

SIU SDM kicks off its fall semester with entertaining resource fair

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ALTON - Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) students received a warm, upbeat welcome to campus for the fall semester during the School's inaugural Resource Fair held Tuesday, Aug. 7.

SIU SDM students, faculty, staff and administrators were treated to free pizza, live DJ entertainment and massages. They also had the opportunity to visit with campus representatives who provided helpful information about resources available to them, such as Campus Recreation, the Career Development Center, Health Service, Library and Information Services and more.

“The beginning of the fall semester always brings fresh motivation to students who are excited to move forward in their academic journey,” said SIU SDM Dean Bruce Rotter, DMD. “We appreciate the many members of the SIUE community who organized and attended the Resource Fair. I believe the students truly appreciated the gesture and the opportunity to learn about the available academic resources and recreational opportunities.”

Free Dairy Queen blizzards were a major highlight of the event, as SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembroke and Mayor of Alton Brant Walker handed out the classic Oreo and cookie dough treats.

“When I think of the SIU SDM, I think of giving,” Pembroke said. “You do an incredible amount of positive work in your communities through events like Give Kids a Smile Day. There’s a true calling that goes along with the health professions. On behalf of SIUE, Edwardsville and the Alton and East St. Louis areas, I thank you for your spirit of giving and wish you well as you start a new semester.”

“The City of Alton welcomes the School’s new and returning students,” added Walker. “Our city is gaining national recognition, and I want to thank you for the value you add to this community. The people in this room are an asset and bring great pride to Alton.”

As students begin a new semester of important dental studies and practice, they expressed their appreciation for the upbeat support demonstrated throughout the Resource Fair.

“The Resource Fair has been a great way to help us celebrate the start of the school year,” said second-year dental student Parsh Maheshwari, of Effingham. “There’s a lot of energy on campus and this has been an all-around successful event.”

“When we return to school, we jump right in and it’s pretty intense and stressful,” added second-year student Cecily Giaquinto, of New Lennox. “This has been a nice reminder that this is a fresh start, and we shouldn’t get too stressed yet. We’re all chipper and excited to meet the new students.”

“I was super excited about today’s event, especially because it involved so many outside leaders and campus community members,” said third-year student Michelle Hickey, of Lisle. “We’re rarely all in the same place, so this has been a great opportunity to meet new students and reconnect with classmates in a fun environment.”

Hickey spoke with representatives from multiple SIUE programs and was glad to know of the resources available to SIU SDM students.

“Everyone was incredibly nice,” she said. “I honestly was under the opinion that I probably wouldn’t need help from resources like the Career Development Center. But, after talking with them, I realized that they can offer me great support with things like resume review and interview tips. It’s nice to know they’re here to help.”

SIU SDM students are eager to continue on their journey toward completing their doctor of dental medicine degrees.

“I’ve always wanted to be a dentist,” Giaquinto explained. “It’s a great profession that allows a person to make a strong positive impact in the community. It’s work that you can really be proud of.”

[The SIU School of Dental Medicine](#) students manage approximately 35,000 patient visits each year at its patient clinics in Alton and East St. Louis. In addition, students offer oral health treatment, screenings and education to more than 10,000 people annually through a wide variety of off-campus community outreach events. These opportunities provide students the training they need to graduate and become highly skilled dentists. The School of Dental Medicine is a vital oral health care provider for residents of southern and central Illinois, and the St. Louis metropolitan region.