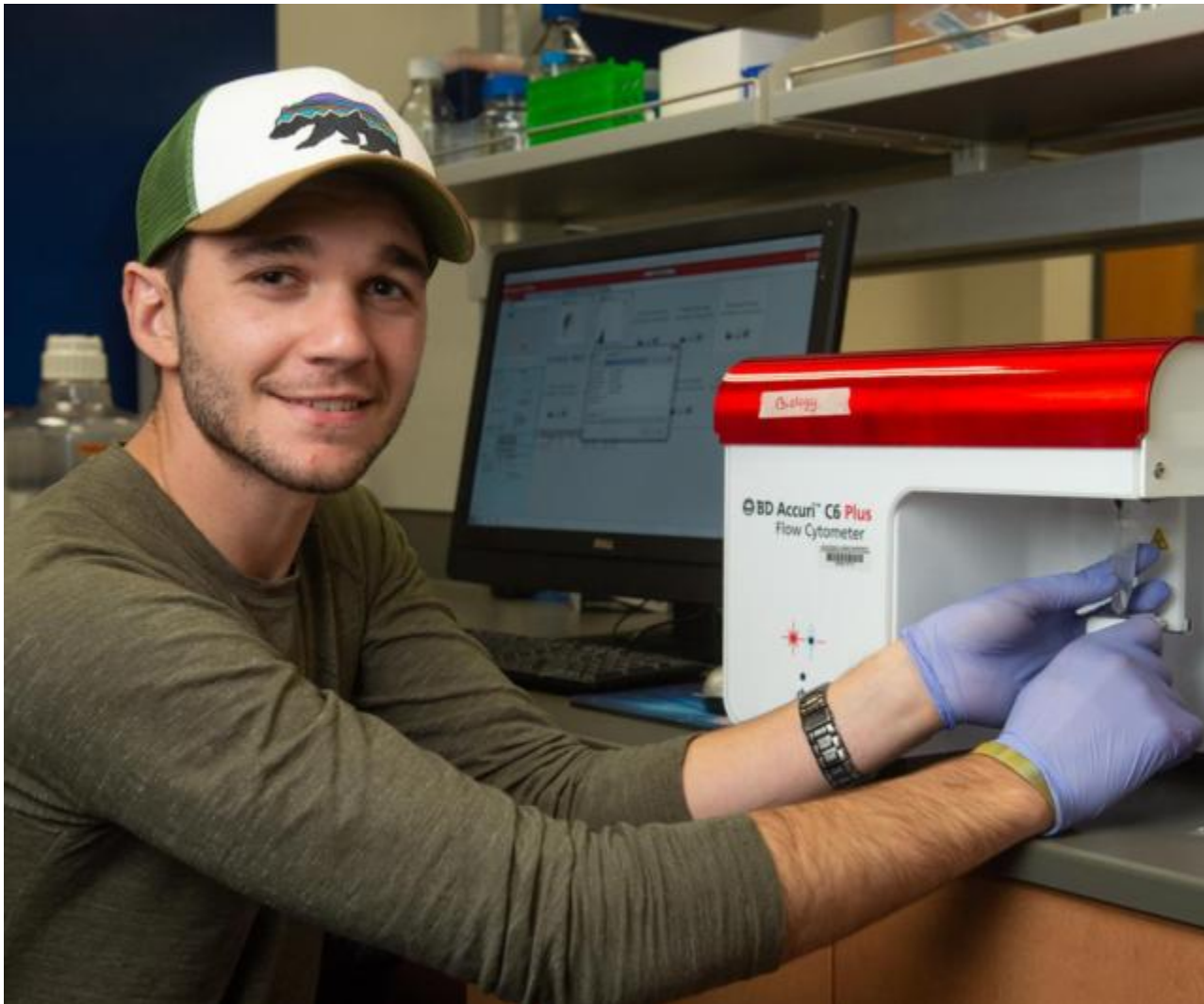




SIUE Graduate School presents Outstanding Teaching Assistant and Thesis Awards

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Graduate School has selected Jacob Miller as the University's 2018 Outstanding Teaching Assistant (TA). The award recognizes graduate students for outstanding performance in teaching and instruction.

