

# Kimmel Leadership Awards Ceremony celebrates service and leadership

April 26 2017 11:44 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville students, faculty staff and surrounding community members were recognized for their outstanding contributions to leadership and service during the 2017 Kimmel Leadership Awards Ceremony held Monday, April 24 in the Morris University Center Meridian Ballroom.

More than 150 individuals and organizations were honored with such accolades as outstanding student leader and emerging student leader, rotary student leader of the month and organization, program and advisor of the year, among others.

“These awards are emblematic of the community service dedication that is embedded in SIUE students,” said SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembroke during the ceremony.

“Community engagement is what we are all about, and your efforts and contributions are particularly important. Our students completed more than 265,000 community service hours and raised more than \$85,000 for a variety of charitable causes during the past academic year. In our mission to shape a changing world, our students are meeting that challenge to an amazing extent.”

Joshua Jones, a sophomore majoring in chemistry in the SIUE College of Arts and Sciences, achieved the esteemed Kimmel Scholarship. The annual scholarship recognizes a standout student for their exceptional volunteer contributions both on and off campus.

Jones, a native of Chicago, has been active in the SIUE community, serving as cooking shift leader and manager for Campus Kitchens at SIUE. He is also a member of the AmeriCorps program where he completed more than 300 hours of service to a number of volunteer agencies. He has participated in an alternative spring trip and is a member of the Pre-Pharmacy Association.



“My initial reaction to receiving this award was bewilderment, and I didn’t know how to truly respond,” Jones said. “I was in a silent world of complete gratitude.

“Giving service brings me joy, as I know that someone’s life has been made easier. It reflects my own life, because I did not have a lot of the normal figures that help people early on. I had to rely on mostly non-family members for help.”

Bethel Buerk, DMD, was honored with the Kimmel Community Service Award. Established in 1990, the award honors community members for notable volunteer service in the areas of education, social service/social welfare, special populations and agency/organizational concerns.

Buerk is a 1992 alumna of the SIU School of Dental Medicine. Buerk is a member of the SIUE Alumni Association Board of Directors and an active volunteer with Missions of Mercy in Collinsville.

During the ceremony, SIUE Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Lora Miles was recognized for her 31 years of service to the Office of Student Affairs. Miles' special acknowledgement came by surprise, with Dr. Connie Rockingham, the former VC for Student Affairs who hired her, presenting the award for Miles' dedication to SIUE.

The SIUE Make a Wish Organization also presented a \$6,500 check to the Make a Wish Illinois organization. Each year, students fundraise to help send at least one child on their wish trip. This year's contribution allowed a three-year-old boy's wish to come true at Disney World.

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#) provides students with a high quality, affordable education that prepares them for successful careers and lives of purpose to shape a changing world. 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 more than 14,000.