

SIUE Alumni Honored Among BizJournal's Exclusive 30 Under 30 Class of 2019

by Megan Weiser
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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville alumni Andrew Ahlers and Amina Musa are among 30 rising leaders named to the St. Louis Business Journal's coveted 30 Under 30 Class of 2019. Honorees were selected from a competitive pool of 300 nominees for their dedication to advancing the local community.

Ahlers, a project manager for S.M. Wilson, earned a bachelor's in construction management from the SIUE School of Engineering in 2013. Musa, an associate with Thompson Coburn LLP, completed a bachelor's in social work from the SIUE College of Arts and Sciences in 2014.

Both expressed their humble gratitude for the recognition received, as they build their careers and philanthropic presence in the St. Louis region. For Ahlers, becoming a leader with integrity and excellence is his ultimate goal.

"I have always been passionate about leadership," Ahlers explained. "From peer community groups in college to mentoring high school students, developing others and investing in teams, I'm driven to lead and find construction management to be a natural fit. Every construction project has its own set of challenges, but I love the opportunity to think, collaborate and work strategically with my team and partners to deliver quality outcomes. It is my goal to lead by example, building those around me through encouragement and positivity."

As project manager, Ahlers works primarily on healthcare projects. He's responsible for scheduling, planning and coordinating construction throughout the delivery, as well as communicating with the owner and team.

"SIUE was fundamental in preparation for my professional journey," Ahlers said. "The construction management program focuses on a unique blend of engineering and business. The field is continuously changing, but these skills have served as an excellent foundation for my personal development."

For Musa, her work presents unique challenges that motivate her to overcome and succeed in providing the best possible service to clients. As an associate in Thompson Coburn LLP's banking and commercial finance practice, Musa assists in representing banks and companies on large financing transactions. She handles deals from start to closing, including drafting all unique documentation that accompanies each transaction.

"Every day at my job is a challenge, because I am tackling new deal structures and issues and finding a way to put business terms into legally sound documentation," Musa explained. "I love that my job involves cooperative and cordial interaction with colleagues, clients and opposing sides of the deal. I am always learning about new

industries and business components, while being involved on various types of transactions. I also work with many intelligent and good-natured people, which is a huge perk of my position.”

Additionally, Musa is co-founder and associate executive director of the Muslim Women’s Professional Network, a nonprofit based in St. Louis and with chapters in Atlanta and Washington, D.C.

“I want to inspire other women, especially Muslim women, to pursue whatever professional path they choose with confidence and have the ability to rise to their full potential,” Musa said.

“SIUE provided the groundwork that has shaped my career thus far,” she continued. “The social work program and the people I met through it taught me to see others for who they are rather than the circumstances of their lives. This provided a larger picture of where I saw my career heading. I do my job every day with a larger vision for our community and all it can be. I hope to continue to let these roots inspire my path.”

The 30 Under 30 Class of 2019 honorees will appear in the July 12 issue of the BizJournal.

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.

SIUE alumni (L-R) Andrew Ahlers and Amina Musa are among the honorees named to the St. Louis Business Journal’s 30 Under 30 Class of 2019.

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