

SIUE

THE MAGAZINE FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE ALUMNI & FRIENDS
SPRING 2025

**SIUE MEN'S BASKETBALL EARN'S
FIRST TRIP TO MARCH MADNESS**

PAGE 12

FOUND A Way



In This Issue **SIUE IMPACTFUL EDUCATORS**

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A CHAMPION IN THE CLASSROOM
AND IN HER COMMUNITY**

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**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE**

Cory Byers (Instructor, Mass Communications) has helped me improve my work countless times, whether editing, writing, shot composition, or with the tech we use. He has a great sense of humor and gives honest and genuine criticism. He's a great guy and an equally great professor!

- TANNER GARRISON (pictured here, far right)
SENIOR, MASS COMMUNICATIONS

“/”





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Greetings from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville!

It is with immense pride and gratitude that I introduce this Spring 2025 edition of the SIUE Magazine, themed "Impactful Educators." At SIUE, we are fortunate to be surrounded by a community of educators who inspire excellence and transform lives in ways that extend far beyond the classroom.

In this issue, we pay tribute to remarkable individuals whose dedication to teaching and service has left a lasting impact on their students, their fields, and the broader community. We celebrate the accomplishments of the SIUE Alumni and Athletics Hall of Fame inductees, whose legacy resonates both on and off the field, uniting alumni, athletes, and educators. In particular, we honor the memory of Karen Morris Watkins, the posthumous inductee for the School of Education, Health and Human Behavior, whose contributions continue to inspire us.

The stories featured here are a testament to the power of education in shaping lives. Taylor Danielson, an education major, alongside her cooperating teacher and alumna Hannah Hergenrother, '17 exemplifies the meaningful bond between student and mentor. Initiatives, such as the Illinois Golden Apple Scholars and SIUE's Future Teachers Conference, are preparing the next generation of leaders for the classroom.

We are also honored to recognize our alumni and faculty who continually give back to SIUE and the communities they serve. Initiatives like the Cougar Cupboard reflect our community's commitment to caring for one another. With new mini-pantries across campus, this effort reminds us that impactful education extends beyond academics—it includes nurturing a culture of support and service.

As you explore this issue, I encourage you to reflect on the educators who have made a difference in your own life. I hope the stories within these pages will inspire you to stay connected, give back, and join us in celebrating the profound influence of educators on our lives and our world.

With Cougar Pride,



JAMES T. MINOR, PhD
Chancellor



HONORING THE
Impactful

At the root of its mission, SIUE is dedicated to the communication, expansion, and integration of knowledge. From the remarkable faculty who lead our students in their educational journeys to the dedicated students who are fueled by the spark of their own experiences and decide to become educators themselves, the impact an educator can make is unmeasurable.

The late Karen Morris Watkins '66, the School of Education, Health and Human Behavior's honoree for the SIUE Alumni Hall of Fame Class of 2025, shattered glass ceilings, and overcame racial division in her career that spanned three decades. This outstanding teacher and administrator received the Excellence in Education Award



Photo (left): Karen Morris Watkins, '66, a charter member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s Epsilon Xi Chapter, surrounded by generations of her sorority sisters during SIUE's 2023 Black Alumni Weekend. Photo (above): The family and friends of Karen Morris Watkins accepted her posthumous award and celebrated her impact at the SIUE Alumni Hall of Fame ceremony. Photo (below): Karen Watkins, '66, and her husband, Dr. Garey Lynn Clifford

bestowed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon Program, and developed several innovative programs, such as integrated curriculum learning centers, program overviews, and pilot programs to expand and enhance student learning. After her retirement from the Ladue School District, where she spent 21 of her 32-year career, she was invited back to serve as the district's coordinator for Oasis, a program that fosters intergenerational learning between children and adults.

Beyond her professional career, Watkins was a dedicated member of her community and generously volunteered with various organizations throughout the St. Louis region. She served as a deacon at the First Baptist Church of Webster Groves, demonstrating her commitment to community service and leadership.



A proud member of the SIUE Alumni Association, Watkins thrived during her time as an elementary education student at SIUE. She was a charter member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.'s Epsilon Xi Chapter and actively participated in the SIUE School Choir. A champion for the elementary education program, she credited SIUE for providing her with access to excellent student teaching opportunities and a strong educational foundation in internal communications.

Watkins passed away in August 2024 before the University could personally celebrate her impact. However, the echoes of her dedication to lifelong learning, as well as her commitment to making a difference in her students' lives and in her community will reverberate for generations.

My fellow alums,

Throughout my years at SIUE, many professors left a lasting impact on me, shaping my understanding and approach to leadership, problem-solving, and service. One course that stands out to me is Pro-seminar in Public Administration with Morris Taylor, PhD. He challenged everyone with high expectations, making topics like organizational structure, budgeting, and leadership engaging and relevant. His passion for the Public Administration & Public Analysis program and dedication to student growth reflects the kind of educators who make a difference. We are proud to highlight some of the faculty members who have left a lasting impression on the University community, shaping their experiences in and beyond the classroom.

