

# SIUE Softball becomes the enchanted forest

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**GODFREY – Squeak! Squeak! Squeak!**

With one SIUE softball player imitating a mouse and others dressing as an owl, a skunk, a lorax and a raccoon, the Cougar softball team served Southwestern Illinois by becoming members of nature for a recent evening.

The SIUE softball team dressed in costumes to help The Nature Institute ([TheNatureInstitute.org](http://TheNatureInstitute.org)) promote the Enchanted Forest with stations designed to educate kids and their families about the animals and the scents of the forest.

SIUE Head Coach [Sandy Montgomery](#) said the event was fun for all and provided an educational experience for those who attended the event.

The Nature Institute works to foster an awareness and appreciation of the natural world through preservation, restoration and education.

"These groups of kids had a guide who took them through the Enchanted Forest," said Montgomery. "Every time they got to one of the stations, there was a script for us to say."

The owl that toots "Who cooks for you" was one of the more popular stops. The animal whose head almost can turn all the way around so it can hunt for food. The real version lives all year at The Nature Institute.

The mouse that bellows "Squeak! Squeak! Squeak!" is one of the most important food sources for carnivores and also plays a role for planting the forest trees by stashing seeds around the nature preserve.

A welcome "Lorax" helped start the tour for families. There were various stations operated by SIUE softball players, including a Follow the Leader area, a Bat/Moth game and an Eye Shine activity to show how to search for animals in the dark.

The SIUE softball team, dressed in costume, made an evening of it as the group cooked by a fire and then used their thespian talents to make the evening a memorable one for the area youth.