

ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR



Dr. Penelope J. Hitchcock is one of the world's most respected and knowledgeable experts on Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD).

Dr. Hitchcock is the acting branch chief of the STD branch of the National Institute of Health of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in Bethesda, Maryland.

In addition to her appearance for the Commencement ceremony, she has made

a commitment to share her STD information with health and science officials as well as the public in three appearances while in Yakima.

On June 11 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. she will tour local clinics and agencies dealing with STDs. On June 12 from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, she will participate in "Clinical Research Update," a medical staff education with all medical staff from area hospitals.

Following the Update, at 9:30 to 11 a.m., she will be featured in a forum for the general public. "STDs Future Challenges for Science, Medicine and Community" is free and no registration is required. Dr. Hitchcock will present the national STD perspective and concerns with a local reaction panel.

"It is fitting that YVCC should honor this very gentle but serious scientist in a year when all of America and the world has finally begun to take seriously the impact of disease in our health care, social and educational arenas," said Mary Kowalsky, Women's Program director, friend and mentor of Dr. Hitchcock. "When Penny was at YVCC in 1970-72, she was assured by Dorothy Prior, niece of the YVCC founder Elizabeth Prior, that her interest in science was attainable."

"I am deeply honored by this award. It is significant that it comes from the very community college where I was urged to pursue my interest in science. Within the STD Branch, my work has focused on the control and prevention of STDs through the development and implementation of a national STD research program," said Dr. Hitchcock.

Dr. Hitchcock earned a bachelor of arts degree from Central Washington University in 1975; a doctorate of veterinary medicine at Washington State University in 1979; and a master of science from WSU in 1980. Her professional career has always been in science, especially research. She is a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Society for Microbiology and the Phi Zeta Honor Society. Her numerous speaking engagements and publications have reached audiences throughout the United States and Canada.