

# SIUE

THE MAGAZINE FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE ALUMNI & FRIENDS  
**FALL 2024**



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE**



# Meet

EDDIE THE COUGAR



**Discover the heart of Eddie!**

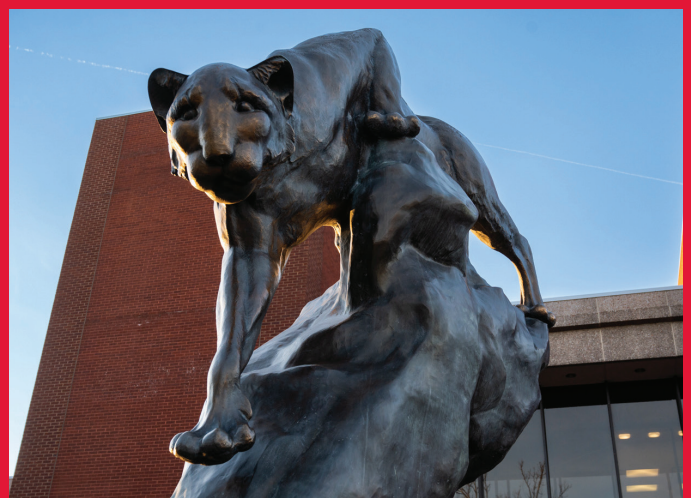
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## ***Greetings from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville!***

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I introduce this edition of SIUE Magazine. As we reflect on the past year, I am inspired by the achievements and milestones of our alumni, students, faculty and staff. This magazine is a testament to the enduring spirit of excellence and innovation that defines SIUE.

In this edition, you will find stories that celebrate the strides we have made as a university community. This past year, SIUE launched new initiatives aimed at enhancing our academic programs, expanding our research capabilities, and fostering a more inclusive and supportive campus environment. Our feature articles provide insight into these initiatives and the dynamic individuals driving them forward.

As you turn the pages of this magazine, I hope you feel a deep sense of pride associated with being an important part of our SIUE community. Our institutional ambition can only be realized with the engagement and support of alumni and friends.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to SIUE. Together, we will continue to build on our legacy of excellence and position the next generation of graduates to own tomorrow.

With warmest regards,

JAMES T. MINOR, PHD  
*Chancellor*

## ***Welcome to the first edition of the new SIUE Magazine!***

It is my pleasure to introduce our theme: "Everything Under the Sun." This issue highlights the diverse and exciting summer programs we host to inspire future Cougars to explore their interests at SIUE.

From innovative summer programming and community impact to campus initiatives and athletic achievements, there is truly something for everyone. Our goal is to keep you informed, involved and invested, showcasing the vibrant energy that defines our SIUE community.

We are committed to ensuring that your bond with SIUE remains strong and that you have access to information, resources, events and networks that enrich your personal and professional life.

We also want to hear from you! Your ideas and feedback are invaluable in helping us shape the future of our Alumni Association. Whether it's a suggestion for a new program, a way to improve our outreach or simply a story you'd like to share, we are eager to listen.

Thank you for being an essential part of the SIUE family. Together, we can continue to build a community that celebrates our past, empowers our present, and inspires our future.

**GO COUGARS!**

CATHY TAYLOR '15  
*Associate Vice Chancellor for University Advancement  
Executive Director of Alumni and Donor Relations*



# EVERYTHING UNDER THE

# Sun

*Each summer, SIUE welcomes more than 1,000 students from kindergartners to seniors in high school through a multitude of summer programming.*

*“These students not only bring energy and enthusiasm to our campus, but their presence represents a crucial connection to the community and most importantly, allows them to see themselves on a college campus,” said SIUE Chancellor James T. Minor, PhD. “These future SIUE scholars – and I say that with intention – begin to understand their educational purpose through early access to us. What a wonderful beginning to an educational career.”*

SIUE is preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals and engineers through its innovative summer programs, including IMAGINE Summer Success Academy and the Engineering Summer Camp. These initiatives enable high school students to see what it’s like to study at SIUE and pursue nursing and engineering as professions.



*A student listens to a computerized patient under the watchful eye of Ann Reed, RN, MSN, PhD.*



*Campers collaborate on a robotics project in the Engineering Summer Camp.*

## IMAGINE SUMMER SUCCESS ACADEMY

The School of Nursing welcomed 30 high school students and soon-to-be college students this summer to its transformative summer camp that introduces them to the possibilities of a nursing career and to higher education.

“The camp introduces underrepresented students to a nursing career through hands-on activities, familiarizes them with SIUE and connects them with peers from different schools who have similar ambitions,” said Myjal Garner, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, assistant professor in the School of Nursing.

The immersive program included simulation stations and CPR training, which allowed participants insight into the demands of a nursing career. Students learned the joy of mentoring and the importance of peer networking in navigating the complexities of higher education.

“I gained many new memories and experiences that will help guide me in my future,” said recent high school graduate Jane Turner. “I felt so welcomed by all the staff, participants and those on campus.”

## ENGINEERING SUMMER CAMP

The School of Engineering’s annual summer program attracts high school students passionate about STEM fields. Under the guidance of Chris Gordon, PhD, School of Engineering associate dean, 48 campers delved into the diverse disciplines of engineering, from 3D modeling to robotics, gaining hands-on experience and exposure to real-world challenges.

