



SIUE Receives Additional Support for Sexual Assault Victim/Survivor Services

September 30 2019 1:33 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Office of Student Affairs has received a \$260,000 grant for 2019-22 from the Department of Justice (DOJ) through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). It is the second DOJ grant, as the University received an initial \$300,000 grant in 2016.

The grant will fund education and victim services for domestic violence and stalking. The University will continue to fund campus education on sexual assault.

“Since receiving the VAWA grant in 2016 and instituting victim/survivor services and prevention education, SIUE has seen an 8 percent decrease in students experiencing sexual assault,” said Jeffrey Waple, PhD and vice chancellor for student affairs. “With this second grant, we are looking forward to a similar growth in services, and decrease in dating/domestic violence and stalking on our campus during the next three years.”

Grant funding will continue to be used to attain these goals:

- Increase awareness of and access to prevention information and victim services
- Prevent incidents of dating/domestic violence and stalking experienced by SIUE students
- Coordinate current and proposed efforts to respond to dating/domestic violence and stalking committed toward SIUE students

The original grant also allowed Samantha Dickens, MSW, to join SIUE as Prevention Education and Advocacy Center (PEACe) coordinator. She has developed and implemented sexual assault prevention and education programming on campus, as well as tailored trainings designed to meet the needs of underserved students (those with disabilities, international students, students who identify as LGBTQ and men) on campus. PEACe is seeking to create a peer mentoring and education program, using evidenced-based methods to most effectively address sexual assault on campus.

Dickens collaborates with campus and community partners on a campus-wide, accessible and visible campaign regarding sexual assault services, resources and awareness.

“During the past three years, I’ve facilitated several programs on sexual assault,” Dickens said. “At every program, I or my colleagues have students thank us for providing these programs and services, and that the student wished we'd had the services when they were assaulted. The support that we now provide for sexual assault survivors, is the kind of support that we intend to provide for our students who experience dating /domestic violence and stalking.”

Through the original grant, SIUE expanded its established sexual assault task force, renamed the Coordinated Community Care Response Team (C3RT), by including new community members such as the Edwardsville Police Dept., Anderson Hospital SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) nurses, Scott Air Force Base representatives and the Madison County State's Attorney Office.

SIUE has also strengthened connections with Call For Help's Sexual Assault Victim Care Unit and increased its involvement in prevention and awareness programming, policy development and survivor support. The University also has included Oasis Women's Center and the Violence Prevention Center in Belleville to improve its services and education on dating/domestic violence and stalking, as well as Solid Lines Productions to provide interactive, theater-based programs.

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.