

## **Area employers connect with SIUE students during October career fairs**

October 9 2017 2:11 PM



**EDWARDSVILLE** - More than 150 industry employers and graduate schools met strong student prospects from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville during the Career Development Center's (CDC) Career Fairs held Wednesday-Thursday, Oct. 4-5.

“Our career fairs are growing tremendously,” said Carrie Smolar, assistant director for employer relations in the CDC. “We’re actively working to help students connect with employers and gain professional opportunities.”

“My program has prepared me well for the business world, and I’ve successfully completed an internship which helped build my resume,” said Lay Upadhyay, a senior computer management and information systems major slated to graduate in December. “The Career Fair offers me a chance to meet with company representatives in-person and have one-on-one discussions with them, which is more personalized than filling out an application online.”

“I’m attending the Career Fair in hopes of earning an internship,” added sophomore civil engineering major Rebecca Fowler. “I am introducing myself to different companies, and learning more about what they’re looking for in an intern or employee, so I can best prepare myself.”



Heightened attendance by area employers at SIUE Career Fairs can be partly attributed to the successful candidates they have recruited from SIUE in the past.

“We feel the individuals in our organization who graduated from SIUE are a testament to the quality of people coming through SIUE programs who possess the skills valuable to us,” said Debbie Blandford, corporate human resources manager with CASS Information Systems, Inc. “Client relations is a big part of our business, and we have

individuals from a variety of programs, such as psychology, history, business and information technology.”

Several SIUE alumni represented companies during the fair. Senior civil engineering student Evan Spurgetis, of East Moline, also met with interested students on behalf of his employer, Larson Engineering.

Spurgetis earned an internship with the company after last year’s career fair. He’s working there part-time this academic year, as he finishes his degree and has signed on for a full-time spot upon graduation. He viewed his internship as an “extended interview” of sorts, because he wanted to stay with the company.

“Our office is in Maryland Heights, and we have multiple SIUE alumni who work for us,” explained Bruce Augustin, PE, senior project manager with Larson Engineering, who earned both a bachelor’s and master’s in civil engineering at SIUE in 2000 and 2011, respectively. “We often look for students to do an internship, then transition to a part-time and/or full-time position. It allows us to get a good understanding of an individual’s work ethic and capabilities, plus it gives them training with our company. Because of SIUE’s proximity to our office, we’ve had great success finding students like Evan who can make that transition.”

The October Career Fair was geared toward students from the College of Arts and Sciences, and Schools of Business and Engineering, as well as all non-teaching majors. The CDC will host a Health Career Fair/Residency Showcase for students and alumni on Monday, Nov. 13.

Additionally, the CDC will host a special roundtable event, Financial Matters: Ask an Expert, from 2-3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14. For a complete list of CDC events, visit [siue.edu/cdc](http://siue.edu/cdc).

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](http://SouthernIllinoisUniversityEdwardsville) 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 nearly 14,000.