Belleville resident Alexandra Vecchio, a senior at Loyola University Chicago, received the Lincoln Academy Student Laureate Award.

Vecchio plans to graduate in May with a double major in environmental studies and sociology and a minor in management.

A 2009 Summa Cum Laude Graduate of Belleville Township High School East, Vecchio was inducted into the Golden Key International Honor Society, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit Honor Society and Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociology Honor Society.

She is co-president of the Student Environmental Alliance at Loyola University and is Director of Sustainability with Loyola University Student Government. She also serves on the executive board of Habitat for Humanity and is assistant manager of the Loyola University's Farmer's Market and Recycling Program.

The Lincoln Academy ceremony was Nov. 3 at the Old State Capitol building in Springfield, followed by a luncheon at the Governor's Mansion.

Each year an outstanding senior from every four-year university and college in Illinois is chosen for overall excellence in curricular and extracurricular activities to receive the Lincoln Academy Student Laureate Award. A total of 52 students are selected to receive this honor that exemplifies the values and virtues of President Lincoln.

Each recipient receives a medallion, a certificate of merit and scholarship.

Alexandra is the daughter of Pat and Dale Vecchio of Belleville.

The Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Bruce Rotter as dean of the SIU School of Dental Medicine in Alton. His appointment is effective Nov. 9.

"Searches for highly qualified deans are extremely competitive, and we were fortunate to have our most qualified candidate already on campus," SIUE Interim Provost Ann Boyle said. "Dr. Rotter possesses the range of experience in education, research, service and administration to guide the School of Dental Medicine as it continues to excel."

Rotter said he is excited about the challenge.
"The dental profession is encountering changes and challenges at a rapid pace, including rapidly evolving materials and technology, regulatory concerns, and access to care and workforce issues," Rotter said. "It is imperative that the dental school curriculum remain contemporary. It must be proactively assessed and revised based on the demands of the profession and the marketplace."

A Glen Carbon resident, Rotter was associate dean for Academic Affairs for seven years prior to serving as interim dean since June 2011. He joined the School of Dental Medicine faculty previously as an assistant professor in 1993, was named associate professor in 1997 and a professor in 2009. During that time frame, Rotter created and administered one of the first implant fellowship training programs in the country. That program led to the creation of a freestanding implant clinic, which he designed, helped develop and directed.

Nancy Tate, executive director of the League of Women Voters, will be a guest of McKendree University's 2012-13 Distinguished Speaker Series at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 27.

The event at the Hettenhausen Center for the Arts is free and open to the public.

Tate leads the non-partisan organization that encourages informed and active citizen participation in government. In keeping with the League's 92-year-old tradition, volunteers registered tens of thousands of new voters for the 2012 election.

From 1994 until accepting the top staff position at the League, Tate was the chief operating officer of the National Academy of Public Administration, an independent, nonprofit organization examining the emerging issues of governance to improve its effectiveness at all levels. Previously a senior administrator at a management consulting firm, she also worked in the Department of Energy, Department of Education and the Office Economic Opportunity. She is an elected member of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Tate is a guest of the Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellows program, which brings Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, prominent artists, business leaders and other non-academic professionals to campus for informal discussions. She will be at McKendree for three days to take part in classroom discussions.