

# **New Military and Veteran Resource Center (MAVRC) Opens At SIUE**

by Doug McIlhaga  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Offices of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs have opened a new Military and Veteran Resource Center (MAVRC) located on the Morris University Center's (MUC) second floor.

The military student population at SIUE is among the largest in the state with Military and Veteran Services currently supporting more than 800 military-connected students and their families.

“The opening of the Military and Veteran Resource Center is a long-term goal finally realized,” said Military and Veteran Services Director Kevin Wathen. “In the first few weeks, we have already seen a steady stream of military-connected students utilizing our computers, printer and lounge space. They are meeting, sharing experiences, and developing a deeper sense of belonging at SIUE.

Telisha Reinhardt, coordinator of military and veteran services, says the center is available to address the isolation experienced by many military-connected and veteran students, who are non-traditional students with lived experiences that differ immensely from traditional students.

“The resource center connects this population with peers who they can simply talk to and be themselves,” Reinhardt said. “We also connect students with services that assist them in reintegrating into civilian life in order to have a successful academic and professional experience at SIUE and throughout the rest of their life. Right now, the resource center is in the process of establishing programs and activities that center on issues such as diversity and inclusion, women and gender matters, and peer mentoring.”

“The momentum does not stop here,” Wathen said. “Our office has plans to enhance the military-connected experience and to increase military-connected graduation and retention. We will continue to make SIUE an institution that the military-connected are proud to call home.”

The project was funded by an SIUE Innovation Grant from the Office of the Chancellor.

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 nearly 13,000.

(L-R): SIUE MAVRC staff Matt Hanks, Brad Hebert, Jasmine Fox, Jacob Vignone, Coordinator of Military and Veteran Services Telisha Reinhardt, Payton Williams, Nathan Peery and Military and Veteran Services Director Kevin Kevin Wathen.