



# News Release

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## **WESTERN STUDENT SELECTED FOR RESEARCH PROGRAM**

**St. Joseph, Mo.** —May 25, 2006—Amanda O’Dell wants to conduct research on adolescence and body esteem to help find solutions to childhood obesity, and the psychology major at Missouri Western State University will have an opportunity to do that this summer. O’Dell was one of 10 students selected nationwide to participate in a six-week intensive developmental psychology research program at Buffalo State College (BSC) in Buffalo, N.Y.

The program, funded by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, includes one-on-one research with a BSC psychology faculty member, two courses for college credit, and research rotations at several area agencies. O’Dell will also participate in workshops on applying to graduate school, career preparation and research ethics. When she returns to Western as a senior this fall, she will continue the research, at least nine hours per week, with Dr. Teddi Deka, associate professor of psychology, serving as her faculty mentor.

Dr. Deka encouraged O’Dell to apply for the program. “We were really excited,” said Dr. Deka. “She’s a really good student. I thought this would be a good opportunity for her because she’ll get a lot of research experience.”

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“Of course I’m excited about taking an advanced course in statistical methods and attending all the workshops,” said O’Dell. “But I think the best thing I will take away from this experience is knowing that I can handle moving across the country and being completely on my own in a new and challenging environment.”

O’Dell’s research on campus will be conducted as part of her independent research in Western’s honors program, and that program will pay her transportation costs to and from Buffalo.

O’Dell, currently the president of Western’s chapter of Psi Chi, the national honor society for psychology; and an officer in the psychology club, plans to attend graduate school after graduating from Western and earn a doctorate in developmental psychology. “Ultimately, my goal is to teach at the college level and to continue my research at a small to mid-size college or university – just like Missouri Western. I hope I can make Western proud through my research pursuits.”

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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.*