

# **SIUE School of Nursing Hosts Inaugural Nurse Anesthesia White Coat Ceremony**

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**EDWARDSVILLE** - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Nursing (SON) recognized 25 nurse anesthesia doctoral candidates for the hard work they have put into preparing for their clinical training with a White Coat Ceremony held Friday, May 3 in the Morris University Center Meridian Ballroom

The registered nurses from the Midwest region are specializing in the practice of anesthesia. The students were selected from a competitive pool of more than 130 applicants. They will graduate in 2021 as the SIUE SON's third cohort of doctorally prepared nurse anesthetists.

“The White Coat Ceremony is a rite of passage that serves to welcome students to healthcare practice and elevate the value of humanism as the core of healthcare,” said Kevin Stein, DNAP, CRNA, APRN, assistant professor and director of the SON’s anesthesia specialization.

“These students spent four years preparing to become registered nurses, have worked at the bedside in critical care units providing for the needs of their patients, and have completed the first year of didactic study in their doctoral training to include a semester-long intensive in the Simulated Learning Center for the Health Sciences,” Stein explained. “They are now prepared to enter the clinical setting to begin practicing anesthesia.”

The white coat is a symbol of scientific excellence and represents purity of purpose in becoming a nurse anesthetist, the delivery of highly competent and compassionate care to those who seek help.

The ceremony’s guest of honor was Kent Fair, a certified registered nurse anesthetist and past president of the Illinois Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Fair delivered a powerful and inspiring message that placed emphasis on compassion in anesthesia practice, encouraging providers to practice kindness and empathy in their interactions with patients and colleagues. Fair proclaimed that the combination of competency and compassionate care defines clinical excellence in patient care.

“We are incredibly proud of these students, and it was a pleasure to recognize their efforts with this inaugural ceremony,” Stein said. “Our nurse anesthesia faculty are committed to providing students with a unique integration of theoretical education and hands-on experience. Students receive exceptional didactic instruction from experientially-qualified faculty who are actively engaged in clinical practice. They are part of a supportive and rich intellectual environmental that is tailored to the needs of adult learners.”

The first White Coat Ceremony took place in 1993 at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. It has since been adopted by nearly every medical school in North America.

In 2014, recognizing the vital role nurses play on the healthcare team, the Gold Foundation partnered with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to adopt a White Coat Ceremony for nursing. More than 130 schools of nursing now participate.

The SIUE School of Nursing’s programs are committed to creating excellence in nursing leadership through innovative teaching, evidence-based practice, quality

research, patient advocacy and community service. Enrolling nearly 1,400 students in its baccalaureate, master's and doctoral programs, the School develops leaders in pursuit of shaping the nursing profession and impacting the health care environment. SIUE's undergraduate nursing programs on the Edwardsville campus and the regional campus in Carbondale help to solve the region's shortage of baccalaureate-prepared nurses and enhance the quality of nursing practice within all patient service venues. The School's graduate programs prepare nurses for advanced roles in clinical practice, administration and education.