Cathy Taylor

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



“Ed Huneke is not just a coach, he is a mentor, friend, educator, and an amazing family man. The impact he left on our former players is amazing. Not only were his teams full of champions and successful on the field, but his players are also leaders in all sorts of industries in the real world, and it's great to see the men they have become. Ed is still connected to the program and continues to support us in many ways that I am forever grateful for.”

— CALE WASSERMANN
SIUE HEAD MEN'S SOCCER COACH



“Dr. Jackie Clement inspired me to keep going. She was so knowledgeable and always there to help you succeed. Our bond spanned over 14 years, and she was the most influential instructor I've ever had.”

— MICHELE HARTKE
DNP, '99, '08, '22



“The teachers at SIUE were incredible—fair, understanding, and truly passionate about what they taught. I had the pleasure of taking a course with Dr. Leonard Van Camp, and his choir was an absolute delight.”

— DORETTA WALKER, '70



“Johnetta Haley in music education drilled into me the importance of establishing discipline first before worrying about anything else. That advice served me so well in my decades-long teaching career.”

— ALICIA SCHAFER '76, '84



“The moment I stepped onto campus to audition for the renowned piano professor, Ruth Slenczynska, I was overwhelmed with nerves. Under the guidance of Harlan Hoke, I was accepted, and the University felt like a perfect fit.”

— RANDY PEMBROOK, PHD, '78, '79, '80
FORMER SIUE CHANCELLOR

WE ASKED *you delivered!*

Thank you to everyone who submitted your story about the educators who made an impact during your time at SIUE.
Here are just a few of the submissions!



“ Riley Maynard’s

mass communications classes were always interesting. He was blunt and funny as he told real-life stories about the media industry. He brought everything to life as he taught and advised.”

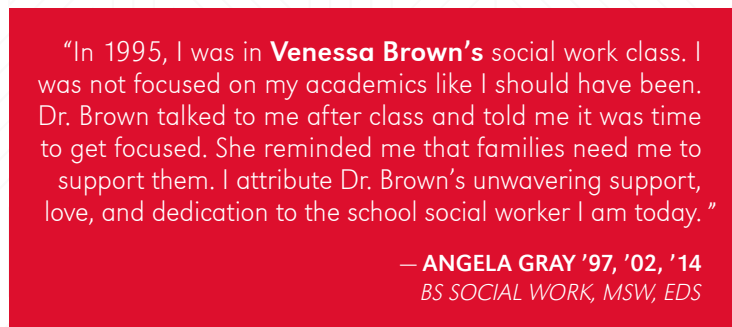
— **SITSOFE NUTSUKPUI LUH '07**
MS MASS COMMUNICATIONS



“ Alan Shiller

was one of the only professors to talk about respect in a classroom setting. He was enthusiastic to teach a young group of students and encouraged body language, pacing and capturing an audience be it one person or a full classroom.”

— **CRISTINA LAZARD '05**
BS BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION/MARKETING



“In 1995, I was in **Venessa Brown’s** social work class. I was not focused on my academics like I should have been. Dr. Brown talked to me after class and told me it was time to get focused. She reminded me that families need me to support them. I attribute Dr. Brown’s unwavering support, love, and dedication to the school social worker I am today.”

— **ANGELA GRAY '97, '02, '14**
BS SOCIAL WORK, MSW, EDS



“

Rudy Wilson was one of the faculty members who strongly influenced my pursuit of my SIUE educational degrees. He was one of the first African American instructors in the department—if not the university—and was admired and highly respected by his students.

— **RIC STEPHENSON**
'70, '74, '77
BA GOVERNMENT, MS
ED COUNSELOR EDUCATION, EDS

”



“**Noble Thompson** was a terrific professor. He not only made the field of meteorology accessible, but he also inspired me to teach it. I have kept his handouts and worksheets ever since as I reflect on ways to teach the course myself.”

— **JOE HINTON '02**
BA HISTORY



James Woodard was the best! He was patient and funny in class, always finding ways to help us remember the rules of music theory, even if it meant us laughing at his antics. He and Mrs. Woodard were gracious hosts, opening their home for receptions after the Composer’s Concerts that were a highlight of the year for all of us. I learned a lot from him about how to be a teacher and a good person.

— **PATRICE CORSO '88, '95**
BM MUSIC EDUCATION, MM

“ / ”

SIUE HALL OF FAME

In a joint celebration in January, SIUE recognized a distinguished group of honorees with inductions into the SIUE Alumni and Athletics Hall of Fame. This prestigious group who, through their leadership, character, and hard work, have made exceptional contributions to SIUE and in their chosen fields and communities.

