



CAS targeted funding initiative contributes to 36 innovative faculty projects

February 19 2018 2:17 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Creativity and innovative thinking abounds at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, but during the Illinois budget crisis, it has been challenging to provide monetary support for numerous innovative and impactful faculty-proposed projects.

That's why College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Dean Greg Budzban, PhD, launched the CAS Targeted Funding Initiative (TFI). The program utilizes funding acquired through the College's Winter Session courses and is supplemented with other internal CAS funds. Now in its third year, the 2018 CAS TFI funded 36 projects totaling \$200,000.

"It's exciting that we have found a mechanism to fund the immense faculty creativity throughout the College of Arts and Sciences," said Budzban. "It's heartening that we received so many proposals and were able to fully or partially fund almost all of them. Our Targeted Funding Initiative offers a way to continuously innovate and find novel ways of doing things. This is how an institution renews itself."

This year's criteria for the CAS TFI included projects focused on interdisciplinary cooperation, collaboration with the SIUE East St. Louis Center and community organizations, faculty mentoring, external speakers and conferences, and instructional innovation.

"Today's complex ideas exist at the margins of disciplines," Budzban explained. "Finding ways to enhance collaboration and interdisciplinary work will always be a focus. It's also important for us to continue to interact and innovate with the SIUE East St. Louis Center to provide services and programs to the students it serves."

The funded projects span CAS' diverse programming from music, historical studies, foreign languages and literature, biological sciences and physics to mass communications, geography and applied communication studies.

A sampling of the 2018 CAS TFI projects include:

- Expansion of the [East St. Louis Center's Performing Arts Awareness Program](#) to the Cahokia School District
- The [Market on Wheels](#) initiative, led by Jessica DeSpain, PhD, associate professor of English language and literature, in collaboration with the Goshen Market Foundation
- The Foreign Language Training Center to the Language Learning Community, led by Debbie Mann, PhD, professor of French in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

- An upgrade of technology in the Department of Geography's geospatial tech laboratory
- Swiping Right on Media Convergence, a Department of Mass Communications collaboration

Central to SIUE's exceptional and comprehensive education, the [College of Arts and Sciences](#) has 19 departments and 85 areas of study. More than 300 full-time faculty /instructors deliver classes to more than 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty help students explore diverse ideas and experiences, while learning to think and live as fulfilled, productive members of the global community. Study abroad, service-learning, internships, and other experiential learning opportunities better prepare SIUE students not only to succeed in our region's workplaces, but also to become valuable leaders who make important contributions to our communities.