

Edwardsville Native Returns to SIUE

by Eric Hess

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EDWARDSVILLE – Daryl Thomas, a native of Edwardsville, has been named the Associate Head Coach for SIUE wrestling, announced Thursday by Head Coach [Jeremy Spates](#). "Bringing Daryl back to Edwardsville is a game changer for SIUE wrestling," said Spates. "He has an extremely high level of experience and has dramatically improved every program where he has coached. We are always talking about trying to keep Illinois wrestlers in state and now have brought one of the best back home."

Thomas returns to Edwardsville after spending last season as an assistant coach at Campbell, where he helped lead the Camels to one of the best seasons in program history. Seven Campbell wrestlers earned spots at the 2021 NCAA Championships in St. Louis.

"I am excited to be back home," said Thomas. "I look forward to helping Jeremy continue to build SIUE into a special place. I am extremely grateful to the University and the athletic department for making it a reality."

The Camels also claimed their third straight Southern Conference regular season and tournament championships. The team was ranked as high as 19th nationally by InterMat.

Thomas holds significant experience in collegiate wrestling having two seasons as an assistant at Old Dominion. Prior to ODU, Thomas spent one year as the head coach at Lincoln College, leading the Lynx to a fourth-place finish in the NJCAA National Tournament. He was named NJCAA Midwest District Coach of the Year

He also was an assistant coach at Northern Illinois during the 2015 and 2016 season. Five Huskies earned NCAA National Tournament qualifying spots during his tenure.

Thomas was part of the Edwardsville High School coaching staff after completing his bachelor's degree in communications at Illinois in 2013. He helped his alma mater advance four wrestlers to the Illinois state tournament while the Tigers finished the 2014 regular season with a school-record 28-0 dual mark and a Southwestern Conference title.

At Illinois, Thomas was a two-time place winner at the Big Ten Championships in 2012 and 2013, finishing sixth each time. He completed his collegiate career with a 53-47 record with six pins. He advanced to the NCAA Championships as a senior and was ranked as high as seventh by WIN Magazine as a senior. He finished third at the 2012 ASICS USA Wrestling University Nationals to earn Freestyle All-American honors.

A 2008 graduate of Edwardsville High School, Thomas was a three-time state qualifier with a career record of 111-23. He set records for single-season takedowns (183) and career takedowns (401).