

SIUE promotes STEM Education as host of Science Olympiad Tournament

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EDWARDSVILLE - **Southern Illinois University Edwardsville** will host approximately 450 STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) – motivated students, grades 6-12, at the annual Science Olympiad regional tournament being held from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13, on campus. Students from 21 different schools across the region will compete in the day's interactive, hands-on events.

Teams of 15 students will investigate events ranging from concepts in life, earth and physical science to engineering devices. New events this year will encompass computer game design, alternative energy, food chemistry and the science of groundwater.

Events are held throughout the SIUE campus, in the Engineering Building, Science West Building and Peck Hall, with teams based in the Morris University Center.

“No other program immerses students across all STEM fields on the same level,” said Mike Avara, regional director of Science Olympiad. “Not only are science background and skills emphasized, but also the concept of teamwork and collaboration in research and problem-solving.”

“SIUE is proud to host this event, because it is an excellent way to generate interest in STEM subjects,” said Colin Wilson, manager of SIUE’s STEM Resource Center. “The competition and team atmosphere provide a new angle for engaging youth in the essential areas of science, technology, engineering and math. The students interested in Science Olympiad are an enthusiastic population who can see the opportunities that institutions like SIUE provide.”

Illinois is a leading state in the Science Olympiad national program. SIUE’s event is one of nine regional competitions in the state. Leading teams from each regional tournament will advance to the State Tournament held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on Saturday, April 16.