

# **SIU SDM provides nearly \$22,000 in free dental care during Veteran's Care Day**

by Megan Wieser

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EDWARDSVILLE - Faculty, staff and students at the Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) demonstrated their appreciation for the sacrifice and service of the nation's veterans by providing free dental care at the inaugural [Veteran's Care Day](#) on Thursday, Nov. 15.

"I jumped on this opportunity," said Jason York, of Macomb, who served in the Air Force from 1993-97. "This was a great offering for veterans. I've seen a lot of people here for a lot of major dental work that has to be done. You can tell they're comfortable at the SIU School of Dental Medicine."

SIU SDM third- and fourth-year dental students, under the supervision of dental school faculty who are all licensed dentists, provided free exams, x-rays, cleanings, fillings and extractions at no cost. Nearly \$22,000 worth of free comprehensive care was provided to 33 patients.

Edwardsville native Kathy Long brought her father, Clarence Korte, a WWII veteran, to Veteran's Care Day.

"I have aging parents and their insurance doesn't cover dental care, so we were thrilled to learn of this opportunity," Long said. "You can't believe the relief on these veterans' faces just being able to get this service done. They are incredibly thankful."

"We were thrilled with the service," she added, "and thoroughly enjoyed visiting with the other veterans as we waited."

Robert Jones, of Glen Carbon, served overseas in Germany in 1960-62.

"The process was easy, and I was greeted quite nicely," he said of his experience. "I'm glad the snow didn't keep us away!"

"We understand that the selflessness of those who serve our country is the very reason we enjoy our freedoms," said Katie Kosten, DMD, director of Community Dentistry. "We know there are a lot of veterans in need of dental care. This was a way that we could give back in the way we are equipped. We were honored to say thank you to our veterans."

[The SIU School of Dental Medicine](#) students manage approximately 35,000 patient visits each year at its patient clinics in Alton and East St. Louis. In addition, students offer oral health treatment, screenings and education to more than 10,000 people annually through a wide variety of off-campus community outreach events. These opportunities provide students the training they need to graduate and become highly skilled dentists. The School of Dental Medicine is a vital oral health care provider for residents of southern and central Illinois, and the St. Louis metropolitan region.