



# **SIUE STEM Center partners with Lewis and Clark Community College on Swarovski Waterschool Development**

by Megan Wieser

October 11 2016 10:51 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Center for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Research, Education and Outreach is contributing to the development of a Swarovski Waterschool in the Southwestern Illinois region, to emphasize safe water use, water education, and water sanitation and hygiene.

Directly aligning with the Center's mission to improve the quality of STEM education, the Swarovski Waterschool will be located on the campus of Lewis and Clark Community College's National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC) along the Mississippi River. It will stand as Swarovski's first and only site in the United States.

“We are thrilled to partner with Swarovski, Lewis and Clark Community College, and Goshen Education Consulting, Inc. to offer Metro East students ages 8-15 the exclusive opportunity to learn about the intricacies and implications of water through an interactive, engaging curriculum,” said Sharon Locke, PhD, director of the SIUE STEM Center.

Currently, development of the Waterschool is in its initial phase. The STEM Center is gathering data and conducting an analysis to determine how the programming will best suit the needs of educators and students in the region.

“The middle school students we talked to were eager to learn more about the history and formation of the Mississippi River and how water safety is impacted by flooding,” Locke said. “They were also highly interested in pollution issues. It is clear these students want to understand more deeply the environment in which they’re living.”

The Center is using its strong connections with area school districts to provide thoughtful insight and ideas on the ways in which the Swarovski Waterschool curriculum should be tailored to fit the distinct educational needs of the region and the U. S.

“One of the themes running through the Swarovski Waterschool curriculum materials is that these middle school students have an ability to be a focused voice in understanding issues of water and the potential to be ambassadors of change,” said Carol Colaninno-Meeks, assistant research professor in the SIUE STEM Center.

“Bringing STEM content to the curriculum is going to be a win-win,” Colaninno-Meeks said. “We’re excited to help teachers think about how the materials align with the Next Generation Science Standards, and assist them in integrating the experiential learning opportunities offered through the Swarovski Waterschool into STEM classrooms across the region.”

## **Swarovski**

Swarovski delivers a diverse portfolio of unmatched quality, craftsmanship, and creativity. Founded in 1895 in Austria, Swarovski designs, manufactures and markets high-quality crystals, genuine gemstones and created stones as well as finished products such as jewelry, accessories and lighting. Run by the fifth generation of family members, Swarovski Crystal Business has a global reach with approximately 2,680 stores in around 170 countries, more than 26,000 employees, and revenue of about 2.6 billion euros in 2015. Together with its sister companies Swarovski Optik (optical devices) and Tyrolit (abrasives), Swarovski Crystal Business forms the Swarovski Group. In 2015, the Group generated revenue of about 3.37 billion euros and employed

more than 30,000 people. The Swarovski Foundation was set up in 2012 to honor the philanthropic spirit of founder Daniel Swarovski. Its mission is to support creativity and culture, promote wellbeing, and conserve natural resources. [swarovskigroup.com](http://swarovskigroup.com)

## **National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC)**

Founded in 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Lewis and Clark Community College, NGRREC is dedicated to the study of great river systems and the communities that use them. The center aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds and their associated communities. To learn more about NGRREC, visit [ngrrec.org](http://ngrrec.org).

## **Lewis and Clark Community College**

Lewis and Clark Community College, founded in 1970, is a two-year higher education institution with multiple campuses, a river research center, a world class humanities center, Community Education Centers and training centers located throughout its more than 220,000-person college district. In addition to offering associate degrees and certificates in more than 40 career programs and numerous transfer options, the college also boasts a popular College for Kids program, a nationally accredited dual credit program for high school students, GED completion and the largest Workforce Training program in the state of Illinois. L&C serves approximately 20,000 students annually and is a national and state award-winning standout among Illinois community colleges. The college also employs more than 600 people, and adds \$338.5 million in regional income annually, which represents 4.6 percent of the regional economy. Learn more at [lc.edu](http://lc.edu).

## **SIUE STEM Center**

The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville [Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach](http://stemcenter@siue.edu) comprises an independent group of researchers and educators, innovating ways to engage students and the public in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Within the SIUE Graduate School, the Center brings together research faculty, graduate students and practitioners to conduct education research. Center staff develop and teach hands-on STEM programming as well as online citizen science and astronomy initiatives. The Center contributes educational expertise to SIUE undergraduate classes and provides professional development for K-12 teachers. The Center boasts a significant library of equipment and resources, which are available for loan at no cost to campus and regional instructors. For more information, visit [stemideas.org](http://stemideas.org) or contact STEM Center Director Sharon Locke at [\(618\) 650-3065](tel:6186503065) or [stemcenter@siue.edu](mailto:stemcenter@siue.edu).