



SIUE Chancellor Pembroke oversees first commencement

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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Chancellor Dr. Randy Pembroke oversaw the fall 2016 commencement exercises Saturday, Dec. 17. Morning and afternoon ceremonies for the 1,229 eligible graduates were in the Vadalabene Center on campus. To view the ceremonies, visit siue.edu/tv.

In his first commencement since assuming the chancellor's role in August, Pembroke encouraged the graduates to become ambassadors for SIUE. "You should always represent SIUE with professionalism, dignity, and kindness and concern for others," he said. "Our mission is to shape a changing world. It's now your opportunity to go out into the world, and what will you choose to shape?"

"I guarantee that you will remember an SIUE faculty mentor 50 years from now, and how they changed your life for the better. So, say thanks before you leave. But be sure to come back again and find yourself - find that piece of you that you leave behind today at your alma mater. We will be waiting."

Representing the SIU Board of Trustees, System President Randy Dunn congratulated the graduates. "You will leave SIUE with a degree from one of this nation's great state universities," he said. "With the background, experiences, personal growth, and you now possess this degree, which is a big part of preparing you for whatever in life you wish to do. Please use all that you've gained from your time at SIUE to also change and improve the lives of others who you will encounter for the rest of your life. "

Chris Gordon, PhD, associate dean of the School of Engineering and associate professor in the Department of Construction, is SIUE's 2016 Teaching Excellence Award winner. He provided the commencement address during both ceremonies.

Gordon advised the graduates to have awareness and a challenge to "disturb the universe," in a reference to St. Louis native T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*. "Sometimes opportunities, threats and challenges come out of the periphery while we focus on the task at hand," he said. We live in a 360-degree world with unprecedented noise, fake news, disinformation run rampant ... it's easy to be distracted while we miss what's essential.

"We have to consciously adjust our focus so we can see what's essential. And you need to go out into the world with yet more vision - see potential. You have to see the looming issues that aren't yet there, but most of all, you have to see the potential for what we can achieve. You have to see that there is something that you can do today that will make a difference in people's lives and that will endure. And that vision takes courage."

The morning student speaker was Joseph Reddy, who earned a bachelor's in nursing from the School of Nursing. The morning session featured the Graduate School, and the Schools of Business, Nursing and Education, Health and Human Behavior.

“I have come to believe that by far the most critical thing you take away from your time at SIUE is the ability to think critically and a familiarity in your subject of choosing,” Reddy said. “The other main purpose of our educational journey has been to gain wisdom. That is why we have been required to take courses often unrelated to our desired major. The hope is that by gaining broad knowledge we can be better Americans and better people.

“Today, we all agree and disagree on a lot but I would call on all of you to try to live your lives for the betterment of yourself, your family, and your country. If you do that, we will be a force to be truly reckoned with.”

Taylor Keel, who earned a bachelor’s in applied communication studies from the College of Arts and Sciences was the afternoon ceremony student speaker. The afternoon session featured the Graduate School, College of Arts and Sciences, and School of Engineering.

“In my 3-1/2 years, SIUE has taught me how to define my own version of excellence,” Keel said. “And even better, this institution has given me the tools to do so by providing a wonderful and practical academic experience and an even more rewarding extra-curricular life, which have shaped my career path.

“Never let an opportunity go! And if you do, actively seek out more. Through my opportunities at SIUE, I have been able to excel in a variety of areas. I feed off of that energy that opportunities give to me. You never know which opportunity will be your snowball effect. I know that SIUE has shaped the person I have become.”

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#) provides students with a high quality, affordable education that prepares them for successful careers and lives of purpose. Built on the foundation of a broad-based liberal education, and enhanced by hands-on research and real-world experiences, the academic preparation SIUE students receive equips them to thrive in the global marketplace and make our communities better places to live. Situated on 2,660 acres of beautiful woodland atop the bluffs overlooking the natural beauty of the Mississippi River’s rich bottomland and only a short drive from downtown St. Louis, the SIUE campus is home to a diverse student body of nearly 14,000.