ALUMNI HALL OF FAME HONOREES



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BRIAN HENRY

BS Mass Communications '95

A senior vice president and chief communications officer at CVS Health, Brian Henry has spent more than three decades as a leading communications executive. His career spans roles at major companies like 3M, Cigna, and Medtronic. He is a dedicated supporter of the Department of Mass Communications and proudly funds the Rising Communicators Scholarship that supports first-in-family students in the program.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR

KAREN MORRIS WATKINS

BS Elementary Education '66

Karen Morris Watkins dedicated nearly three decades of her career to classroom teaching and education administration. Watkins was a trailblazer for African American women in both teaching and educational leadership roles and worked to innovate curricula and programs. She was a charter member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s Epsilon Xi Chapter. Watkins is remembered for her commitment to making a difference in her students' lives and in her community.



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

CHARLES MYER

BS Business Administration '90

Charles "Charlie" Myer took a job as an instructor at the Edwardsville YMCA as a young adult and dedicated the entirety of his professional career to advancing the nonprofit organization's mission before retiring in 2021. Myer served the YMCA in multiple roles across the country before transitioning into financial development where he helped to raise millions for the organization. He remains committed to supporting his community through service organizations and actively volunteers at his local YMCA on the east coast.



SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

JONATHAN FOWLER

BS Electrical Engineering '10

Edwardsville native and president of J.F. Electric, Jonathan Fowler has played a key role in the growth of his family's business. He is a dedicated supporter of the School of Engineering and a long time Advisory Board member. Like his grandfather before him, he serves on the SIUE Foundation Board. He has been recognized both individually and in part with J.F. Electric in the St. Louis Business Journal and in the inaugural class of the St. Louis Titan 100.



SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE

CHRISTOPHER LARSEN, DMD

Doctor of Dental Medicine '88

Christopher Larsen is a prominent figure in the dental community, with leadership roles at the national, state, and local levels. Larsen has served as president of the Illinois State Dental Society and has been actively involved in the American Dental Association. Outside of his successful dentistry practice, he and his family own a vineyard and winery—the Old Oaks Winery—in Milan, Ill.



SCHOOL OF NURSING

JACQUELYN CLEMENT, PHD, FNP, RN

MSN Nursing '80

Jacquelyn Clement has dedicated more than 55 years to advancing nursing education and improving healthcare outcomes. A former assistant dean and graduate program director in SIUE's School of Nursing, Clement has left an indelible mark on nursing education through her leadership, mentorship, and service to the profession.



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME HONOREES

Members of the 2001 Men's Soccer team

2001 MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

The 2001 men's soccer team finished with an overall record of 17-3-3, advancing to the national semifinals before losing to host and eventual national champion Tampa 2-1. Head Coach Ed Huneke was named the Regional Coach of the Year and four Cougars, Justin McMillian, David Mwendapole, Cress Maddox, and Matt Evers earned All-Region honors. The team outscored its opponents 65-21 during the season.



BASEBALL

DARIN HENDRICKSON '93, '96

Darin Hendrickson played two seasons of baseball for the Cougars in 1990-1991. He amassed a career record of 18-5 and a 2.65 earned run average in 30 career appearances. His 18 career wins rank 11th all-time, while his career ERA earned him the 10th lowest mark of all time. His total of 10 wins in 1991 is tied for the third most in a single season at SIUE and he helped lead the Cougars to a school-record 43 wins and a trip to the World Series.



WRESTLING

STEVE STEARNS '86

Steve Stearns wrestled for the Cougars from 1983-1986. Stearns was a three-time All-American, finishing as the Division II National Champion at 134 pounds in 1986, which followed third place finishes in 1983 and 1985. He was seeded at the 1986 Division I National Championship, where he won two matches and advanced to the quarterfinal round. Stearns helped the Cougars to a pair of team National Championships in 1985 and 1986.



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AND SOFTBALL

MIA SMITH '86, '96

A two-sport standout in basketball and softball, Mia Smith played four seasons of basketball and softball at SIUE. She appeared in 94 basketball games and currently ranks 36th all-time in scoring at 880 points. Smith also is sixth on the career steals list with 221 and seventh in assists at 308. Smith made 190 appearances on the softball diamond for the Cougars and recorded 158 career hits, ranking 30th all-time. Her 55 stolen bases (without being caught) are tied for 11th most in program history and her 103 runs scored rank 19th all-time.



VOLLEYBALL

ANDREA (VOSS) TOENNIES '04

Andrea Voss played four seasons of volleyball at SIUE, ranking eighth on the career list with 125 matches played. She ranks fourth all-time with 1,349 kills, sixth at 2.11 kills per set, and third in hitting percentage at .307. She is third in career block solos at 141, second in total blocks with 612 and is the all-time leader in block assists with 471. Voss holds the single-match record for hitting percentage at .917, when she recorded 11 kills on 12 attempts with no errors in a 2003 game against Belmont Abbey. She was an AVCA All-America Honorable mention in 2003 and a two-time All-Region performer.