“Our campers leave with increased confidence in their problem-solving skills, more insight into which areas of engineering they are most interested in and a thirst for more engineering knowledge,” said Gordon. “We often see our campers return to pursue their engineering studies at SIUE.”

The camp evolves with current industry trends to ensure campers are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in the ever-advancing field of engineering.





Art Camp

# EVERYTHING UNDER THE

# sun



## SUMMER CAMPS

*Theater, writing and art ...  
engineering and science ...  
percussion, flute,  
band and jazz ...  
basketball, soccer and wrestling ...  
music technology  
and musical theater.*

SIUE faculty and staff share their expertise and love for learning through summer camps coordinated through the Office of Online Services and Educational Outreach. These camps are extremely popular and often welcome the same campers year after year. In fact, theater, art, musical theater and science camps sell out every year.



Performing Arts Camp

## PERFORMING ARTS CAMP

Students aged 7-17 enjoyed six weeks of artistic expression at the SIUE East St. Louis Center's annual Performing Arts Summer Enrichment Program. Performance training opportunities are offered in jazz, ballet and hip-hop dance with Katherine Dunham Technique influences, piano, keyboarding, trap drumming, bass guitar and voice. Camp includes lunch, field trips and daily enrichment classes and culminates in a well-attended concert and dance performance featuring the students.



Theater Productions

## THEATER PRODUCTIONS

This year's summer shows included the hilarious and heartfelt tale, "Junie B. Jones is Not a Crook," based on the best-selling book series by Barbara Park, and "Alice in Wonderland," a magical, tuneful and over-the-top entertaining musical for the whole family!





Theater Productions



Science Camp

## FREEDOM SCHOOL

A group of lucky kids spent six weeks falling in love with reading this summer at SIUE's inaugural **Freedom School**. The SIUE Institute for Community Justice and Racial Equity (ICJRE) hosted 50 students in grades 5-8 for the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program, an intergenerational, culturally competent summer program built on literacy, leadership and social advocacy.

"I thought that singing songs, cheers and chants was fun. I love the 'Tribe' chant, especially the part that goes, 'I love my Freedom School.' Harambee is the best part of Freedom School," said Kelsey Malone III.

"Harambee is a Swahili word that means 'all pull together,'" said Tandra Taylor, PhD, professor of history, and ICJRE interim director. "Our morning assemblies began with Harambee, a celebratory moment at the start of each day that affirms and honors Black people and cultures."

According to Taylor, Harambee included volunteers reading motivational children's books, singing Freedom Schools' official motivational song, "Something Inside (So Strong)" by Labi Siffre, and call-and-response-driven cheers and chants.



Freedom School volunteers lead the morning's Harambee.





Meet

THE **HEART** OF  
EDDIE THE COUGAR



Brandon Greenwald didn't set out to play the part of SIUE Athletics' mascot Eddie the Cougar. But he says he was in the 'right place at the right time.'

The first event of the 2023-24 school year he attended was the Bronze Boot soccer game between the Cougars and Saint Louis University at CITYPARK in downtown St. Louis. SIUE took home the Joseph Carezza Sr. Trophy for the first time in 41 years!

Greenwald's friend and classmate, J.D. Stone, was reviving SIUE Athletics' official student support group, the Red Storm, and wanted him to be involved. A theater major, Greenwald was working on a production of Little Women which was occupying much of his time.

Greenwald attended Cougar Madness, the official kickoff to the basketball season and jokingly asked what it took to play the part of Eddie. Luke Young, director of marketing and promotions, explained that the role was mostly filled.

"Two days later they had a need for a mascot and called me back," Greenwald recalled. He first suited up for the Edwardsville Halloween parade. Most mascot costumes are infamous for two things: being hot and smelly! But not Eddie.

"I got really lucky," he said. "It was about a month after the new costume arrived. It was about 30 degrees outside, and while everyone else was bundled up in their parkas, I was probably the most comfortable inside the costume."

Greenwald used his theater training and acting background to bring Eddie to life. Though he admitted it was a unique challenge to portray the mascot with only his movements and non-verbal interactions, he instantly felt proud to personify Eddie.

“ With mascots, like acting,  
you're playing a part.  
You just don't have any lines. ”

— **BRANDON GREENWALD, BA '24**  
*Eddie the Cougar, 2023-24*

In addition to working as Eddie, he helped J.D. bring back the Red Storm and organized support for Cougar athletics teams.

"I just wish I had done it sooner," Greenwald said. "I've never been prouder to be a student than when I was working with Athletics and helping to develop that culture. I'm excited to see where J.D. and everyone takes it. I know what SIUE can be."

Greenwald graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in theater performance. He now lives in Atlanta and is pursuing an acting career.

## New Cougar Logo Unveiled

The new Eddie the Cougar made his debut at Homecoming 2023. Eddie's makeover was part of a larger rebranding of SIUE Cougar Athletics and is a modernized version of the legendary cougar which symbolizes spirit and pride in SIUE.



The new Cougar logo was designed by former men's basketball player and assistant coach Kris Crosby, BS '06, MS '09, lead graphic designer in University Marketing and Communications. Two versions of the logo were put to a vote and more than 7,000 SIUE students, faculty, staff and alumni selected the new logo.