Miller is pursuing a master's in biological sciences, with a concentration in microbiology. He achieved a bachelor's in biological sciences from the SIUE College of Arts and Sciences in 2016.

The Peoria native has served as a TA for three semesters in biology 150 and 250 and microbiology 350, under the guidance of Chrissy Simmons, and Susanne DiSalvo, PhD.

"I'm grateful to the students and faculty who have contributed to me obtaining this award," Miller said. "What I enjoy most about my role as a teaching assistant is watching students' progress. I appreciate watching adversity being conquered. While it is nice to see students excel from the start, it is especially fulfilling to watch students who start off rocky, self-reflect and reconstruct their study techniques, and then excel from there."

According to his professors, Miller has gone above and beyond his duties in all capacities as a TA, noting he has attended lectures to better understand materials in order to assist students, maintained highly-active office hours, and taken time to master course components and produce practical problem sets so that students could get ample practice.

Upon graduation, Miller aspires to pursue medical school and become a clinical pathologist.

Receiving honorable mention in this category from the SIUE Graduate School was Edwardsville native Patrick Ayres. Ayres serves as a TA in the field of Modern World History, a course that enrolls the largest number of history students every year.

The Department of Historical Studies' Allison Thomason, PhD, and Carole Frick, PhD, emphasized, "The course is a challenge to conceptualize, organize and make accessible to undergraduate students, and to manage. Mr. Patrick Ayres consistently impresses us with his effectiveness as a teacher and concern for and accessibility to the students."

The Graduate School also announced its 2018 Outstanding Thesis Award recipient. Joshua Pritsolas was selected for his thesis "Principle Component Analysis and Spatial Regression Techniques to Model and Map Corn and Soybean Yield Variability with Radiometrically Calibrated Multitemporal and Multispectral Digital Aerial Imagery."

Pritsolas, of Glen Carbon, earned a master's in geography from SIUE in May 2018. His thesis committee noted, "With its focus on agriculture and use of remote sensing and spatial statistics, Josh's thesis project is at the intersection of natural sciences, social sciences and geospatial techniques. At the core of this thesis, Josh develops methods for extracting and understanding the spatial yield variation within different agricultural fields. His methods are powerful, defensible and transferable."

Receiving honorable mention in this category was Morgan Tillery, of Olney, who earned a master's in industrial/organizational psychology in May 2018. Her thesis was entitled, "Effect of Leaders' Use of Humor on Participants' Perceptions of Leaders."

The Department of Psychology's Catherine Daus, PhD, stated, "With increasing levels of stress in society, and in the workplace particularly, Morgan's results show a win-win scenario and have strong theoretical and practical implications. Humor in the workplace, as a scientific field of study, is in its infancy. Morgan has helped our understanding of it and moved it forward."

By preparing the next generation of leaders in a knowledge-based economy, [SIUE's Graduate School](#) fulfills the region's demand for highly trained professionals. Graduate school offerings include arts and sciences, business, education, engineering, nursing and interdisciplinary opportunities. SIUE professors provide students with a unique integration of theoretical education and hands-on research experiences. Students can obtain graduate certificates or pursue master's degrees, and be part of a supportive learning and rich intellectual environment that is tailored to the needs of adult learners. The Graduate School raises the visibility of research at SIUE, which ranks highest among its Illinois Board of Higher Education peers in total research and development expenditures according to the National Science Foundation. Doctoral programs are available in the Schools of Education (Ed.D.) and Nursing (DNP). The School of Engineering and the Department of Historical Studies feature cooperative doctoral programs (PhD), and the College of Arts and Sciences features an Environmental Resources and Policy cooperative PhD.