

St. Louis Section names SIUE IEEE Outstanding Student Branch of the Year

by Megan Wieser

December 11 2017 2:31 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) student organization was honored as Outstanding Student Branch of the Year during the St. Louis Section's annual banquet held Saturday, Dec. 9, in St. Louis.

The St. Louis Section executive committee voted unanimously to recognize SIUE's IEEE Student Branch with appreciation for "their deep involvement in various student activities hosted by the section and region."

Past and present student branch representatives, along with faculty advisor George Engel, D.Sc, professor in the SIUE School of Engineering's (SOE) Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and SOE Dean Cem Karacal, PhD, attended the banquet to accept the award.

"We are humbled by the outpouring of support we've received from the SIUE School of Engineering, including many faculty and staff from the SOE Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering," said SIUE IEEE branch chair Tyler Friedel, a senior from Brussels. "To be selected as Student Branch of the Year is a huge honor. We are proud to be SIUE students and to share this award with the School of Engineering."

"It is an honor to be recognized for our achievements by industry leaders, who we aspire to become," added SIUE IEEE Secretary Corwin Fritts, a senior from Du Quoin. "One day, I hope to sit in their position to recognize and support a new set of talented students."

The SIUE IEEE student branch is active at the local, sectional and regional level, boasting a regular attendance of approximately 20 undergraduates, with more than a hundred interested contacts. With strong support from Engel, students participate in networking events, outreach projects, competitions, industry tours and more.

The branch is currently helping the IEEE St. Louis Section with one of its STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) outreach programs by mentoring 7th grade students at St. Boniface's Parish School in Edwardsville. The project involves constructing a small wind turbine, powered by a hair dryer, which will illuminate a LED.

"Student branch members plans to deliver supplies, including magnets and electric coils, purchased by the Section, to the 7th grade science class," Engel explained. "The group will return next semester to help the students finish their wind-powered turbines, and will select a winning design based on quality of construction, creativity and a written report."

"The outreach program not only promotes careers in science and engineering, but also teaches SIUE student branch members the value of volunteering their time and talents," he added.

According to Friedel, the branch's combination of activities greatly prepares students for future success. He emphasizes that strong student leadership from years prior initiated the organization's growth and development, which current members have maintained and expanded.

The SIUE IEEE student branch regularly participates in the St. Louis Section Black Box competition. SIUE teams won both the analog and digital contests in 2017. Additionally, members of the branch have participated in the IEEE Xtreme Programming Contest for the past five years, and it has sent student members to the IEEE Region 5 Conference every year for the past 22 years. In 2016, its robotics team took third place in the Region 5 Robotics competition.

The SIUE School of Engineering offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and two cooperative doctoral programs, all housed in a state-of-the-art facility. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research, and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. All undergraduate programs are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies.