



SIUE History Prof Manuel Working on Biofuels Book with NCERC

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Jeffrey T. Manuel, assistant professor in Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's Department of Historical Studies within the College of Arts and Sciences, is teaming up with the NCERC at SIUE to record the history of alcohol-based fuels in Illinois.

"Farmers, researchers, business leaders, politicians, and many others have been working to build Illinois' biofuels industry for decades," Manuel said. "This is an important but overlooked aspect of the state's agricultural and business history.

"Fuel alcohol has been suggested as a promising alternative to oil and gas for over a century. My research asks why Americans have repeatedly turned to alcohol fuel as an alternative energy source and why earlier efforts to promote alcohol fuels were unsuccessful."

The NCERC at SIUE selected Manuel's project for its first faculty fellowship award, which provided him with a course release to free time for research and interviews. The Center's faculty fellowship program is sponsored by the Illinois Corn Marketing Board to foster collaborative research between the NCERC and the University community.

"We truly appreciate the Illinois Corn Growers' support of this collaborative relationship, and we are excited to partner with Dr. Manuel on his project," said NCERC Director John Caupert. "The biofuels industry has a long and fascinating history, with deep roots in Illinois. Dr. Manuel's work will shed light on the industry's evolution, and demonstrate the resilience and innovation of the industry's past and present pioneers."

Manuel's work will include in-depth interviews of key players in the biofuels industry, which will be recorded and archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield as part of the Agriculture in Illinois oral history collection. The interviews will serve as a starting point for a planned book about the history of fuel alcohol in America.

"I believe my research will add a valuable historical perspective to SIUE's existing strengths in biofuels research," Manuel said. "I hope that SIUE can become a world leader in a multidisciplinary study of biofuels as we work to create this valuable record for the general public and future researchers."

A native of Anoka, Minn., Manuel earned a bachelor's in history and economics from Northwestern University in 2001. He achieved a doctorate in history from the University of Minnesota in 2009.

Manuel's research interests focus on the history of resource industries in the modern U. S. He is especially interested in relationships between resource industries, the environment, technology and politics.

Manuel's first book, "North Country Blues: The Struggle to Sustain Mining on Minnesota's Iron Range, 1915-2000," is under contract with the University of Minnesota Press. His research on the history of the iron ore industry has also appeared in *Technology and Culture* and several forthcoming edited collections. This research has been supported by grants and fellowships including a STEP Grant from SIUE's Office of Research and Projects and the University of Minnesota's Norman Johnson Dewitt Fellowship.

"I have close family ties to agriculture and agribusiness," Manuel said. "My dad is an oats broker, my brother trades wheat, and my mom grew up on a small family farm in Minnesota. So ethanol research is bringing me back to the family business in an interesting way."

The NCERC is now accepting applications for 2015-2016 Faculty Fellowships. Funding is available to support course buyouts and other research costs for SIUE faculty interested in research collaboration with the NCERC. Applications are due Friday, Dec. 19, and can be found online at <http://www.ethanolresearch.com/Faculty%20Fellowships.shtml>.

About The NCERC: The NCERC at SIUE is a nationally recognized research center dedicated to the development and commercialization of biofuels, specialty chemicals and other renewable compounds. The Center's fully functional dry grind pilot plant and laboratories are equipped with advanced biofuels capabilities including corn fractionation, pretreatment, and a fermentation suite with 5, 30, 150 and 1500L scale-up. Facilities are staffed by industry veterans with more than 100 years of collective experience in fermentation and biofuels production. This knowledgeable team has the flexibility and expertise to design and carry out projects in any region of the advanced biofuels or specialty chemicals space. For more information, contact Courtney Breckenridge, (618) 659-6737 ext. 230, cbreckenridge@ethanolresearch.com, or visit <http://www.ethanolresearch.com>.

About SIUE: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville <http://www.siu.edu> provides students with a high quality, affordable education that prepares them for successful careers and lives of purpose. 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 14,000.