

# Solar eclipse amazes viewers at SIUE

by Megan Wieser

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EDWARDSVILLE - All eyes, protected by approved glasses, were to the sky at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville on Monday, Aug. 21 as thousands gathered to watch the remarkable solar eclipse. At SIUE, 99.5 percent totality occurred at 1:18 p.m.

“Everybody was excited and ready with their glasses,” said Marcus Powell, a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). “It was nice seeing everyone out on the Quad together.”

“The most exciting part was that we were all cheering together as it neared totality,” added Sarah Surmeier, a second-year pharmacy student. “It was a really interesting experience.”

The solar event aligned with the University's first day of classes. With multiple viewing sites set up across campus, students were able to safely observe the phenomena. A public viewing site was available at Korte Stadium, where a crowd of approximately 1,500 gathered.

Experts from the Department of Physics were on hand to share their knowledge of the eclipse and operate solar telescopes that captured each moment and allowed for live video streaming of the awe-inspiring event.

“For some people, this will be a once in a lifetime experience, and for younger students, hopefully it will be an inspiration to understand and appreciate science,” said Abdullatif Hamad, PhD, professor of physics in CAS.

The university actively prepared for the event and offered community education this summer, including hosting workshops for area teachers, so they could learn the science of eclipses and hands-on activities for teaching.

A history and myths section on SIUE's eclipse webpage also helped the campus and surrounding communities learn more ahead of the spectacular event.