Tandra Taylor, PhD, interim director of the Institute for Community Justice and Racial Equity (ICJRE) and Dennis Mares, PhD, interim director of the Center for Crime Science and Violence Prevention (CCVSP), lead social and criminal justice programs at the Southwestern Illinois Justice and Workforce Development Center in Belleville, Ill.

## IMPROVING THE WAY JUSTICE IS DELIVERED

SIUE continues to add value to the St. Louis metro region—this time by strengthening evidence-based practices in criminal justice with a focus on violence reduction.

SIUE's new Center for Crime Science and Violence Prevention (CCVSP) at the Southwestern Illinois Justice and Workforce Development Center in Belleville, Ill., was approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in July 2023 and is the first of its kind in the region.

"The CCVSP creates new opportunities to partner with community organizations, local government offices and law enforcement agencies to provide research and training in support of a new initiative for social justice, crime reduction and violence prevention," said Jerry Weinberg, associate provost for research and dean of the Graduate School, who retired at the end of June 2024.

The CCVSP has already developed partnerships with regional agencies and organizations to provide a range of services, including grant development, data analytics, crime analysis, mapping, evaluation, research and more.

"The success of the CCVSP will translate into more opportunities for our students, staff and faculty to be involved in research, publications and relationships with the community at large," said Dennis Mares, PhD, interim director of the CCVSP and professor in the SIUE Department of Criminal Justice.

Mares is working with police departments and counties served by the CCVSP on several projects\* focused on the intersection of policing and technology.

- License plate readers, cameras and other surveillance tools are helping the Alton Police Department prevent crime and hold offenders accountable. The CCVSP is helping establish a real-time crime center and crime analysis portal that brings mapping capacity to the city and expands its commitment to public transparency.
- Expanded license plate reader technology and cell phone forensic software are helping the Collinsville Police Department improve investigative outcomes. The CCVSP is providing technical assistance, analysis of ongoing data collection, and a final evaluation detailing the impact on crime and investigative outcomes.
- East St. Louis and Alton Police Departments acquired and deployed body-worn cameras in preparation for the Illinois state mandate requiring body-worn cameras for all state agencies. The CCVSP is examining use-of-force statistics to determine if the cameras impact use of force and complaints against officers. Surveys of police officers and the public indicate wide-spread support for the program.

*\*Projects are supported by the U.S. Department of Justice. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, the U.S. Department of Justice or the U.S. Government.*

LEARN MORE | [siue.edu/ccsvp](https://siue.edu/ccsvp)



# COMMUNITY-ORIENTATED DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARS (CODES)

“This unique academic opportunity will prepare you to lead the communities you love and care about,” said SIUE Chancellor James T. Minor, PhD, as he welcomed the inaugural CODES cohort in fall 2022. “Those communities are waiting on you to emerge as leaders with the intellectual tools, social sensibilities and commitment required to solve real problems.”

In its third year, CODES is a competitive scholarship program for incoming first-year students who are Pell-eligible, first generation or historically underrepresented in their major. They are chosen to participate based on their commitment to making a difference in their communities. A novel general education pathway, CODES is grounded in community engagement, digital humanities and social justice.

“We realized that students flourish when they work in a team and conduct research with real implications,” said Jessica DeSpain, PhD, director of CODES, professor in the Department of English, and the co-director of the IRIS Center for Digital Humanities. “We brought that model into the general education curriculum for these standout scholars.”

The second CODES cohort, which started in fall 2023, worked with the Missouri Botanical Gardens to help the institution tell a more accurate, culturally sensitive story about its history of enslavement. CODES students studied the indigenous knowledge and cultural context underlying specimens in the Garden’s expansive collections and retraced the erasures of Black and Brown residents who lived in the area that is now Shaw Park.

“Projects like these help students become connected to a broader world and it helps them apply what’s happening in the classroom to that broader world and understand their place in it,” DeSpain said.

**The Mellon Foundation recently awarded SIUE a \$1 million grant from their Higher Learning Division to expand each CODES cohort from 25 to 100 students. The program will be utilized as a model for SIUE faculty fellows and a three-day training for visiting fellows from institutions across the country.**

“Every aspect of the program involves students working in research teams, thereby creating a tight-knit learning community. The students’ research addresses topics embedded within a community focus.”

— JESSICA DESPAIN, PHD  
Director, CODES

Professor, Department of English  
Language and Literature  
Co-director, IRIS Center for Digital Humanities

CODE Scholar Shelby Terrell from St. Charles, Mo., is majoring in computer science with a minor in music. “I’ve learned to work with others as a team. It’s nice to collaborate with people from other communities. I appreciate being able to work with minorities in CODES, because there aren’t a lot of minorities in computer science.”

Every aspect of the program involves students working in research teams, thereby creating a tight-knit learning community. The students’ research addresses topics embedded within a community focus.



Members of the second CODES cohort present their project results.





IN IT TO  
*Win it!*



Venessa A. Brown, PhD, joined SIUE in 1994 as an assistant professor in the Department of Social Work and spent the next 30 years in various capacities at the University before retiring in June.

“I wanted to leave as part of Athletics, and while I’m leaving the institution, my heart will always be in Athletics,” Brown said.

Brown's relationship with Intercollegiate Athletics began when she was invited to serve on the transition team while SIUE was transitioning to NCAA Division I status before the 2008-09 school year. After getting to know the coaching staff, specifically men’s basketball, she knew she wanted to do more.

The men’s basketball locker room was being renovated and plans included an academic mentoring center and study room. Brown saw it as the perfect opportunity to contribute and donated \$25,000 to support the renovation. The new space was officially named the Dr. Venessa Ann Brown Academic Mentoring Center.

“It really helped us during our transition,” Brown said. “The NCAA saw that faculty members were investing in our student-athletes and saw SIUE as a good model.”

Brown soon began joining the men’s basketball team on road trips. “I really felt a part of something,” she said. “From there I always looked out for Athletics.”

She then developed a faculty mentoring program which paired men’s basketball players with faculty members. The program expanded from men’s basketball to other SIUE sports and soon included both faculty and staff.

In March 2021, Brown took an official role in Athletics and was named the first Associate Athletic Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Athletics' Chief Diversity Officer. She has developed modules and led training sessions with coaches, staff

and student-athletes in DEI initiatives all while her **“In it to Win it”** mantra has permeated the department.

“Student-athletes who I don’t even know come in from the weight room or they see me coming in,” Brown said. “They say, ‘hey Dr. Brown! In it to Win it!’ I’m grateful because it’s an attitude.”

In 2023, the Dr. Venessa A. Brown “In it to Win it” Leadership Development Program was created with a goal of equipping student-athletes with essential skills and knowledge that will not only help them excel in their sports and academics but also thrive in the professional world. The program relies on financial support and participation from donors and community members, including Brown.



*Director of Athletics Andrew Gavin gifted Venessa A. Brown, PhD, a personalized Cougars chair of her own and announced an identical chair will remain in the arena in Brown's honor.*

Brown is a fixture at men’s and women’s basketball games inside First Community Arena, occupying the chair just down from the end of the Cougars’ bench, cheerfully serving as an unofficial greeter to many a Cougar fan.

At the department’s Red and Black Benefit in April, Director of Athletics Andrew Gavin gifted Brown a personalized Cougars chair of her own and announced an identical chair will remain in the arena in Brown’s honor.

**Your generosity can shape SIUE’s future in many meaningful ways.**

Every gift is a powerful investment that transforms the lives of current and future SIUE students. Learn more about how to make an immediate or lasting impact at [siue.edu/give](http://siue.edu/give).

**[siue.edu/give](http://siue.edu/give)**



# SIUE BASKETBALL



Ray'Sean Taylor, BS '24, KK Rodriguez, MSEd '23, and Desmond Polk, BS '24, returned to SIUE to finish their athletic careers and earn graduate degrees.



## LOYAL ALUMNI STILL AT HOME WITH SIUE BASKETBALL

Whether from injuries or other issues, student-athletes often miss a season of competition. Throw a global pandemic in the mix, where student-athletes were given an extra year of eligibility, and you have players who may play five, even six years or more in their respective sports. Student-athletes often complete their undergraduate education while maintaining athletic eligibility. Many elect to finish their eligibility at a different institution as graduate students. That's not the case when it comes to three SIUE student-athletes.

Women's basketball student-athlete KK Rodriguez, MEd '23, and men's basketball student-athletes Desmond Polk, BS '24, and Ray'Sean Taylor, BS '24, chose to return to SIUE to finish their athletic careers as graduate students.

In Polk's case, COVID-19 afforded him an extra year of eligibility. For Taylor and Rodriguez, injuries caused both to miss a season during their careers.

Rodriguez, currently an MBA student, was unsure if the NCAA would allow her another year of eligibility after playing in 10 games in 2023-24 before injuring a knee. Once the waiver was granted, Rodriguez knew she was coming back.

"I felt like I had unfinished business," Rodriguez said. "We have the pieces to be competing for an OVC championship and I want to get us there."

Rodriguez, a St. Louis native, transferred to SIUE from Tulsa before the 2022-23 season and credits Head Coach Samantha Quigley Smith, Assistant Coach Ariel Massengale and the program for helping her enjoy the game again.

"When I came here, I was able to discover my love for basketball again," Rodriguez said. "Coach Sam and Coach Ariel helped take me to a place I didn't think I could get to as a player."



Polk and Taylor, who are both working toward a master's in kinesiology with a specialization in physical education and coaching pedagogy, echoed Rodriguez's sentiments of loyalty.

"This is a home away from home," said Polk, who is originally from Milwaukee. "I have enjoyed being around Coach Barone so much over the years. I want to ride out my last year and enjoy it with the coach who recruited me and brought me here in the first place."

"It's a family atmosphere. Coach Barone is the one who believed in me first," said Taylor, who is from Collinsville. "I might put a lot of pressure on myself, but that's how I got to where I am. I want to win it for where I am from. I want to be a reason my city is on top."

"Every year we've gotten better and better," Polk added. "I really believe that this year is going to be the biggest year."

