

SIUE set for leadership role in National STEM Center Network

September 25 2018 2:57 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Center for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Research, Education and Outreach continues to be a leader in transformative STEM education programming and community engagement.

Its innovative strategies and best practices will be shared nationally as STEM Center Director Sharon Locke, PhD, has agreed to serve a two-year term on the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Network of STEM Education Center (NSEC) Steering Committee.

“SIUE representation on the NSEC Steering Committee reflects the creative ideas of our STEM Center staff, and the dedication to STEM education among the SIUE STEM faculty and administrators,” Locke said. “As a member, I will provide guidance and advice on the health and direction of the network.”

NSEC currently links 201 STEM education centers at 163 institutions. NSEC research has found that “university STEM education centers often serve as hubs of campus-based efforts to transform undergraduate STEM education, improve the quality of math and science teacher preparation, and increase the success of research grants by attending to broader impacts.”

SIUE STEM Center programs have been shared for several years at NSEC conferences, showcasing the ways it strives to be a visionary among STEM centers. Reports have included:

- Findings of its social network analysis, showing how it could be used as a method for evaluating the impacts of STEM centers
- Best practices for sustaining an equipment lending library and developing strategic research plans
- Successful strategies for catalyzing undergraduate STEM education, such as the STEM Center’s Faculty Research Fellow program, which provides support for SIUE faculty who have ideas for transforming their courses to increase the use of student-centered instruction

The [Network of STEM Education Centers \(NSEC\)](#) is “an organization of campus-based centers and offices that serve as catalysts for educational transformation in STEM. The network allows center leadership, university and college administrators, and state and national policymakers to have a central hub for their communal efforts.”

The SIUE Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach comprises an independent group of researchers and educators, innovating ways to engage students and the public in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Within the SIUE Graduate School, the Center brings together research faculty, graduate students and practitioners to conduct education research. The Center contributes educational expertise to SIUE undergraduate classes and provides professional development for K-12 teachers. The Center boasts a significant library of equipment and resources, which are

available for loan at no cost to campus and regional instructors. For more information, visit <https://www.siue.edu/stem/about.shtml> or contact STEM Center Director Sharon Locke at (618) 650-3065 or stemcenter@siue.edu.