



Former Chancellor Vandegrift to receive SIUE Honorary Doctorate

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EDWARDSVILLE - Former Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Chancellor Vaughn Vandegrift, PhD, will receive an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from SIUE at its May 2018 commencement. The SIU Board of Trustees approved the presentation during its December meeting on the Carbondale campus.

Including his eight years as SIUE's chancellor, Vandegrift committed 38 years of service to higher education with stops at Illinois State University, Murray State University, Montclair State University and Georgia Southern University.

As the SIUE chancellor from 2004-2012, Vandegrift was a catalyst for change. His vision for SIUE was to be nationally recognized as a premier University for the excellence of its programs, and development of professional and community leaders. His efforts in promoting SIUE to even higher levels of academic excellence are still being felt.

Under Vandegrift's leadership, SIUE experienced significant growth. More than \$300 million in infrastructure and building projects were realized, including a new residence hall, Evergreen Hall; the Science Building Complex; Student Success Center; Lukas Annex; the School of Dental Medicine Laboratory; the School of Pharmacy building; and renovations to the Vadalabene Center, Engineering Building, and Art and Design Building. With his focus on the University competing nationally, he transitioned SIUE to NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletics with memberships in the Ohio Valley, Missouri Valley and Southern Conferences.

In the academic arena, Vandegrift led development of new degree programs, including a master's program in industrial engineering, doctoral programs in educational leadership and nursing practice, and a dual diploma program with Istanbul Technical University. His efforts led to establishing a University-wide advising plan, organizing the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) program, and developing a new general education plan.

Vandegrift was also essential in branding SIUE. He led a marketing initiative to develop and promote the lowercase red "e" at SIUE as a University hallmark. His efforts led to record enrollment in fall 2011 with 14,235 students, which was later surpassed in fall 2015 with 14,265 students.

Vandegrift served the St. Louis metropolitan area through involvement on several boards. He was a member and past president of Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois. Additionally, he served as a member of St. Louis Civic Progress, Innovate St. Louis, St. Louis Regional Chamber, United Way of Greater St. Louis and the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market.

Vandegrift received numerous awards, including the *St. Louis Business Journal* Influential St. Louisan award (2006-2012); the 2011 Lewis and Clark Council: Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen award; the 2009 Freedom Fund Higher Education Leadership Award; Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois awards in 2007, 2010 and 2012; and the 2012 Edwardsville-Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce Synergy Award.

Vandegrift earned a doctorate in chemistry from Ohio University in 1974 after achieving bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry from Montclair State University in 1968 and 1970, respectively.

[Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#) 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.