### Support SIUE Athletics | EMPOWER FUTURE CHAMPIONS

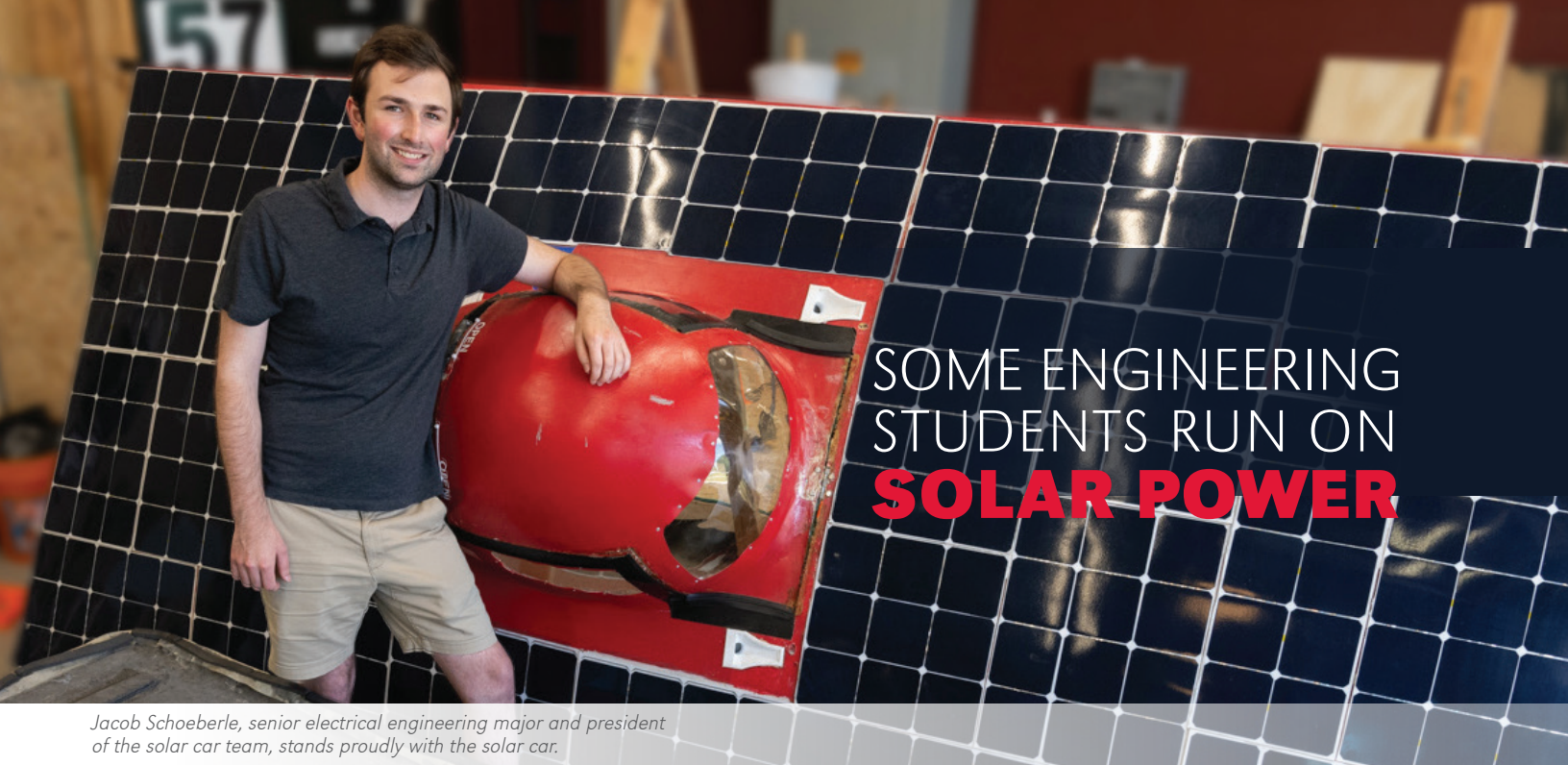
Your generous contributions as a member of the **Cougars Champions Fund** enable SIUE student-athletes to excel academically, athletically and personally as they represent the Cougars. Your gift plays a crucial role in allowing SIUE to progress and compete as the Metro East's Division I athletics program. Contributions provide student-athletes with uniforms, state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, team travel, top-tier coaching, academic support programs, and other essential resources.

**Together, we can ensure the continued success and growth of SIUE Athletics.**

- Learn more about supporting SIUE Athletics
- Join the Cougars Champions Fund
- Purchase tickets

[siuecougars.com/CCF](https://siuecougars.com/CCF)





## SOME ENGINEERING STUDENTS RUN ON **SOLAR POWER**

*Jacob Schoeberle, senior electrical engineering major and president of the solar car team, stands proudly with the solar car.*

The SIUE Solar Racing Team is celebrating its 20th year of soaking up the sun. Formed in 2004, the student-led team designs, builds and races solar-powered vehicles. Racing competitions allow vehicles to start with a fully charged battery pack and teams must rely on solar power once the initial charge is gone.

Electrical engineering alumna, Lisa Smith, '16, was on the solar racing team for three years. Today she works for Boeing as a level three engineering integration lead and is a product owner. Smith attributes her time on the solar car team as a catalyst for where her career is now.

"The hands-on experience with such a wide variety of materials and technology was something I could never have gotten elsewhere," said Smith. "The team was a key component in me being a reputable and experienced candidate for a job right out of college."

