

# Rededicated SIUE science complex provides state-of-the-art teaching and research

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) hosted a Science Showcase Friday, Sept. 21 as it celebrated the \$70-million renovation of the Science Building East. The renovation focused on teaching

and research facilities in the Departments of Physics, Mathematics and Statistics, and the Center for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Research, Education and Outreach.

SIUE students are reaping the benefits of SIUE's ongoing commitment to campus growth with the renovations that were the final phase in a \$79 million construction and infrastructure improvement plan to the Science Complex, which includes Science East and the new Science West.

"We are proud of the investment in science and math-related education that has been made through these construction and facility upgrades," said CAS Dean Greg Budzban, PhD. "SIUE is a remarkable educational resource for students in the region."

Built in 1966, the original Science Laboratory Building has housed classrooms, laboratories for teaching and research, and offices for science and various other programs. Growing enrollment and demand for science and math curriculum created an increased need for teaching and laboratory space, as well as updated equipment.

The redesign of Science East was completed in 2006, and funding was appropriated in 2009. Renovations were well underway when work was completely halted in the summer of 2015 because of the state budget impasse. With the beginning of the fall semester quickly approaching and a full roster of classes scheduled in the two 200-seat auditoriums in the building, SIUE "forward funded" the remodeling of those two spaces, which remained open during construction. Those expenses were eventually repaid with the approval of a state budget in 2017.

"Though it took time, it was worth the wait," said Rich Walker, vice chancellor for administration. "This is the capstone project to more than \$310 million worth of improvements to our teaching and research space at SIUE."

The renovation project followed the completion of Science West in 2013. The Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry and Environmental Sciences are housed in Science West.

The Science Complex contains safe, state-of-the-art facilities that enhance opportunities for cutting-edge teaching and research by faculty, and also provide opportunities for more student engagement in experiential learning.

"Our new lecture rooms allow for many more students to be taught and in an immeasurably more comfortable environment than the previous classroom," said Jack

Glassman, PhD, associate professor and chair of the Department of Physics. “Also, our research spaces are outfitted with equipment that allows our professors to perform their research and train our students at all levels.”

Newly created labs include:

Two biophysics labs, one of which is dedicated to X-ray crystallography

Three photonics research labs, all of which are light-tight and shielded from vibrations, with portholes allowing light from the laser lab to be shared with researchers in connecting labs

One optics teaching lab that accommodates five tables, each with its own screened-in area

Science East is equipped with the same high-end equipment students will find in the research labs of future employers. Modern offices for the faculty, as well as dedicated spaces for collaboration in teaching and research, are central in the new building. A large, department-staffed, tutoring room provides extra help to students, and dedicated work spaces give students room to conduct course- and research-related tasks.

“Each physics faculty will have their own research lab instead of sharing space,” said Abdullatif Hamad, PhD, professor of physics. “We will be able to acquire more equipment and involve more students in our research, since space will no longer be an issue. This will help us recruit world-class researchers to join the physics faculty at SIUE.”

Science East is designed and constructed to the standards of the U.S. Green Building Council as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) silver-rated building. As such, it is highly energy efficient, and has high levels of wall and roof insulation; double insulated, polarized glass windows; and the latest technology for the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems.

Lighting motion sensors turn off lights when a room is not in use. Solar roof panels help reduce consumption and demand from the power grid. Exterior bracing adds seismic stability.

Originally \$81.8 million was budgeted to invest in the Science Complex, but the project was completed \$2.7 million under budget. Of the total investment, \$32 million was dedicated to renovating Science East.

Architecture services were provided by Hastings+Chivetta Architects, Inc. River City Construction provided general contracting.

Central to SIUE's exceptional and comprehensive education, the [College of Arts and Sciences](#) has 20 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.