

SIU SDM Annual Give Kids A Smile Day Provides More Than \$50K in Free Care for 85 Children

by Doug McIlhagga
October 17 2019 1:09 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University's School of Dental Medicine (SIU SDM) served 85 children between the ages of 3-13 at its 14th annual Give Kids A Smile Day on Monday, Oct. 14 at the SDM's main clinic. The volunteer dentists and staff provided \$53,604 in preventive, restorative and surgical treatment for the children who participated.

Fun activities for children took place in the gym throughout the event. SDM first-year dental students hosted a variety of "Smile Stations" featuring fun, educational activities and games to help children learn the importance of a good diet and oral hygiene.

"The holiday affords those needing urgent and routine dental care to come see us," said Katie Kosten, DMD, assistant professor in the SIU SDM and director of community dentistry. "Children had their dental concerns addressed and had some fun at the same time."

Give Kids a Smile Day annually offers free comprehensive dental care, including examinations, x-rays, cleanings, fluoride treatments, fillings, sealants, stainless steel crowns and extractions. All dental services were provided by SIU SDM faculty, students and staff, and Lewis and Clark Community College dental assisting and dental hygiene faculty and students. Professionals and volunteers from the community also participated.

Give Kids A Smile Day is a national event sponsored by the American Dental Association to provide free dental treatment for underserved children. The event is organized to promote community awareness of the need for dental services among the underserved.

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.