Involvement in student organizations allows students to develop valuable communication and leadership skills while being part of a team. For Smith, the teamwork and comradery enhanced her classroom education and elevated her career readiness.

"Teams would try to help each other as much as possible at the competitions," she recalled. "Advancing the technology as much as we could was the true purpose for the races."

For current team president Jakob Schoeberle, the solar racing team was one of the influencing factors when he chose SIUE.

A senior majoring in electrical engineering, he is leading the interdisciplinary team in its current build of a three-wheeled bullet, or mono car, which is much different from the cars the SIUE racing team has built in the past.

"These cars are designed to be as slim and long as possible to reduce the overall drag of the car," said Schoeberle. "The three-wheel design reduces the rolling resistance."

Each year, the solar racing team strives to push the limits of what is possible in high-performance, solar-powered vehicle design. The students consistently build impressive cars and have performed well at competitions over the years.

According to Timothy York, PhD, faculty advisor to the solar racing team, the most recent American Solar Challenge (ASC) survey shows that the SIUE team's annual budget is a fraction of what the average team spends.

"The team is constantly having to cobble together whatever they can from the limited resources available, and yet they've still been able to get a car to the competition over the years," York said. "I am in awe of the dedication of our team to make the build happen given the constraints."

SIUE was an important stop along the Electrek American Solar Challenge (ASC) in July. The 2024 ASC was an eight-day race from Nashville, Tenn., to Casper, Wyo. SIUE was chosen as a historic stop of the challenge and hosted the competing teams.

“  
The hands-on experience with such a wide variety of materials and technology was something I could never have gotten elsewhere.  
”

— LISA SMITH  
BS Electrical Engineering '16

SUPPORT THE SIUE SOLAR CAR TEAM | [connect.siu.edu/g/solar-car](https://connect.siu.edu/g/solar-car)



# BY THE *numbers*

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*SIUE Chancellor James T. Minor, PhD, welcomed Ed and Karen Grady back to campus.*

## ALUMNUS INVESTS TIME, TALENT, GOOD FORTUNE

Ed Grady, 1972 civil engineering alumnus and 2024 Honorary Doctorate recipient, believes education is key to individual success and societal growth. Ed is one of SIUE's most enthusiastic, involved and generous alumni. He originally became engaged with the SIUE Alumni Association, completed three-plus terms on the SIUE Foundation Board and currently serves on the School of Engineering Advisory Board. Ed has invested his time, talent and good fortune in raising the national profile of SIUE's programs, faculty and students.

"I valued my education at SIUE because the school offered both classroom and hands-on experience," Grady said. "This continues to be core to the engineering curriculum where much of the learning takes place in labs and through many of the student organizations and teams."

Originally Ed was reluctant to donate money to SIUE. He believed state supported schools didn't need private funding. But when he joined the School of Engineering Advisory Board, he learned that many of the exceptional things at SIUE were made possible by private investment.



Ed had some ideas to ensure the School of Engineering offered a well-rounded education relevant to current industry needs – he and his wife Karen have:

- Invested in the Fowler Student Design Center
- Established the Grady Student Innovation Loft
- Named facilities honoring two of Ed’s most inspiring professors
- Created a shared scholarship between the School of Engineering and the School of Business to support and encourage students with entrepreneurial skills and ambitions

“One of my key objectives for engaging with the School of Engineering was to encourage cooperation with the School of Business. Every engineer must understand basic business principles,” said Ed.

The Grady Entrepreneurship Scholarship has helped more than a dozen students reach their goals of succeeding in school and in their career. “This is the most rewarding aspect of being part of SIUE,” reflects Ed.

Ed and Karen have now chosen to name SIUE as the beneficiary of their Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Ed explains that naming his alma mater as the beneficiary works the same way as designating any other beneficiary, except for one very big difference – the plan funds will pass to SIUE completely tax-free.

Some would say an IRA is an ideal vehicle for tax-wise giving. An heir could pay up to 40% in federal estate taxes plus up to 20% in state estate taxes (depending on the state of domicile) on these tax-deferred assets, not to mention an heir would also be subject to ordinary income tax when taking money out of the IRA.

“It makes good sense to plan for the potential legislative changes in estate and gift tax exemptions in 2025,” suggests Ed. With the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 due to sunset on December 31, 2025, the individual lifetime estate and gift tax exemption is set to be reduced by more than half to \$5.6 million.

“We prefer to know and have some control over where our hard-earned remaining estate will go and believe direct donation is the most efficient way to do this,” said Ed. With this future gift, the **Grady Family Entrepreneurship Scholarship Fund** will likely grow by an additional \$3 million, tripling the number of students whose lives it will change.



*Ed Grady, '72, received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters and was hooded by Denise Cobb, PhD, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and Cem Karacal, PhD, Dean of the School of Engineering at the May 2024 Commencement.*

**Donors with taxable estates can use this unique window of opportunity to lock in as much of the current exemption (\$13.61M for individuals, \$27.22M for married couples) for both charitable estate planning and current giving. A donor can use their remaining lifetime annual exclusion in 2024 and 2025 (the amount of money or assets the government permits you to give away in your lifetime and in your estate without having to pay the federal gift tax) before it is potentially cut in half next year.**

*The IRS has agreed to honor gifts up to the current exemption level and not “claw back” those gifts into that individual’s taxable estate.*

**“In life, if you really want to be heard and make a difference, you cannot just advise, criticize and walk away — you must get engaged both personally and financially,” said Ed. “Every donation to the SIUE Foundation, small or large, makes a difference, and you can control how your donation makes that difference in ways you want and then see the results.”**





**GIVING TUESDAY** | DECEMBER 3, 2024

Help SIUE Athletics and our student-athletes achieve their goals with your support. Roll Cougs!