EDUCATION STUDENTS GET
HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE WITH

Cooperating Teachers



Teacher candidate Taylor Danielson guides a student at Caseyville Elementary.

The elementary education program at SIUE prepares the next generation of impactful educators through regular interaction with first through sixth graders with hands-on student teaching placements.

Teacher candidates spend two days a week at their placement site during their first semester of student teaching. The time is spent learning their cooperating teacher's routines, building relationships with the students, and getting familiar with the curriculum and how the school operates. Student teaching becomes an assignment during their second semester.

Senior elementary education student Taylor Danielson kicked off the fall 2024 semester student teaching alongside SIUE alumna Hannah Hergenrother, BS elementary education '17, in Hergenrother's third-grade classroom at Caseyville Elementary School.

Hergenrother was placed at Caseyville Elementary School for her first short-term student teaching placement while studying at SIUE. She felt a deep connection with the school immediately and was hired as a third-grade teacher after graduating.

It is the best feeling in the world to receive emails and handwritten letters from past students. Once you are a student in my classroom, I consider you one of my students for a lifetime.

— HANNAH HERGENROTHER, BS '17
Third Grade Teacher, Caseyville Elementary

“/”

“

Growing up, I always had the best teachers. They inspired me, and I want to be able to do the same for my own students.

— TAYLOR DANIELSON
Senior, Elementary Education

”

“I love working with Miss Hergenrother,” said Danielson. “She has some of the best classroom management strategies of any of the teachers I have worked with. She implements many routines that help her get her students’ attention and keep them on track.”

Growing up as a self-proclaimed teacher's pet, Danielson idolized her teachers. As she prepares to graduate and enter a classroom of her own, she closely observes and notes the strategies her mentors, professors, and cooperating teachers have implemented to develop her own teaching style.

According to Hergenrother, the sheer amount of field experience offered to SIUE teacher candidates is one of the program's biggest strengths. Now, as a cooperating teacher, she gets to share her expertise and experiences with Danielson, just as her cooperating teachers and mentors did with her.

“Taylor gets to see me fail, reflect, adjust, and try again,” Hergenrother said. “She sees me advocate for students and connect with parents, which is something that can be intimidating as a new teacher.”

Hergenrother hopes that her student teacher takes away the importance of building relationships with her pupils and utilizes some of the classroom management strategies she has observed while at Caseyville Elementary.

“I hope Taylor will look back on her student teaching experience fondly and enter her career with enthusiasm and confidence,” said Hergenrother.

Please share your student teaching experiences of impact to inspire rising educators at SIUE by emailing siuealumni@siue.edu.



High school students participate in hands-on learning activities at the Future Teachers Conference.

INSPIRING FUTURE IMPACTFUL EDUCATORS

In November 2024, high school students from across the region who are considering careers in education were invited to SIUE for the 2024 Future Teachers Conference. The day-long event highlighted teaching pathways in the School of Education, Health and Human Behavior (SEHHB)—early childhood education, elementary education, special education, secondary education— and introduced students to teaching careers.

We had 20 school districts participate, and more than 300 students registered for this year's conference, making it our biggest Future Teachers Conference yet.

— ANGELA WHITE, '98

Director of Field Placements
School of Education, Health and Human Behavior



From the time guests poured onto campus, they were greeted by SIUE student hosts and beloved mascot Eddie the Cougar. The conference, held in conjunction with the Madison County and Southwestern Illinois Career and Technical Education (CTE) Systems, had a stacked agenda filled with workshops, keynote presentations, and panels led by current SIUE students, faculty, and active teachers from throughout the region.

"The highlight of this event is when high school students' faces light up as they arrive on our beautiful campus and realize their entire day is going to be focused on furthering their aspiration

to be a teacher," said Alison Reeves, PhD, '89, associate dean of SEHHB. "Mingling with professors, current teachers, and education majors in a conference setting helps draw them into the profession of teaching."

This year's conference had several highlights, including:

- The World Café session, led by Rachael Mahmood, EdD, Illinois Board of Education's 2024 Teacher of the Year, and assisted by Nathaniel Williams, PhD, chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning
- Keynote session led by 2020 Illinois Middle School Principal of the Year and three-time SIUE alum Tron Young, EdD '09, '17, '19, assistant superintendent for educational services at Alton Community Unit School District 11
- Attendance of Illinois State Senators Erica Harriss, '99, and Christopher Belt, '02, Madison and St. Clair County Regional Superintendents Rob Werden, '11, '21, '24, and Lori Costello

"As high school students are considering teaching as their career choice, the Future Teachers Conference provides additional information about the teaching profession to solidify their decision," said White.

