



SIUE's Gillentine Receives 2019-20 Employee Degree Completion Award

by Megan Weiser
April 29 2019 9:21 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - Jim Gillentine has been awarded the 2019-20 Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Employee Degree Completion Award. A five-member faculty committee selected Gillentine from a pool of seven candidates.

The Degree Completion Award program is administered by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration. The program is designed to allow employees to attend classes up to full time, if needed, for two semesters and complete their baccalaureate degree.

“Many SIUE employees take advantage of their educational benefit to earn a degree while working full time,” said Rich Walker, SIUE Vice Chancellor for Administration. “However, the time commitment necessary to earn a degree and work full time can be tremendous. SIUE is pleased to reinstate the Degree Completion Award program, which had been suspended during the state budget crisis, and select a truly deserving candidate.”

Candidates must meet three criteria: 1) they must be civil service or professional staff employees; 2) they must be within 32 credit hours of completing their first baccalaureate degree; 3) and they must have worked at SIUE for at least three years prior to the start of the semester in which they plan on enrolling. To remain eligible for the award as a student, the employee must remain in good academic and behavioral standing during the award period, and should not be employed elsewhere.

Gillentine has served SIUE as a building services worker since 2014. Discovering that SIUE will waive tuition for employees, he enrolled in college for the first time that fall. He has attended classes during the day, then clocked in and worked the 6 p.m.-2 a.m. shift each night, cleaning Founders Hall classrooms.

Gillentine is nearing completion of a bachelor's in English with a double major in philosophy and a minor in creative writing. He was awarded the English Student Scholarship Award in 2017 and the Outstanding Nontraditional Student Award in 2018. He is a member of the English honors society Sigma Tau Delta and has achieved the dean's list four times.

Gillentine has been a published author since 2009. His debut novel, *Of Blood and the Moon*, was a finalist for the Darrell Award in 2009. His most recent book was *Heart of the Beast*, published in 2018 by Pro Se Press. His work has also appeared in the anthologies *When the Shadow Sees the Sun* and *Cover of Darkness*.

Gillentine also currently serves as president of AFSCME Local 2232 representing the SIUE building services workers and volunteers with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Edwardsville as acolyte master.

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