**ALUMNI WEEKEND** | JANUARY 10-11, 2025

Join fellow alumni for a weekend filled with memories!

- **SIUE Hall of Fame**  
FRIDAY, JAN. 10

Join us for a combined celebration as we recognize distinguished SIUE honorees with inductions into the SIUE Alumni Hall of Fame and the SIUE Athletics Hall of Fame! The prestigious group will be honored for their leadership, character, hard work and accomplishments!

[siue.edu/hof](http://siue.edu/hof)

- **Cougar Basketball Games and Reception**  
SATURDAY, JAN. 11

Cheer on the Men's and Women's Cougar Basketball teams as they face off against Tennessee Tech. Catch up with friends and fellow alumni at our annual Alumni Basketball Reception between the games!

[linktr.ee/siuealumni](http://linktr.ee/siuealumni)

**BLACK ALUMNI REUNION WEEKEND**

MARCH 28-30, 2025

Come home for Cougar Daze, the SIUE Alumni Association Black Alumni Alliance's 3rd Black Alumni Reunion Weekend! Celebrate the past, present and future of SIUE; reconnect with former classmates; meet new faces, reminisce and have an amazing time!

[linktr.ee/siuealumni](http://linktr.ee/siuealumni)



**ONE DAY, ONE SIUE** | APRIL 24, 2025

Mark your calendar for our fourth annual ONE DAY, ONE SIUE Reception at 6:30 p.m. on the Quad! Following last year's remarkable success, where we raised over \$2.2 million and brought together more than 500 alumni and friends, we're uniting once again to create new opportunities for SIUE students.



**ALUMNI AFFINITY GROUPS**

Our Alumni Affinity Groups unite alumni and friends through common interests, backgrounds, experiences and geographic ties. When you join an affinity group, you enter a vibrant community where belonging thrives. Join us today and be part of a community that celebrates what brings us together.

**Current Affinity Groups**

- Art Therapy Alumni Network
- Biological Sciences Alumni Network
- Black Alumni Alliance
- Chicago Chapter
- Music Department Alumni Network
- School of Dental Medicine Alumni Council
- School of Pharmacy Alumni Network
- Springfield Illinois Area Chapter
- St. Louis Young Professionals Network



**Do you want to start an SIUE Alumni Chapter or Network?**  
[siuealumni@siue.edu](mailto:siuealumni@siue.edu) | 618-650-2760

[siue.edu/affinity](http://siue.edu/affinity)





## FROM YOUR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Greetings Fellow Alumni!

My first year representing each of you as president of the SIUE Alumni Association has gone by in the blink of an eye. I have had the pleasure of meeting and/or reconnecting with many of you at such incredible events as Golden Graduation, One Day, One SIUE, the St. Louis City SC Soccer Game and Alumni Reception, and Cougars on the Move in sunny Jupiter, Fla. I am so thankful for our staff and volunteer board who tirelessly works to make these events successful. It is one of my goals as president to find ways to connect with each of our alumni across the globe and our growing number of Affinity Groups are making that more possible than ever before.

Do yourself a favor and take advantage of the programs and events we have to offer or, better yet, find a way to get involved yourself! As you can read in this issue, there are numerous opportunities to do just that.

So many great things are happening on campus as well. As a School of Pharmacy alum, I am especially excited to see the progress of the new Health Sciences Complex. Coming from the first graduating class of that program where we had nearly every class in the same classroom, it will be a huge addition to campus and will greatly enhance the interprofessional experiences of those who have the privilege of learning there. I hope you will make the time to revisit our beautiful campus and see all the changes that have been made.

Be sure to keep your contact information updated so you receive the latest information. I look forward to the upcoming year and all the great things the Alumni Association has in store!

GO COUGARS!

MAGGIE KRUMWIEDE, PHARMD '05, '09  
President, SIUE Alumni Association Board of Directors

CONNECT WITH US! | [@siuealumni](https://twitter.com/siuealumni)

## WELCOME NEW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS!

- Alisha Abbott, BA Mass Communications '11
- Jodi Cox, BA Foreign Languages and Literature '03, MPA '15
- Brock Elmore, BS Business Administration '09
- Jessica Hutson, BS Business Administration '07
- Dzifa Kraka, MPA '14, BS Nursing '20
- Matt Parrott, BS Speech Communication '10
- Sarah Winter, BS Business Administration '16, MBA '19

## ALL SIUE GRADUATES ARE AUTOMATIC MEMBERS OF THE SIUE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION!

SIUE Alumni Association members have access to alumni savings, campus amenities and, of course, programs and events where you can connect with fellow Cougars.

