

The NCERC at SIUE receives Inspiring Programs in STEM Award

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EDWARDSVILLE - The National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has received [*INSIGHT Into Diversity*](#) magazine's Inspiring Programs in STEM (science, technology, engineering,

mathematics) Award that recognize colleges, universities and organizations for programs that are improving access to STEM fields for students from underrepresented groups.

The award is presented to institutions whose programs inspire a new generation of young people to consider STEM careers, as well as support working professionals in these fields. View the entire list of initiatives making a significant difference by providing mentoring, academic and professional support, hands-on activities and research opportunities [here](#).

The NCERC project, “Solving the Equality Equation: Hands-On Workshops in STEM,” was funded by the Meridian Society and facilitated STEM workshops in May 2018. The NCERC partnered with two nonprofit organizations, Coordinated Youth and Human Services (CYHS), a school for at-risk youth that provides an alternative learning environment, and the Girls Scouts of Southern Illinois, to offer the workshop and reach populations that are currently underrepresented in the STEM fields.

To meet the needs of these groups and further fulfill NCERC’s mission to “train the bioeconomy workforce of tomorrow,” the NCERC hosted “Fueling Fun” workshops, which provided insights into the fermentation process, the benefits of biofuels, and careers in the bioeconomy. NCERC hosted 23 CYHS students on Friday, May 4 and 50 Girl Scouts and their parents the following day. Activities included a hands-on fermentation experiment, badge-earning activities in innovation, and a tour of the NCERC facility.

“Not only did the workshop participants learn about the benefits of STEM careers, but they also learned that these careers are fun, achievable, and they can earn them in their backyard at SIUE,” said Jackie Pohlman, event coordinator and NCERC specialist of commercialization. “I hope we see these young people back here as undergraduates and interns of NCERC.”

[The NCERC at SIUE](#) is a nationally-recognized research center dedicated to the development and commercialization of biofuels, biochemicals, biomaterials, and bioproducts. Located 20 miles from downtown St. Louis, the Center supports a diverse clientele including industry clients, academia, government, and trade. Through their skilled staff and unique facility, NCERC is paving the way for a bright, bio-based economy, one commercialization at a time.

[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 more than 13,000.