Support the Future Teachers Conference

Contact Nick Niemerg, SEHHB Director of Development
nniemer@siue.edu | 618-650-5043
connect.siue.edu/g/sehnb

HISTORIC

goals

Jason Stacy, PhD, Distinguished Research Professor of History, is leading students into the world of hands-on historical inquiry through a unique experiential learning opportunity in the Louisa H. Bowen University Archives and Special Collections at Lovejoy Library.

Stacy co-teaches an applied historical methods course with digital archivist and visiting assistant professor Marcella Lees, MLIS, where students gain practical skills in archival arrangement, primary source research, argumentation and synthesis, and more.

“

When they are hard at work processing the collection, the hum of the quiet washes over the room, and you can hear everyone’s gears turning.

— JASON STACY, PHD

Distinguished Research Professor of History

”

To create a detailed digital catalog, students spent the fall semester assessing, organizing, and preserving a trove of memorabilia originally collected by St. Louis businessman and soccer enthusiast Henry D. "Hap" Meyer. Meyer fell in love with the sport as a



Senior Phillip Hermeyer carefully sorts through the memorabilia in the Henry D. "Hap" Meyer Collection.

young man and ultimately amassed a 50-box collection of soccer photos, papers, and memorabilia, which was donated to SIUE by his daughter in 1974 after his passing. The collection includes the papers of Thomas W. Cahill, one of the founders of American soccer, founder of the U.S. Soccer Federation, and coach of the first U.S. men’s national soccer team.

“We are processing an archival collection that has sat on our shelves for the last 50 years,” said Stacy. “Our goal is to teach theories behind these particular skill sets by executing public-facing projects such as historical publications, books, and museum exhibitions.”

Stacy and Lees hope the finding aid will help future researchers—current and future students, hobbyists, and academics alike—add additional context to the rich history of soccer.

