



SIUE Employees Join Community Partners For Coat, Hoodie And School Supply Giveaway In East St. Louis

by Megan Wieser

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EDWARDSVILLE - With the cold season blowing in and school having been in session for several months, the need for outerwear to weather the winter and supplies to get through the rest of the year are critical for many East St. Louisans.

Several Southern Illinois University Edwardsville employees participated in the “Coat, Hoodie and School Supply Drive Thru” from 3-5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 19 at the East St. Louis Higher Education Campus (ESLHEC), 601 James R. Thompson Blvd. in East St. Louis. The school supply drive, which was sponsored by Children’s Home and Aide, and Illinois Coalition for Community Services and Community Youth Services East St. Louis Area Project Board, served nearly 100 families.

“This was a collaboration of several area agencies to help East St. Louis students and parents,” said Kimberly McClellan, program coordinator of one of the partnering

agencies, the National Alliance on Mental Illness Southwestern Illinois Chapter, and project specialist at Cahokia Head Start/Early Head Start Center.

“If you were to Google the top 10 poorest cities in Illinois, three show up here in the Metro East – East St. Louis, Brooklyn and Centreville,” said SIUE alumnus Sen. Christopher Belt, D-Centreville, who joined volunteers at the roundabout on the ESLHEC. “These are underserved communities. This giveaway is important to make sure that at this time of the year when weather is changing, people have coats, hoodies, gloves and scarves.”



“Many school supplies received in the beginning of the school year have been exhausted, and families are now feeling the pinch to ensure that their children have necessities for school,” added McClellan.

Some of those donating items included Diane Hayes Owino, instructor in SIUE’s Department of Applied Communication Studies, and members of the SIUE Professional Staff Association.

Besides McClellan, other SIUE volunteers included Nicole Robinson, Head Start/Early Head Start; Carolyn Kribs, East St. Louis Charter High School; and Dawn Huckleberry, Integrative Studies academic advisor.