



# WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES Spokane Snapshot

*The University's Health Sciences Campus*

The Washington State University Health Sciences Spokane campus was created in 1989 and is one of five campuses that make up the Washington State University system. Located in Spokane's University District, WSU Spokane offers degrees leading to careers in pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences, biomedical sciences, nursing, healthcare administration, speech pathology, audiology, dietetics, exercise, and soon, medicine.

Although more than 90 percent of the WSU students on campus study in the health sciences, WSU Spokane also offers advanced degrees for K-12 teachers and administrators, as well as graduate degrees in criminal justice.

In recent years, WSU Health Sciences Spokane has expanded significantly, due in part to the University's commitment to the health sciences in Spokane and also to intense community support. The campus has

seen considerable investment in new research equipment and facilities, growth in the number of biomedical researchers and doctoral students, and an increase in the number of students studying for professional healthcare practitioner degrees.

Community support and collaboration made possible two recent significant additions in medicine – the state legislative authorization for WSU Spokane to be the base for the state's second public medical school, and the construction of the Spokane Teaching Health Clinic. The new College of Medicine is working on creation of the M.D. program, and the teaching health clinic is a partnership with Providence Health Services and the Empire Health Foundation, and is the site for most medical residents in eastern Washington to do their post-graduate training as well as an opportunity for all healthcare-bound students on campus to learn to care for patients in healthcare teams.

# Research Snapshot

## Cancer

A number of researchers are making progress on this front. Most recently, the NIH funded a Spokane research study to find out how genetic differences affect our risk of contracting tobacco-related cancers.

## Chronic Illness

With funding from the National Institutes of Health, a researcher in Pharmaceutical Sciences is studying a molecule with anti-inflammatory properties found in green tea as a potential new approach to combating rheumatoid arthritis, a chronic inflammatory condition that affects the joints and surrounding tissues.

## Mental Health & Addiction

Researchers in Nursing and Medicine are working on NIH-funded projects to help Native Americans deal more effectively with mental health problems and addiction among youth.

## Natural Products & Drug Interactions

Do natural products such as St. John's Wort and green tea interact negatively with commonly used drugs? A pharmaceutical scientist is part of a multidisciplinary, multi-institutional study under way to find out. The team is funded by the NIH's National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health.

## Sleep and Performance

Researchers from the WSU Sleep and Performance Research Center have developed a new way to measure alertness in drivers through steering wheel movements. Their recently patented technology may lead to the development of an early detection system for drowsy drivers.