PRESERVING HISTORY

Support the Louisa H. Bowen University Archives and Lovejoy Library

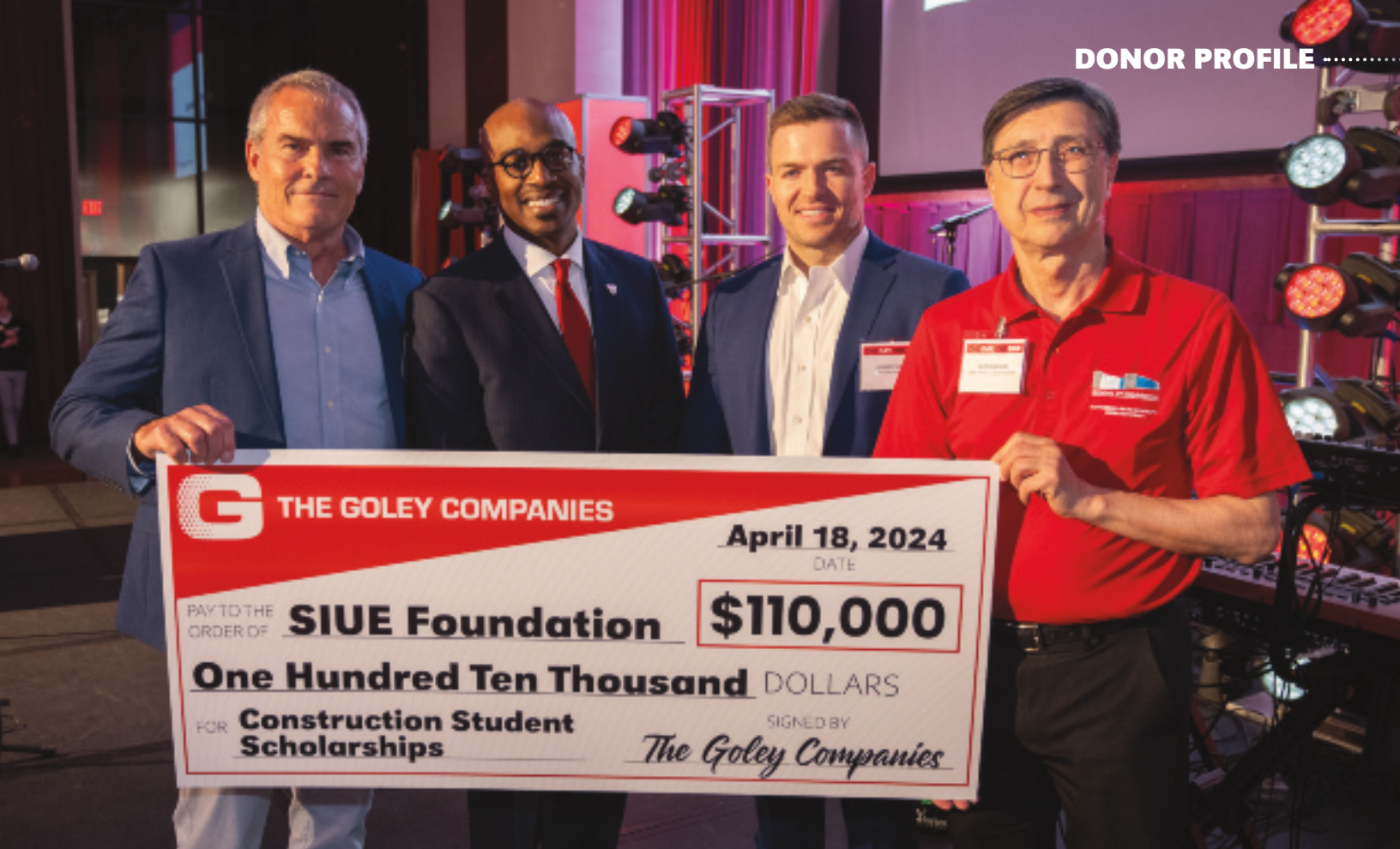
connect.siu.edu/g/lovejoy-library

Donate a Historically Significant Collection

Contact Andrea Keller, Director of Development
618-650-2714 | andkell@siue.edu



Photo left: Jason Stacy, PhD, Distinguished Research Professor, uncovers history within the Henry D. "Hap" Meyer Collection.



Joseph and DeWayne Goley of the family-owned business, The Goley Companies, continue to create profound impact on SIUE's construction management program.

THE GOLEY COMPANIES ESTABLISH ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The ongoing collaboration between the SIUE School of Engineering and The Goley Companies is preparing and inspiring the next generation of construction management professionals.

The family-owned company recently donated a \$110,000 endowed gift to mark the company's 50th anniversary and support Goley Company scholarship recipients.

"The Goley Company's engagement with our students through classroom visits, internship, and their mentorship early in their education is exactly what is needed to recruit and retain well-prepared students and graduates for the construction profession," said Cem Karacal, PhD, dean of the School of Engineering. "We are happy to have partners like Goley that share a common vision to make an impact in our region."

Founded in 1973 with headquarters in Dupu, Ill., The Goley Companies is a third-generation family business that specializes in delivering building performance solutions, such as insulation, air sealing, fire stopping, and energy testing services for residential and commercial clients. Company leaders visit campus often to speak to construction classes, and engineering students are often employed by the company during their first or second year of

academic instruction in the construction management program.

"We have gotten so much out of the relationship that we have with SIUE and the students and professors who are part of this program," said Joseph Goley. "We thought it was only right for us to give back to the community that's given us so much."

"The Goley family understands that the key to their successful and continued expansion will be due to their recruitment, mentoring and support of quality individuals," said John Cabage, PhD, associate professor and chair of the Department of Construction. "They see SIUE's program as a way that they can connect with up-and-coming construction community members."

Elliot Marsh, fourth-year construction management major, received the inaugural Goley Company Scholarship.

"When I received the scholarship, it was at a time of discouragement—a time where I was wondering if all the hard work I was putting into school was really worth it," said Marsh. "Receiving The Goley Company scholarship gave me a renewed sense of motivation in my studies. And senior-itis notwithstanding, I plan to keep pressing on in my studies with this renewed desire to do the best I can in all I do."



Student volunteers inventory recent donations to the Cougar Cupboard and Mini Cupboards.

COUGAR CUPBOARD

A LIFELINE FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Our goal is for members of the SIUE community to be focused on achieving educational excellence, not worrying about where or how they can access food and necessary hygiene products. In a 2023 survey conducted across campus, 37% of students shared that they experienced limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food.

Established in 2018, the Cougar Cupboard food pantry ensures those who are facing financial challenges have access to the necessities they need to succeed. Its visitors are offered a dignified shopping experience designed with convenience and anonymity in mind, providing equitable access to food and supportive services without judgment and at no cost. The Cougar Cupboard also empowers clients by informing visitors about resources to address their critical needs, including instructions on how to apply for SNAP benefits or connecting them with other community partners for additional support.

In September 2024, the Cougar Cupboard served 979 clients and distributed 3,179 pounds of food.

"The Cougar Cupboard plays a crucial role in addressing food insecurity among SIUE students, faculty, and staff by providing essential food and basic needs such as toiletries, fresh produce and snacks," said Lealia Williams, BS '00, MSEd '23, student care and advocacy coordinator in the Office of Student Affairs. Williams was recently honored by the Metro Area Professional Organization with a Serving Humanities award for her efforts with the Cougar Cupboard.

The Cougar Cupboard is located on the lower level of the Morris University Center to meet the growing needs of the University community. It has also constructed and installed six smaller pantries, called Mini Cougar Cupboards, across the Edwardsville and Alton campuses, to provide access to nonperishable goods and hygiene items. Patrons can take what items they need and others are encouraged to leave what items they can.

