



Public invited to take part in Sept. 8 Guinness World Record attempt at SIUE

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by Betsy Lewin



EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has teamed with community businesses and organizations in hopes of achieving a Guinness World Record for the “longest line of books” on International Literacy Day.

Organizer Stephen Hupp, PhD, professor of psychology in the School of Education, Health and Human Behavior, invites the public to help accomplish the amazing achievement, beginning with an opening kickoff at 11:30 a.m. Friday, Sept. 8 at the Outdoor Recreational Sports Complex off Northwest University Drive on campus. The official measurement will occur at 3:30 p.m.

At the kickoff event, Hupp will emphasize the value of literacy. Those in attendance will be given one of the gently-used books that have been donated to add to the line. Hupp hopes to overcome the current record, which was set in 2016 with a line of 13,410 books that stretched 1.4 miles in the United Kingdom.

“This world record attempt combines several goals, including the promotion of children’s literacy, student service and community engagement, as well as supporting our amazing Head Start staff,” Hupp said. “We also thought it would be a heck of a lot of fun! Whether or not we break the record will be determined by how much this attempt captures the imagination of others who share our goals.”

According to Hupp, the majority of the donated books from the world record attempt line will be given to children in Head Start programs in East St. Louis, Cahokia, Caseyville and Belleville. This massive contribution will support his ongoing [Kid Books Project](#), which aims to collect one million gently-used books for children in local Head Start programs, ages five years and younger.

Books will also be donated to the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the Greater St. Louis Book Fair and other fitting causes.

Organizations helping coordinate the event include the SIUE Psychology Club, Psi Chi, the Head Start Social-Emotional Wellness team, and the Clinical Child and School Psychology graduate program.

Local organizations that have provided large amounts of books to the effort include the Edwardsville Public Library, St. Mary's Catholic School in Edwardsville, Liberty Middle School, St. Jacob Elementary, St. John Newman Church, St. Andrews Church, the Christian Activity Center, Tri-Township Public Library and Afterwords Books.

For more information, contact Hupp at sthupp@siue.edu and find updates on Twitter [@StephenHupp](https://twitter.com/StephenHupp).

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](https://www.siu.edu/) 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.