[siue.edu/alumni/benefits-resources](https://siue.edu/alumni/benefits-resources)

## SIUE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The SIUE Alumni Association exists to establish, nurture and maintain the relationship between the University and its alumni. Our goal is that our alumni are informed, involved and invested in the life of SIUE. All graduates of SIUE are automatically members of the SIUE Alumni Association. The SIUE Alumni Association was incorporated in 1972 and is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

SIUE alumni have exclusive free access to a range of online learning tools, webinars and virtual programs featuring bestselling authors and experts on various topics.

[alumlc.org/siue](https://alumlc.org/siue)





SHOW YOUR  
**SIUE PRIDE**  
EVERYWHERE YOU GO!



SIUE license plates are a fantastic way to show your Cougar pride on the road and support our alma mater at the same time! A portion of your purchase supports student scholarships.

*Get your new  
license plate today!*



[siue.edu/plates](https://siue.edu/plates)

## GET YOUR NEW SIUE COUGARS GEAR!

The Cougar Store in the MUC or online  
[thecougarstore.com](https://thecougarstore.com)

New SIUE Amazon store  
[siue.edu/cougars-amazon](https://siue.edu/cougars-amazon)



## Refer a Student

Do you know any students interested in attending SIUE soon? If you refer them to SIUE, we'll waive their \$40 undergraduate application fee. Just complete the online form, and we will take care of the rest. A member of the Admissions team will contact them and share the good news! Applications can be submitted ahead of a fee waiver referral form.

[siue.edu/alumni/give-back/refer-a-student](https://siue.edu/alumni/give-back/refer-a-student)

For students with a family income less than \$113,575 and assets less than \$50,000 based on submitted FASFA, we'll cover tuition, mandatory fees and course-specific fees after utilizing financial aid from all federal, state and institutional sources, including merit-based scholarships, as funding is available.

- **SIUE Commitment:** Illinois residents
- **SIUE Gateway Opportunity:** Greater St. Louis residents

[siue.edu/financial-aid](https://siue.edu/financial-aid)



SPRING COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY STUDENT SPEAKER

“ On May 5, 1994, my father arrived in the United States for the first time. He came here with just the clothes on his back and could not speak a word of English. Here we are exactly 30 years to the day, and his daughter is the first one in his family to graduate college with a bachelor’s degree. This is what it means to be a student at SIUE. ”

— AMIRA SAMIR AL-JASSIM, BS SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AND AUDIOLOGY '24  
*School of Education, Health and Human Behavior*



TO THE SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE CLASS OF 2024

- 2.8 million Illinois residents live in communities with a shortage of dental providers
- Neighboring St. Clair County is federally designated as having a shortage of dental health professionals

“ Said quite simply, the children and families in the state of Illinois need you. ”

— CHANCELLOR JAMES T. MINOR, PHD

@SIUEEDWARDSVILLE’S INSTAGRAM POST

**Hey, @dropframe2020!  
 Lovejoy Library has nap pods now!**

“ For me, it was a good place to take a nap in between classes. ”

— @DROPFRAME2020

”



SIUE SOCCER TEAM WINS BRONZE BOOT OVER SLU AGAIN THIS YEAR!



“

"A short Cougar growl of satisfaction."

— EDDIE THE COUGAR

”

**Eddie the Cougar on SIUE's Bronze Boot win over SLU and his favorite fan-made souvenir from that game**



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE**

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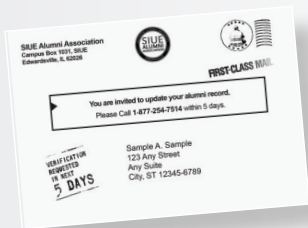
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**SIUE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**  
**Share Your Story, Celebrate Our Legacy**

Every Cougar has fond memories of their time at SIUE, and we invite you to share yours! The *SIUE Oral History Project* offers alumni a wonderful opportunity to reflect on their time at SIUE in their own words. These stories will be compiled into a special book celebrating our alma mater and its rich history.

The SIUE Oral History Project is made possible through a partnership between the SIUE Office of Alumni and Donor Relations and Publishing Concepts, Inc. (PCI). Along with gathering stories, PCI will help collect updated biographic information to keep us connected with Cougars nationwide. You will also have the option to purchase the oral history publication and other merchandise, though there's no obligation to buy.

You will receive a postcard like the one pictured here and email from PCI with instructions on how to share your story. You'll share your recollections over the phone with a trained communication professional on the PCI team.



***Didn't receive a postcard or email?***

No problem! You can still share your story by calling 1-877-254-7154.

Join us in celebrating all eras of SIUE alumni by sharing your unique experiences and memories. Let's honor our past and inspire future generations of Cougars!



**WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU  
AS WE PREPARE FOR FUTURE ISSUES  
OF THE SIUE MAGAZINE.**

*Who made a difference in your life at SIUE? Did you or a fellow alum choose a career in which you educate and inspire others? We want to hear your stories of "Impactful Educators."*

*Do you know an SIUE alum who's landed their "Dream Job?" Maybe it's you. Whether it's unique, exciting or simply special in its own way, we want to hear about it!*

We're celebrating alumni who are inspiring others living their professional dreams. Submit your story or nominate someone today for a chance to be featured in our upcoming magazine!

***Reach out to us at [siuealumni@siue.edu](mailto:siuealumni@siue.edu).***