The pantry is supported solely by donations from students, on-campus groups, departments, individual donors, clubs, and athletic teams, and from several organizations throughout the region. Donations from community organizations have helped the pantry stock its shelves, provide guests with reusable shopping bags, build and purchase fixtures to store display its donations, and even acquire a new refrigerator, allowing it to provide fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy items.

Organizations throughout the University community and beyond are invited to support the Cougar Cupboard by contributing to one of its sponsorship tiers:

- Sponsor a Shelf
- Sponsor the Cougar Cupboard
- Sponsor a Mini Cupboard

Area businesses can also help support the Cougar Cupboard by hosting food drives and bringing their donations to its location on the Edwardsville campus or one of its mini pantries.

Support the Cougar Cupboard

Contact Andrea Keller, Director of Development for Student Affairs: andkell@siue.edu.

BY THE *numbers*

**#1 STUDENT-ATHLETE
GRADUATION RATE**
..... IN ILLINOIS

for public institutions

12,000+

SIUE HOMECOMING
& FAMILY WEEKEND
PARTICIPANTS

**\$1.2
MILLION**

AWARDED IN SIUE
FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIPS TO
STUDENTS



**#2 STUDENT-ATHLETE
GRADUATION RATE**
..... IN THE NATION

for public institutions

50%

SIUE UNDERGRADS

PAID 50% OR LESS FOR TUITION AND FEES
AFTER SCHOLARSHIPS/FINANCIAL AID
(2023-24 academic year)

400 PARTICIPANTS

9TH ANNUAL
COUGARS UNLEASHED 5K/10K RUN
AND PANCAKE BREAKFAST

50

BOXES OF SOCCER
MEMORABILIA IN
THE HENRY D. "HAP"
MEYER SOCCER
COLLECTION

**2 BACK-TO-BACK
BRONZE BOOT WINS**
SIUE MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

\$1,000

STOCKS THE
COUGAR CUPBOARD
FOR ONE MONTH

116

9-12 GRADERS

*Enrolled at
SIUE East St. Louis
Charter High School*

300+

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
FROM 20+ SCHOOL DISTRICTS
2024 FUTURE TEACHERS CONFERENCE



Empowering

THE NEXT GENERATION OF NURSES

Marjorie Fonza-Thomason, DNSc, RN, MS psychiatric mental health, '86, dedicated her career as a nurse and educator to empower those who, like her, are driven to care for people in their time of need.

The spark that ignited Fonza-Thomason's pathway to nursing occurred while she was a nun at the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis convent. She was inspired by how the community worked together toward a common goal.

Her experiences impacted her educational trajectory, and she worked hard to earn a license to practice as a registered nurse. Sometime later, she left the convent, got married, had children, and worked to advance her nursing career. A colleague who was attending the SIUE School of Nursing shared she received a scholarship for nurses from the National Institute of Mental Health. Fonza-Thomason decided to submit an application and utilize the funds to pursue an advanced degree in mental health nursing.

“

My professors took an interest in me as a person, not just as a student. They were invested in my growth and development, and I learned so much from them about how to support and empower students.

— **MARJORIE FONZA-THOMASON, DNSC, RN**
MS Psychiatric Mental Health, '86

”

“I still remember the day I decided to apply for that scholarship,” she said. “It was a chance to have my books and tuition taken care of, and I knew I couldn’t pass it up.”

When she arrived at SIUE, Fonza-Thomason was welcomed to the program with open arms. SIUE fostered an inclusive, supportive environment for minority learners like herself, and despite the obstacles in her way as a young Black mother, the university was there to help her succeed.

The support she received from the mentors who stepped up to take her under their wing—including former professor Martha Welch and emerita professors Doris Bell and Mary Ann Bierbaum—played a key role in Fonza-Thomason's decision to become a nurse educator herself.

After she earned a master's at SIUE, Fonza-Thomason began her career as a nurse educator. She was commissioned into the U.S.





Army Reserves and later transferred to the U.S. Navy. During her time of service, she was promoted to the rank of Navy Captain.

The outstanding nurse educator, who went on to earn a Doctor of Nursing Science degree, has held several faculty positions at higher education institutions around Illinois and Missouri, including SIUE, and served as a mentor for minority students in the School of Nursing at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She also functioned as the acting director of the School of Nursing at the Metropolitan Community College for a short time. Fonza-Thomason's academic interests were focused on diversity and minority underrepresentation in the nursing workforce. She also served a four-year term as the president of the Association for Black Nursing Faculty.

Throughout her career as a nurse educator, Fonza-Thomason exemplified the ideals, instilled by mentors, and extended the same grace to her students until retiring in 2006.

