

SIUE STEM Center Offers Unique Geocoins for EarthCache Explorers

by Megan Wieser

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EDWARDSVILLE – EarthCaches are interesting geological sites that help individuals explore the landscapes around them. The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville STEM Center is encouraging community members to take part in the fun, outdoor learning opportunity by visiting EarthCache sites on the SIUE campus and in the region.

“It’s Earth Science Week, and last Sunday was EarthCache Day, so we figured what better time to encourage people to dive into geoscience learning,” said STEM Center Instructor and Outreach Specialist Colin Wilson. “There are EarthCache sites all over the world, and the STEM Center has created some within reach of campus. These sites open people’s eyes to some of the geology of this region. They’re available for some socially-distant outdoor fun, and offer opportunities to learn something new and explore SIUE’s amazing campus and surrounding areas while enjoying the fall beauty.”

The STEM Center is offering a special incentive to engage in EarthCaching. Community members who find at least three of the STEM Center’s six EarthCaches will get a beautiful geocoin. The collectors’ items are limited, so Wilson encourages participants to explore soon.

Information on the STEM Center’s six EarthCache sites is available at SIUESTEMCenter.org/earthcaching. The site also offers ideas for incorporating EarthCaches into the classroom, tips for creating original EarthCaches and a virtual walkthrough of an example EarthCache.

Participants who complete the three-site challenge should email STEM Center Director Sharon Locke, PhD, at slocke@siue.edu. Geocoins will be distributed this fall in the order the Center receives submissions.

The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville [Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach](http://www.siu.edu/stemcenter) comprises an independent group of researchers and educators, innovating ways to engage students and the public in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Within the SIUE Graduate School, the Center brings together research faculty, graduate students and practitioners to conduct education research. The Center contributes educational expertise to SIUE undergraduate classes and provides professional development for K-12 teachers. The Center boasts a significant library of equipment and resources, which are available for loan at no cost to campus and regional instructors. For more information, visit <https://www.siu.edu/stem/> or contact STEM Center Director Sharon Locke at (618) 650-3065 or stemcenter@siue.edu.