittney Kelley, junior nursing major from Kansas City, Mo.; Terrell Lane, sophomore business major from St. Louis, Mo.; Brent Matthews, senior business major from Rushville, Mo.; Mallory Paines, junior elementary education major from St. Joseph, and Alisha Tanner, freshman speech communications major from Kansas City, Mo.

Dr. Crowley said the improvisational theatre group is part of Western's peer education component, which also is comprised of peer counselors and a student speakers bureau. The improvisational theatre group often performs in area elementary, middle and high schools.

"All three groups are driven by students' motivation and desire to help and serve others. They get to help people and they gain great leadership and communication skills," said Dr. Crowley. "It's great to see students serving students."

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*Missouri Western State University is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The university offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.*