

# SIUE Welcomes Diverse Class of Meridian Scholars

by Megan Weiser  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville welcomes the newest recipients of the University's Meridian Scholarship to campus. This year's incoming class of 20 Scholars is among the University's most diverse, including students from Illinois and Missouri, as well as Tennessee, Oregon, Kentucky and Nigeria.

The Meridian Scholarship is the most prestigious scholarship given to incoming first-year students. Each year, more than 600 students submit an application essay and resume, meet high academic qualifications (a score of 1260 on the SAT or a 27 on the ACT) and complete an on-campus interview. The four-year award includes full tuition, fees, and room and board.

In addition to one's academic merit, recipients are selected based on a holistic review of a student's application and interview. Successful students often demonstrate creativity in the arts, perseverance in athletics, self-awareness in self-improvement, and dedication to others through service to their school, faith and local communities. Ultimately, students are selected not only on what they have accomplished, but also their potential to shape a changing world.

SIUE Meridian Scholars are enrolled in the University Honors Program, where they enjoy a distinctive small-college experience with all the benefits of a large comprehensive university. Throughout their schooling, students are encouraged to: ask important and difficult questions, then pursue their answers; consider the connections between seemingly different ideas and practices; investigate the current issues facing their field of study; and find opportunities for civic engagement.

### **SIUE's 2019 Meridian Scholarship recipients, along with their hometowns and academic interests:**

Christine Alex, Chicago – biological sciences  
Nicole Boyd, Granite City – mass communications  
Macy Deck, Edwardsville – mechanical engineering  
William Diehl, Johnson City, Tenn. – secondary education, history  
Anne Fulgenzi, Sherman – political science, psychology and communications  
Dominic Grasso, St. Louis – dance  
Jesse Harris, Springfield – biological sciences  
Karli Rose, Kinmundy – biological sciences and Spanish  
Cara Levingston, Le Roy – civil engineering  
Kendra Mackey, Columbia, Mo. - exploratory  
Allie Niebrugge, Teutopolis – international business  
Fatimot Afolashade Onanusi, Bariga, Lagos State, Nigeria – nursing  
Shyloh Peckham, Gresham, Ore. – exploratory  
Ava Ploeckelman, Clarksville, Tenn. – biological sciences  
Angelia Prather, Owensboro, Ky. – theater and dance  
Tessa Schwarzentraub, Metamora – international business  
Trinity Sharp, Richton Park – computer science  
Dana Smith, Lake in the Hills – biological sciences  
Ana Vasquez, Chesterfield, Mo. – industrial engineering  
Lydia Wegel, Champaign – nursing  
For more information on the Meridian Scholars program and to apply for fall 2020, visit [siue.edu/meridian](http://siue.edu/meridian).

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.

Standing alongside SIUE's 2019 Meridian Scholars are (far left) Dr. Eric Ruckh and (far right) Chancellor Randy Pembroke. The 2019 recipients include (L-R front) Ana Vasquez, Karli Rose, Christine Alex, Lydia Wegel, Dana Smith, Mary Deck, Ava Ploeckelman, Anne Fulgenzi, Tessa Shwarzentraub, (back L-R) Allie Niebrugge, Cara Levingston, Jesse Harris, Fatimot Afolashade, Kendra Mackey, Shyloh Peckham, Dominic Grasso and Trinity Shar