In 2018, she decided to give back to SIUE by establishing the John & Marguerite Crump Memorial Scholarship in Nursing.

Named in honor of her parents who did not have the chance to finish their education past grade school, the scholarship fund selects traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing students who are members of the Student Nurse Achievement Program (SNAP). The fund awarded its first \$750 scholarship in April 2024 to Kania Farrell, the current vice president of SNAP.

Fonza-Thomason, who now lives in a small town near Kansas City, Mo., decided to give back to the university that fostered her passion for helping others.

"The sense of fellowship and belonging I experienced at SIUE was so important to me," she said.

"The faculty and staff made it clear that they valued diversity and were committed to the success of all their students, regardless of ethnicity or background.

That sense of community and belonging has stayed with me ever since."

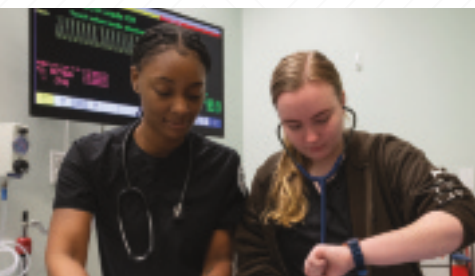
I feel very blessed to be recognized and awarded this scholarship. I was inspired to become a nurse because I love helping others and being involved in the process of making people feel better. This, compounded with not seeing a lot of people who looked like me in this field, solidified that I wanted this for my career.

— KANIA FERRELL
Senior, BS Nursing

“/”

Student Nurse Achievement Program

The School of Nursing's Student Nurse Achievement Program (SNAP) is a successful, ongoing initiative that addresses the critical need to increase the numbers of diverse professional nurses in the workforce. Fully funded by a Health Resources and Services Administration Grant, SNAP is designed to recruit and retain racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse high school graduates interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Science in nursing.





FROM YOUR ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Fellow Alumni,

Greetings on another new year of exciting happenings with the Alumni Association. I hope you were able to make it back to campus this past fall. The colors were so beautiful, and the campus was as vibrant as ever.

I've recently spent some time reflecting on the educators who have influenced my life. Coming from a small town, I can easily recall the names of each of my teachers from K-12. They each had a hand in raising me during my adolescence and such an impactful time of my life.

However, it was at SIUE where I truly began to appreciate the importance of a dedicated educator. I think back on my time in the School of Pharmacy, when the program was brand new, and many professors were just getting their feet wet. The faculty were so determined to make the program successful and accredited that they devoted countless hours outside of the classroom to ensure that we understood the material, but also that we were faced with real-world scenarios that would ultimately help us apply our classroom knowledge. I think it says a lot about the program that 20 years after I started, many of those same educators are still at SIUE. They have impacted hundreds of us and continue to make a difference in the lives of young adults.

Not all educators come in the form of classroom teachers. I encourage each of you to share your expertise with current SIUE students, as a mentor or preceptor. Personally, I have found precepting students to be quite fulfilling and find I learn just as much from them as they do from me. There are always opportunities for alumni to get involved in this way and the Office of Alumni Affairs can help facilitate those experiences.

I look forward to hearing your stories about the teachers who influenced your SIUE education and can't wait to see you at Homecoming and Family Weekend this fall.

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



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE**

SAVE THE DATE!

HOMECOMING & FAMILY WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 24-28, 2025

SIUE is gearing up for another exciting Homecoming & Family Weekend. Alumni, parents, families, and community members are invited to come together with current students for a weekend packed full of exciting activities. Highlights include the annual chili cook-off, chalk mural contest, COUGARFEST-Rock the Quad, Cougars Unleashed Homecoming Run and Pancake Breakfast, soccer games, and much more. We can't wait to celebrate with you in September!

CONNECT WITH US! | **@siuealumni**

COUGAR CONNECTIONS.....



HOMECOMING AND
FAMILY WEEKEND 2024

Highlights



next up! **DREAM JOBS**

**Actor. Archaeologist. Bestselling Author.
Chief Executive Officer. Educator. Inventor.
Pediatric Neuropsychologist. Sculptor.
Professional Athlete. U.S. Representative.
Pulitzer Prize-winning Journalist.
Cast Director and Chief Potassium Enthusiast.**



What do all these careers have in common?

They represent just a few of the diverse and inspiring career paths taken by SIUE alumni.

In the next issue of our magazine, we will highlight the dream jobs that reflect both the ambition and talent of our alumni but also their values and experiences that shaped them.

Whether the dream careers of SIUE alumni were sparked on campus or discovered after graduation, the individuals featured in our next issue will prove that with passion, hard work, and sometimes, a little bit of potassium, landing a dream job can be a reality.

*Matt "The Young Professor" Graifer '10, MEd Kinesiology,
Cast Director and Chief Potassium Enthusiast for the
Savannah Bananas*

