

SIUE East St. Louis CHS Students Leave For Thanksgiving With Full Stomachs And Padded Pockets

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EDWARDSVILLE - Gift cards to buy food for the Thanksgiving Day spread and an early turkey day meal with all the trimmings were given to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville East St. Louis Charter High School (CHS) students on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 18-19.

On Friday, CHS students filed into the cafeteria and sat down to pre-prepared and pre-packaged Thanksgiving meals. The dinners consisted of turkey or chicken, dressing, five-cheese macaroni, sweet potatoes, green beans, corn, cornbread, cranberry sauce, and an assortment of cupcakes.

“Our tradition is a formal, sit-down Thanksgiving meal with teachers and administrators serving our CHS scholars,” said CHS Director Gina Jeffries, EdD. “However, because of COVID-19, we had to distribute the meals already packaged.”

Families lined up to receive Schnucks gift cards at the beginning of the school day on Thursday.

“Each (CHS) scholar received a \$100 Schnucks gift card for their family, made possible by the SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School Angel Tree campaign,” said CHS Interim Assistant Principal Pamela Saffore. “Our annual Angel Tree Campaign has been such a blessing to our families. This year, we decided to split it up so that students received a grocery gift card before the Thanksgiving holiday. Then our scholars will receive other gifts, including a CHS letterman jacket, before the Christmas holiday.”

“Because of others, my mother can get a helping hand for Thanksgiving and Christmas,” said CHS senior Tyrell Montgomery, who has been a recipient of CHS Angel Tree donations for the past three years. “I have four siblings. She doesn’t talk about it, but I know she works hard to get what she can to take care of us. I know money is tight.”

“I’m looking forward to the items we receive before Christmas break,” said CHS junior Charles Shaw, who has enjoyed receiving Angel Tree donations for the past two years. They provide us with both what we need and what we want.”

CHS named the week leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday break, Nov. 15-19, as Turkey Trot, a week of Thanksgiving and celebrations through fun, games, music and food. During the week students participated in such activities as themed-costume days, making Christmas tree ornaments, trivia, team building activities and a pep rally introducing the first SIUE East St. Louis Charter High School basketball team, according to Liza Cummings, PhD, CHS STEM instructional coordinator, and Stephanie Newton, CHS reading and math interventionist.

One Thanksgiving-related activity that graces the walls of the school are lists of things students are most appreciative of in alphabetical order, some of which include: America, any attitude that is positive, Charter High School, earth, family, God, imagination, Jeffries, kindness, life, love, money to pay the bills, my mother, opportunities, Roundtree, teamwork, world, youth, and zeal of the Lord.

[The SIUE Charter High School](#) is a school-of-choice for families in the East St. Louis School District 189. The mission of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville East St. Louis Charter High School is to prepare students who are career- and college-ready upon graduation. To achieve this mission, the school and its staff will positively impact

the educational and economic lives of East St. Louis, Illinois youth through individualized instruction in core academic subjects, exploration of career interests and aptitudes, assistance in realizing students' talents, high academic goals, and expectations that graduates will become competitive employees for the 21st century.