

# **SIU School of Dental Medicine Confers Degrees Upon 58 Graduates**

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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) emeritus faculty and SIUE alumnus Dr. Dennis “Denny” Savoca addressed 58 students who received their doctor of dental medicine degrees at the SDM’s commencement ceremony on Sat., June 1, in the SIUE Morris University Center Meridian Ballroom. The commencement ceremony is available on [siue.edu/tv](http://siue.edu/tv).

Savoca told the class that they were not only ambassadors for the dental profession, but also for the SIU SDM. He provided four areas for them to support: organized dentistry by joining the American Dental Association, and state and local dental societies; the SIU SDM by being a passionate advocate; the community by joining local organizations such as Rotary Clubs, chambers of commerce and various church groups; and oneself by maintaining mental, physical and spiritual help.

In 1976, the SDM hired Savoca as an assistant professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry. While serving as a faculty member at the SDM, Savoca earned a master's in educational administration from SIUE.

Savoca later served the SDM as section head of operative dentistry and assistant dean for clinical affairs, before retiring in 2006 as an associate professor and associate dean for clinical affairs. In his retirement, he continued to serve the SDM as a part-time faculty member for a number of years. Additionally, he is a member of the SDM dean's advisory board.

As SDM Dean Bruce Rotter, DMD, MS, encouraged the class to celebrate their success and new profession, he advised them with an anonymous quote. "This is the beginning of a new day," he said. "You have been given this day to use as you will. You can waste it or use it for good. What you do today is important, because you are exchanging a day of your life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever. In its place is something you have left behind. Let it be something good."

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.