

White House Launches Challenge, SIUE Commits to Action

by Megan Wieser
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EDWARDSVILLE – Continuing its unwavering commitment to preserving the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and surrounding community members, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has joined the COVID-19 College Vaccine Challenge.

SIUE is among nearly 300 colleges and universities participating in the growing initiative, launched by the Biden Administration in June. The challenge aims to accelerate national progress toward President Biden’s goal of 70% of the U.S. adult population receiving at least one vaccine dose by July 4th.

Participating colleges have pledged to take three key actions:

Make sure every member of your campus community knows they are eligible for a vaccine and has resources to find one.

Lead the way by identifying champions for vaccine efforts across campus and implementing a plan to get as many members of your college community vaccinated as possible.

Meet your community where it is: bring vaccines on-site, and make it easy for students, staff and faculty to get vaccinated at sites nearby them this summer.

“We are thrilled to join our higher education colleagues nationwide with this commitment,” said Chancellor Randy Pembroke. “Our pledge to act is an extension of our ongoing efforts to ensure a transparent, consistent and accessible sharing of resources, guidelines and vaccine access that have helped our campus community members remain informed for their health and safety.”

SIUE maintains a robust COVID-19 website, which includes a dashboard that offers data on testing and trends of the virus as a result of the University’s surveillance testing program. Additionally, weekly campus updates share information on face coverings, hand washing and social distance guidance, travel guidelines, vaccine eligibility and registration, safety guidelines and support, training opportunities and more.

“The College Vaccine Challenge is a terrific way for all postsecondary institutions to engage students, faculty and staff in an effort to keep their communities safe,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “I encourage every college and university to take this pledge and get creative in becoming Vaccine Champion Colleges. We must all work together to beat this pandemic and put the focus back on students’ educational careers that will put them on the path to success.”

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.