

SIUE Alumna Jackson Earns Competitive National Award From Anthropology Honor Society

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Southern Illinois University Edwardsville alumna Sacha Jackson of, Edwardsville, who earned a bachelor's in anthropology, French and psychology in May 2020, achieved third place in the Lambda Alpha Senior Scholarship Award competition of the Lambda Alpha National Anthropology Honor Society – a first for a student in the College of Arts and Sciences' Department of Anthropology.

After accepting the nomination by anthropology faculty and pursuing a daunting application process, Jackson was recognized for her senior capstone project, which

focused on the Lyles Station Consolidated School and Museum and the encapsulating community.

“Lyles Station, Indiana, is the last remaining African American farming community in the state,” said Jackson. “For over 200 years, the families in this community have bonded together through blood and land, with their unique microcosm leading to a featured position in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture. As a descendant of this location, my intention was to highlight the heritage site as a nexus for history, pride and identity of the residents and descendants of this community.”

When asked how she became interested in the field of anthropology, Jackson replied, “I have always had an intense interest in what motivates people collectively and individually. This focus developed organically into a deep curiosity about cultures outside of my zone of perception, and supported my enthusiasm for learning a language that will provide increased access to others.”

Jackson plans to expand her study into cultural anthropology during graduate school. She aspires to work in a museum or within an organization that places high importance on fostering honest, open dialogues between cultures and peoples to bring greater understanding to why we are, who we were and what we shall become.

“Winning this award is a sign that my passions led me on the right path,” Jackson said. “This acknowledgment from the larger anthropological community inspires one to proceed down an unknowable path with greater confidence. The support and encouragement of SIUE’s Departments of Anthropology and Foreign Languages and Literature is beyond measure. My long-suffering professors have no idea how grateful I am for their patience, understanding and willingness to laugh in questionable times.”

While at SIUE, Jackson was involved in numerous initiatives, including instruction in SIUE’s Head Start/Early Head Start program, French document transcription and translations through the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) program and archival assistance in the Interdisciplinary Research and Informatics Scholarship (IRIS) Center.