

# Aspiring higher education leaders work to shape a changing world

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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville students in the College Student Personnel Administration (CSPA) are fulfilling the University's mission of shaping a changing world through their hands-on learning experiences.

CSPA students David Groves, Jr. and Jordyn Hale, both of Danville, are supporting the future success of first-generation students by facilitating and increasing college access and college persistence.



“My desire and passion to help the next generation outweighs any other decision I could make,” said Groves, who is serving through Americorps as a college transition coach at College Bound St. Louis. “I noticed that in my role as a student leader during my undergraduate term that institutions often tend to focus on specific student groups. It takes leaders like myself to enter the field and help spark the idea of change, like someone once helped spark in me.”

SIUE’s diverse CSPA program prepares students for entry-to-mid level positions in college administration, such as in student affairs, academic advising or admissions. It requires internship experiences to allow students the opportunity to actively engage contemporary higher education issues facing today’s college students.

“I want students, especially first-generation minority high school students, to understand how important it is to prepare for college as early as possible,” Hale said, who is currently gaining experience through her work with students in the SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School.

“My responsibilities include working with the college counselor to assist with college visits and materials for college prep,” Hale continued. “This assistantship is allowing me to apply what I have learned from my studies, to real-life situations.”

According to CSPA Program Director Pietro Sasso, PhD, students who pursue this area of study demonstrate excellence in servant leadership.

“With a particular emphasis on social justice, our students often are committed to serving historically underrepresented populations in higher education,” Sasso said. “Through graduate assistantships, they gain a deep understanding of the diversity of college populations, their experiences and the complexity of higher education.

“Their commitment to SIUE’s value of citizenship is particularly evident through their experiential learning opportunities which benefit the University community and our student population, and increase college access and persistence.”

For more information on SIUE’s College Student Personnel Administration graduate program, visit [siue.edu/grad/college-student-personnel](http://siue.edu/grad/college-student-personnel).

By preparing the next generation of leaders in a knowledge-based economy, [SIUE’s Graduate School](#) fulfills the region’s demand for highly trained professionals. Graduate school offerings include arts and sciences, business, education, engineering, nursing and interdisciplinary opportunities. SIUE professors provide students with a unique

integration of theoretical education and hands-on research experiences. Students can obtain graduate certificates or pursue master's degrees, and be part of a supportive learning and rich intellectual environment that is tailored to the needs of adult learners. The Graduate School raises the visibility of research at SIUE, which ranks highest among its Illinois Board of Higher Education peers in total research and development expenditures according to the National Science Foundation. Doctoral programs are available in the Schools of Education (Ed.D.) and Nursing (DNP). The School of Engineering and the Department of Historical Studies feature cooperative doctoral programs (PhD), and the College of Arts and Sciences features an Environmental Resources and Policy cooperative PhD.