

# **Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program donates \$20,000 to SIUE School of Engineering for construction drone**

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program (SICAP) has donated \$20,000 to the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School

of Engineering's (SOE) Department of Construction for the purchase of a specialized construction drone.

The drone will be capable of supporting multiple payloads for versatile construction-site data acquisition applications, including centimeter-accuracy global positioning, high definition video and thermal imaging.

“The Southern Illinois Builders Association (SIBA) and the Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program have been instrumental in the success of the SIUE construction program over our 40-year history, and have been longstanding partners in promoting safety, education, and the advancement of the building industry,” said Chris Gordon, PhD, SOE associate dean and professor in the Department of Construction.

According to Gordon, SICAP's generous donation, coupled with the Department of Construction's recently hired faculty members' technological expertise, keeps the construction program and its students at the forefront of the industry. Students gain strong technical and leadership skills that prepare them to lead in an industry that is rapidly innovating in both technology and project delivery.

“This new platform will provide our students opportunities to interact with best-in-class data acquisition methods to support construction management activities,” Gordon said. “In addition, it will support the scholarship of our faculty members who focus on improving the modeling, inspection and management of our built environment.”

Department of Construction Assistant Professor Chenxi Yuan, PhD, is training for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Remote Pilot Exam, which will permit him to operate the construction drone in research and creative activities. His research interests include object detection and tracking, underground utilities mapping, geospatial information management, e-construction and mixed reality.

Construction and civil engineering instructor David Sherrill is also a licensed drone pilot and will be using the new drone in the advanced surveying classes.

#### About SIBA and SICAP

Established in 1945, [Southern Illinois Builders Association \(SIBA\)](#) represents approximately 500 construction companies throughout Southern Illinois and is the largest regional contractor association in Illinois. Contractor members range in size from small, closely-held firms doing less than \$250,000 volume per year, up to companies performing several million dollars in volume. The Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program (SICAP) is a not-for-profit industry fund powered by employer contributions based on hours worked by craftsmen of: Carpenters District Council of Greater St. Louis & Vicinity; Southern and Central Illinois Laborers District Council;

Southwestern Illinois Laborers District Council; Plasterers and Cement Masons East St. Louis Local 90; Plasterers & Cement Masons Local 143 Serving Southern Illinois Counties; Operating Engineers Local 520; and Painters District Council 58.

The [SIUE School of Engineering](#) offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and a cooperative doctoral program. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research, and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. Students gain hands-on experience in the School's state-of-the-art facilities, including the new Fowler Student Design Center.